

**Mainstream Editors' Perception of Ethical Journalism Practices and Fake News Dissemination in Nigeria**

**Nneka IKEM ANIBEZE**  
**LCU/PG/001781**

**Being a PhD Thesis Submitted to the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, Faculty of Communication and Information Science, Lead City University, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria**

**In Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy Degree (PhD) in Mass Communication and Media Technology**

**2024**

**Certification**

This is to certify that this study was conducted under my supervision by Nneka IKEM-ANIBEZE (LCU/PG/001781) for the Award of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) in Mass Communication and Media Technology, Faculty of Communication and Information Science, Lead City University, Ibadan, Nigeria and that this work has not been previously submitted.

---

**Dr. Waheed Bayonle BUSARI**  
**Supervisor**

---

**Date**

---

**Dr. Yemi Kunle OGINNI**  
**Head of Department**

---

**Date**

## **Dedication**

This thesis is dedicated to El-Roi, the Almighty God.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## Acknowledgement

I appreciate Lead City University, Ibadan, for the opportunity to pursue my postgraduate studies. I am also grateful to the University Library and other libraries that provided access to necessary resources. I am thankful to authors and authorities whose works were consulted during my research, as well as the Postgraduate College Compliance Team for the diligent work done to make this work perfectly. I thank God Almighty, the author and finisher of this work for His love and mercy. I could not have done this work without Him.

I owe deep gratitude to my supervisor, Dr. Waheed Bayonle Busari for his patience and kind advice during this research and for painstakingly reading through this dissertation over and over to ensure perfection. God bless you, sir. Thanks to my lecturers: Prof. Lambert Ihebuzor who nudged me on to start this program in the first place; Dr. Yemi Kunle Oginni (H.O.D) for his assistance; Professor Taye Babalaye and Professor Gboyega Abioye. I am grateful to Dr. Adekunle Olusola Otunla who took a special interest in my work and provided the needed guidance. Thanks to Dr. Kenneth Umezurike Dr. Bukola Irele and all the other lecturers who taught me in my postgraduate classes. Thank you Dr. Dare Ogunyombo and Micheal Achi for the back and forth while typing and editing my work. My immense gratitude goes to Dr Anthony Apeh Amedu for his continuous vetting and editing of this work. I am forever indebted to you. I am grateful to my coursemates Dr. Adebisi Adegoroye, Bashir Mohammed and Adebisi Aro for all the moral and academic support.

I acknowledge the Nigerian Guild of Editors, particularly the President, Eze Anaba, for granting me access to the register of registered Editors in Nigeria and facilitating contacts with editors who responded to my research questions and the Guild of Sports Editors. I thank Prof. Daniel Kolawole Olukoya, the General Overseer of Mountain of Fire and Miracles Ministries for his fervent prayers and wise counsel always. Thank you to Hajiya Sadiya Umar Farouq, Barrister Hannatu Musa Musawa for your support, Kingsley Oyero, Joy Taiwo, Angela Emordi, Ibrahim Adamu and Odudu Udo.

My sincere indebtedness goes to my family, Onochie, Ifeanyi, Chibeze, Chisom Anibeze, and my dearest sister Ifeoma Nworjih, for their unflinching support, pure, unconditional, unadulterated and unalloyed love during my study and this research work. I also appreciate the support of my late former lecturer, Mr. Mike Esiri, during my undergraduate days.

Although, the above-mentioned institutions and persons played vital roles in the completion of this research work, I take full responsibility for any errors that may be found therein.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## **Abstract**

Globally, compliance to ethical standards among journalists is the norm. However, the state of unethical practices noticed in newspaper, electronics and online media practice in Nigeria is presumably, on an all-time high due to fake news dissemination, lack of objectivity and decency in their reportage. The central issue in discussions on ethics in Nigeria is ethical journalism practice and preponderance of fake news resulting in serious ethical breaches among mainstream editors in Nigeria. Therefore, this study examined the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination in Nigeria. The study was anchored on Social Responsibility Media Theory while a self-designed structured questionnaire was employed for data collection. A descriptive survey research design was adopted. Data was gathered using a questionnaire instrument through Google Forms. Sample was selected using systematic sampling technique. A total enumeration technique was adopted to access 116 registered mainstream editors across Nigeria. The study found the level of ethical journalism practices among mainstream journalists in Nigeria was high while mainstream editors were found to observe the ethics of journalistic practice. The perception of Nigerian Mainstream editors journalism practices was found to be positive, which implies that mainstream editors were favourably disposed to ethics of journalistic practice in Nigeria. However, dissemination of fake news was found to be rampant as well as the perception of Nigerian mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. The study recommends that mainstream editors should pay more attention to ethical journalism practices among their reporters while dissemination of fake news should be discouraged among media practitioners.

**Keywords:** Ethical Issues, Journalism practices, Fake News & Mainstream Editors

**Word Count:** 257

## Table of Contents

<b>Content</b>	<b>Page</b>
Title Page	
Certification	ii
Dedication	iii
Acknowledgement	iv
Abstract	v
Table of Contents	vi
List of Tables	ix
<b>Chapter One: Introduction</b>	
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	5
1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study	7
1.4 Research Questions	7
1.5 Hypotheses	8
1.6 Significance of the Study	8
1.7 Scope of the Study	9
1.8 Limitation of the Study	9
1.9 Operational Definition of Terms	9
Endnotes	12
<b>Chapter Two: Literature Review</b>	
2.1 Conceptual Review	14
2.1.1 Concept of Journalism Practice	14
2.1.5 Concept of Ethnic	29
2.1.6 Key Functions of the Mass Media	59

2.1.7	Enforcement of Code of Ethnic	60
2.1.8	Press Law and Guidelines Guiding Journalism	65
2.1.9	Concept of Fake News	74
2.1.10	Concept and Perspectives of Citizen Journalism	102
2.2	Theoretical Framework	109
2.2.1	The theory of Ethics	109
2.2.2	Social Responsibility Theory	115
2.3	Review of Empirical Studies	118
2.4	Conceptual Model	133
2.5	Summary of Gaps in Literature Reviewed	135
	Endnotes	137
<b>Chapter Three: Methodology</b>		
3.1	Research Design	147
3.2	Population of the Study	147
3.3	Sample and Sampling Techniques	147
3.4	Description of the Research Instrument	147
3.5	Validation of the Research Instrument	148
3.6	Reliability of the Research Instrument	148
3.7	Method of Data Collection	149
3.8	Method of Data Analysis	149
	Endnotes	150
<b>Chapter Four: Results and Discussion of Findings</b>		
4.1	Demographic Data Analysis	151
4.2	Presentation of Data	153

4.2.2	Hypotheses	162
4.3	Discussion of Findings	167
	Endnotes	173
<b>Chapter Five: Conclusion</b>		
5.1	Summary of Findings	176
5.2	Conclusion	176
5.3	Recommendations	177
5.4	Contribution to Knowledge	178
5.5	Suggestion for Further Studies	179
	Bibliography	180
	Appendix 1	190
	Bio-data	213
	The University Compliance Certification	216

## List of Tables

<b>Table</b>		<b>Page</b>
3.1	Reliability of The Research Instrument	149
4.1	Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=113)	151
4.2	Level of Ethical Journalism Practices in Nigeria	153
4.3	Level of Fake News Dissemination among Journalists in Nigeria	156
4.4	Perception of Mainstream Editors on Ethical Journalism	159
4.5	Perception of Mainstream Editors on Fake News	161
4.6	perception of Mainstream Editor on Ethical Journalism Practices	163
4.7	Perception of Mainstream Editor on Ethical Journalism Practices	164
4.8	Perception of Mainstream Editor on Fake News	166

## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

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

The rise of fake news and disinformation in Nigeria has further complicated the media landscape, with significant implications for governance and public discourse. In this context, ethical journalism practices are crucial in maintaining the credibility and integrity of the media. Mainstream editors play a vital role in shaping the editorial direction of their organisations and ensuring that ethical standards are upheld<sup>1</sup>.

Against this backdrop, the study explores the perceptions of mainstream editors in Nigeria regarding ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination. By examining their views and experiences, the research aims to contribute to the ongoing efforts to promote responsible and ethical journalism in Nigeria and to combat the spread of misinformation and disinformation in the media<sup>2</sup>.

As the fourth estate of the realm, the mass media remains a vital part of any society and thus the importance of the media in any society has been well documented over time. The mass media, charged with informing, educating, and entertaining the public, has remained a vital part of any civilisation over time. Individuals from all areas of life have welcomed the media as an ally in making sense of whatever situation may exist at any given time, which is not surprising. This is because when making a difficult decision, what the media reflects has a big impact on people's perceptions.

The way the media depicts a government can have a significant impact on public perception. Given the importance of the media, former UN Secretary-General, Kofi Annan stated that "if information and knowledge are vital to democracy, they are a precondition for progress<sup>2</sup>." The media are both drivers and facilitators of good governance and development, the media is connected with a country's identity since it functions as a recordkeeper based on how it reports events regularly. As a result, the media gives historical, ideological, and political perspectives on vital topics, to the point where democracy suffers if the media fails<sup>1,2</sup>.

Given the importance of the media, various countries have moved to legitimize their operations. The

Nigerian Constitution, for example, recognizes the media's function as a polity surveyor, system inspector, and provider of solutions to potentially conflict-ridden circumstances in society. Section 22 of Chapter II states that "the press, radio, television, and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people"<sup>3</sup>. The concept of the "fourth estate" is related to the four pillars of democracy, with the media serving as the fourth and most crucial pillar. A lively and free media have been considered fundamental prerequisites for a thriving democracy since many countries adopted democratic governance rules.

This is because every democracy requires a means through which the authorities and their activities may be discussed and critically assessed. No democracy can aspire to realise the great ideas that underpin the concept of freedom and equality without self-reflection and debate. Furthermore, the media is critical to the countries due to its intrinsic tendency to question and criticism the ruling regimes.

This means that no country in the world can hope to achieve democratic governance without a free and independent press<sup>4</sup>. Mainstream editors in Nigeria play a crucial role in journalism practice and fake news dissemination. They are responsible for overseeing the editorial process in reputable news organisations, ensuring that published content meets ethical standards and is accurate.

In Nigeria, mainstream editors face challenges in combating fake news due to various factors, including pressure to meet deadlines and stay ahead of the competition, limited resources and inadequate fact-checking capabilities, external influences and political pressures that can compromise editorial independence, difficulty in verifying sources and information in a rapidly changing news landscape amongst others. Despite these challenges, mainstream editors in Nigeria are essential in promoting ethical journalism practices, ensuring responsible reporting and balanced coverage, fact-checking and verifying information to prevent fake news dissemination advocating for press freedom, and fighting against censorship<sup>2</sup>.

However, this freedom of expression has been significantly impacted by the advent of the internet. In the 1980s, what we now call the internet became commercial and more of a public utility, while its importance has grown ever since as we increasingly employ online tools for information collection and dissemination, electronic commerce, and community management<sup>5,6</sup>.

The introduction of the internet has improved communication by making it more participatory, engaging, and informative. The internet has eliminated distance as a communication barrier. It has established a connection between the audience and the journalists. People may now communicate effortlessly across long distances. Journalists have benefited greatly from the internet because they no longer rush to the newsroom to prepare their reports to beat deadlines. News stories can be filed without the presence of reporters thanks to the internet.

The internet and social media have improved the speed with which news from many sources is delivered<sup>7</sup>. The opportunity provided by the internet regarding news gathering and dissemination, which is a core function of journalists, is also being enjoyed by citizens. As this experience traverses the space of journalism practice, it has led to the coinage of the term citizen journalism<sup>6</sup>.

Scholars have argued that social networking sites provide a sort of mass communication through which people might develop new creative independence. Similarly, they believe that in every democratic system, the processes of individuation and speaking uphold the key to empowerment, agency, and resistance. As a result, citizen journalism refers to individuals who are not professional journalists but still play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing, and disseminating news and information. They are often members of the community who want to share their experiences, perspectives, and information with others.

Citizen journalism has changed the face of journalism by giving citizens the freedom to report on issues as they see appropriate. It has evolved into a useful advocacy tool, transforming citizen journalists into citizens' activists<sup>8,9,10,11</sup>. Because of the substantial internet interference in journalism, scientific research into technology-mediated social participation is now required and fake news is one of these topics or phenomena that have drawn the attention of scholars and professionals<sup>6</sup>.

Globally, concerns about 'fake news' have grown. Many people believe that "fake news" has developed into a powerful and menacing force in the online news industry, with disastrous ramifications for democracy. As a result, news organisations and technology businesses have taken initiatives to combat the spread of fake news. These initiatives, as well as the debate surrounding them, assume that false news reaches a large, gullible audience that does not compare tales from other sources<sup>12</sup>. This scenario presents a challenge for ethical journalism practice because, in some instances, the public is not able to distinguish the source of such false or negative information as they generally allude to the fact that the "journalists" are responsible.

Ethics in journalism practice are the principles that journalists are expected to follow. Journalistic ethics refers to the moral principles and ideals that govern and/or guide reporters in their work. These standards spell out the goals and responsibilities that journalists, editors, and others in the field should follow to do their jobs responsibly. In Nigeria, professional and regulatory organisations collaborated to create a code of journalistic ethics to define the minimum acceptable behaviour required of its members<sup>13,14</sup>. Journalism requires a high level of public confidence.

It is morally important for every journalist and news medium to uphold the highest professional and ethical standards to gain and maintain this confidence. Journalists should always have a healthy concern for the public interest when performing their obligations. Nigeria, like many other nations, has established a set of journalistic ethical guidelines that emphasise principles such as editorial independence, truthfulness, fairness, privacy, confidentiality, and decency. However, the proliferation of fake news is significantly hindering adherence to these ethical standards, making it challenging for professional journalists to distinguish accurate reporting from misinformation, thereby posing a significant threat to the foundation of a democratic society.

The delivery of news via social media has become a source of worry in recent years. Data shows that 62 percent of US adults acquire their news from social media, with more than 40 percent on Facebook. According to estimates, the top-performing fake election news items on Facebook garnered more views than top stories from major news agencies like the New York Times, Washington Post, Huffington Post, or NBC News in the final three months of the 2016 US presidential campaign. During that period, 20 of the most popular bogus election stories from fake news sites had more than 8.7 million shares, reactions, and comments on Facebook, compared to a little over 7.3 million from 19 major news websites<sup>12</sup>.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Journalism remains a significant contributor to the growth and development of any society. As the Fourth Estate of the realm, the mass media are not just expected to provide information; they are required to ensure that whatever information they present to the public about any issue of public interest is true and good enough for the public to make an informed decision. However, recently, there have been serious challenges regarding how journalists navigate the dynamics of information gathering due to the growing rate of fake news. The advent of the Internet and social media has turned fake news into a major phenomenon in the communication polity across the world, so much so that countries are making efforts to legally curtail the spread through legislation. At the centre of the quagmire is the professional journalists whose jobs have on several occasions been put into doubt particularly when they have to go beyond the normal to prove that their reports are the truth because of contending, contrasting, and competing tendencies of fake news. Unfortunately, before journalists have an opportunity to defend or clarify the news, many readers would have read about them on various social media platforms, thereby making the job even more difficult to correct. The proliferation of fake news in Nigeria poses significant challenges to the credibility and trustworthiness of journalism, compromising the role of mainstream editors as gatekeepers of information. Social media and online platforms have created a fertile ground for the spread of misinformation, which has become a major obstacle for mainstream editors in their quest to uphold

the tenets of ethical journalism. The challenges posed by fake news are multifaceted and far-reaching, encompassing the erosion of public trust, the compromise of journalistic integrity, and the undermining of the democratic process. Despite their critical position, mainstream editors face numerous obstacles in navigating the complexities of fake news dissemination, including information overload, limited resources, pressure to break news first, limited media literacy, and competing political and economic interests. Mainstream editors are tasked with the responsibility of verifying the accuracy of reports, ensuring the credibility of sources, and maintaining the transparency and accountability of their publications. However, the sheer volume of information, combined with limited resources and the pressure to break news first, has created an environment that is conducive for the spread of misinformation. Furthermore, the limited media literacy among Nigerians has made it difficult for audiences to critically evaluate the credibility of sources, exacerbating the problem of fake news dissemination. Political and economic interests have also been identified as significant drivers of fake news, as various actors seek to manipulate public opinion and shape the narrative to suit their agendas. The situation is further complicated by the lack of effective regulatory frameworks, the absence of media literacy among Nigerians, and the exploitation of fake news for political and economic gain. As a result, mainstream editors are faced with an existential crisis, as they struggle to maintain the credibility and trustworthiness of their publications in the face of an unprecedented onslaught of fake news. Despite the significance of the problem, there is a dearth of understanding regarding mainstream editors' perceptions of ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination in Nigeria. Specifically, there is a need to investigate the challenges faced by mainstream editors in navigating fake news dissemination, the perceived impact of fake news on journalism in Nigeria and the strategies employed by mainstream editors to combat fake news and ensure ethical journalism practices. This study aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of the challenges posed by fake news dissemination in Nigeria, and to explore the perception of mainstream editors in Nigeria regarding ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination, with a view to identifying effective strategies for combating fake news

and promoting ethical journalism practices.

### **1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study**

This study seeks to examine mainstream editors' perceptions of ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination in Nigeria.

The objectives were to:

- i. find out the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria;
- ii. ascertain the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria;
- iii. examine the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria;
- iv. ascertain the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination in Nigeria;
- v. determine the relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria;
- vi. examine the relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria; and
- vii. determine the relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and combined ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

1. What is the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria?
2. What is the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria?
3. What is the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria?
4. What is the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria?

## **1.4 Hypotheses**

Ho1 There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria.

Ho2 There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

Ho3 There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and combined ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria

## **1.5 Significance of the Study**

Given the set objectives, findings from this study will be relevant to journalists as they ply their trade and compete with the menace of fake news. Journalists who have fewer years of experience will learn from the experiences shared by the editors on how best to manage and remain ethical in a world that is infiltrated by fake news aided by the internet and social media. Also, findings from this study will help to prepare and equip students of journalism as they study and get prepared to excel in journalism practice. For journalism educators, findings from this study will add to existing literature while also helping to moderate the curriculum to appreciate the contemporary issues around fake news and how professional journalists can manage them. For the policymakers, findings from this study will be significant because fake news has the dynamics of international engagement, which at some point influences how society is perceived, hence the need to support the media to be ethical in carrying out their activities. Although there are many studies on fake news and its implication for information gathering and dissemination in societies, studies that examined the perspectives of editors appear limited. Therefore, this study aims to support existing literature on fake news and ethical journalism in this regard. Theoretically, the study will be relevant in establishing the relationships between the

variables in this study, their interplay, and advanced knowledge of the assumptions of the engagement and relationship espoused in the theory.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study was limited to two hundred and sixty-seven (267) editors in print, broadcast, and online media across mainstream editors in Nigeria. The focus was on mainstream editors' perception of ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination in Nigeria. The editors were cut across Nigeria. The reason for the choice of Mainstream editors all over Nigeria was to ensure that all media houses in the country and regions were represented.

### **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

The major limitation encountered by the researcher during this study was the unwillingness of the editor to make information available for the researcher. Although this does not in any way affect the study negatively.

### **1.8 Operational Definition of Terms**

**Citizen Journalism:** Any type of newsworthy content that is gathered, disseminated, broadcast, and analysed by people who are primarily not professional journalists but who are actively working to ensure that such news receives significant public attention, particularly using blogs, social media, etc. This encompasses any participatory strategies, such as phone-in programs, requests for comments on media social media handles, letters to editors, etc., that mainstream media uses to solicit citizen feedback, views, and reactions on any public affairs subject.

**Citizen Journalists:** Untrained writers who gather and publish information primarily on blogs and other social media platforms to raise public awareness and elicit reader reactions. They may do this by providing information on recent or old issues to get people's attention.

**Dis-information:** False Information that the person who is disseminating it knows is false but still spreads to inflict harm on a person, group, organisation, or country.

**Editors:** Trained and professional journalists in positions of leadership in print and broadcast media outlets, making editorial and often administrative decisions about the gathering, processing, verification, and dissemination of news content via print (newspapers and magazines) or broadcast (television and radio).

**Ethical Journalism:** Journalism practice that demonstrates appreciable compliance with the ethics and principles of the journalism profession which include truthfulness, accuracy, independence, fairness, humane reporting, and accountability.

**Fake News:** A kind of news that is published either in print, online, or broadcast that is without a verifiable source and immediately or subsequently confirmed to be false information, mal-information, misinformation, or disinformation.

**Mainstream Editor:** A journalist who has risen to the pinnacle of the profession to become the editorial head of a news organisation and who works exclusively or mostly for mainstream media outlets such as newspapers, radio stations, or television stations.

**Misinformation:** False information, which the person who is disseminating it presents as being true to the public.

**Mal-information:** Real information that has been intentionally twisted/manipulated to inflict harm on a person, group, organisation, or country. Mal-information is fake information presented to make a scheme sound more believable.

**Social Media:** Websites like Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Instagram, and others that let users (citizens) who are not trained in the craft of journalism post articles or other content that might be considered news in the sense of what journalistic news should entail. These are online communities where people can generate, share, and/or trade information and ideas, providing the necessary conditions for citizen journalism to flourish.

## Endnotes

1. R. Olatunji; A. Ogweezy-Ndisika & J. Jimoh, *Overview of Media, Governance and Development in Nigeria*, In R. Olatunji, A. Ogweezy-Ndisika and J. Jimoh, *Media, Governance and Sustainable Development in Nigeria*, ed., Lagos: LASU Publishers, 2020, 1-13.
2. L. Oso, *Second Forward*, In G. Ahmadu, *The Rise and Fall of the New Nigerian Newspaper*, **Kaduna: Ahmadu Bello University Press**, 2016.
3. *1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Fundamental Rights (Enforcement Procedure) Rules*. Nigeria: Federal Government of Nigeria, LL30.
4. P. Juneja, *Introduction to Media. Management Study Guide*, 2022, Available online: <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/introduction-to-media.htm/>.
5. O. Apuke; B. Omar & E. Tunca, *Effect of Fake News Awareness as an Intervention Strategy for Motivating News Verification Behaviour among Social Media Users in Nigeria: A Quasi-Experimental Research*, **Journal of Asian and African Studies**, 58(6), 2023,888-903,
6. R. Kahn & Michael A. Dennis, *Internet*, **Encyclopedia Britannica**, 2022, Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/Internet/>.
7. B. Gbadeyan, *Social Media and Journalism Ethics in Nigeria: A Study of Journalists in Kwara State of Nigeria*, **International Journal of Social Science and Human Research**, 4(3), 2021, 389-396.
8. O. Apuke; B. Omar & E. Tunca, *Literacy Concept as an Intervention Strategy for Improving Fake News Knowledge, Detection Skills, and Curtailing the Tendency to Share Fake News in Nigeria*, *Child & Youth Services*, 44(1), 2023, 88-108.
9. Y. Luo & T. Harrison. *How Citizen Journalists Impact the Agendas of Traditional Media and the Government Policymaking Process in China*. **Global Media and China**, 2019, Available online: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2059436419835771/>.
10. A. Nkomo & B. Themba. *Citizen Journalism in Comparison with Professional Journalism*. **INOSR Arts and Management**, 2018, Available online: <http://www.inosr.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/INOSR-AM-41-1-4-2018..pdf/>.
11. I. Nyam & S. Okpara, *9Mobile News SMS Entrepreneurship and Citizen Journalism Potentials in Nigeria*, **Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies**, 2021.
12. J. Nelson & T. Harsh. *The Small, Disloyal Fake News Audience: The Role of Audience Availability in Fake News Consumption*. **New Media & Society**. 20(7), 2018, Available online: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322820042/>.

13. K. Inobemhe; F. Ugber; I. Ojo & T. Santas, *New Media and The Proliferation of Fake News in Nigeria*, Nasarawa **Journal of Multimedia and Communication Studies**, (2) 2, 154-166. 2020.
14. J. Folarin; K. Adesina & B. Ismail. *Ethical Compliance among Journalists in Nigeria: A Theoretical Appraisal*, **Nigerian Communication & Information Technology Journal**, 1(1), 2019.
15. Nigeria Press Council. *Code of Ethics*, 2022, Available online: [http://www.presscouncil.gov.ng/?page\\_id=281/2022](http://www.presscouncil.gov.ng/?page_id=281/2022).
16. R. Ekwunife; H. Nwachukwu & I. Ukeje, *Bureaucracy and Citizen Journalism: Issues and Challenges Imperative for Media Practice in Nigeria*, **International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development**, 5(6), 2021.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## **Chapter Two**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter will review relevant literature about the variables of the study while extant theories will also be reviewed to put the study in proper perspective on the perception of mainstream editors on the influence of fake news on the ethics of journalism practice in Nigeria. Therefore, this chapter will examine the major concepts that are germane to understanding the objectives that this study seeks to achieve.

- 2.1 Conceptual Review
- 2.2 Theoretical Framework
- 2.3 Review of Empirical Studies
- 2.4 Conceptual Model
- 2.5 Summary of Gap in Literature Reviewed

#### **2.1 Conceptual Review**

##### **2.1.1 Concept of Journalism Practice**

Journalism can be defined as “the collection, preparation, and distribution of news and related commentary and feature materials through such print and electronic media as newspapers, magazines, books, blogs, webcasts, podcasts, social networking and social media sites, and e-mail as well as through radio, motion pictures, and television”<sup>1</sup>. Journalism can also be seen as “the work of collecting, writing, and publishing news stories and articles in newspapers and magazines or broadcasting them on the radio and television”<sup>2</sup>. Whereas, the American Press Institute defines journalism as “the activity of gathering, assessing, creating, and presenting news and information. It is also the product of these activities.

What is clear from the above definitions is that journalism as art requires that collection, scripting, and presentation of information through a medium must happen for the journalism to take place. In essence,

Michelle Mathias explained that in simple words, journalism “could be defined as a searching, collecting, assessing, and editing of news or information which could be published or presented on a given media forum that could include press (newspaper or magazine or books), radio, television or the Internet”<sup>4</sup>.

Scholars have posited that the term "journalism" refers to the work or output of qualified "news producers". It usually refers to the production of reports on recent or current events for the benefit of the general audience. Journalism is another synonym for "news," and it has many recognizable characteristics, including the need to be current, pertinent, reliable, and engaging. However, connotations associated with journalism are ambiguous, suggesting concern over the standing of the profession because the goal, audience, and national media cultures of each style and school of journalism are diverse from one society to the other<sup>5</sup>. Given the foregoing, a brief consideration of the etymology of journalism further provides a background to our understanding of the concept of journalism. The Etymology of the word journalism, journalist, or Journal dates back to the ancient Greek word “hēmeroúsios”, which also has a connection with the word “diurnus” which means ‘daily’ from the Latin word diurnalis or diurnal. The word when traced historically had the meaning of either making a daily record (Swift) or the management and conduct of a journal or periodical work where a journalist was considered as ‘a writer of journals and the manager of a periodical work.’

It suffices to note that newspapers were the primary medium for reporting on current events when the term "journalism" was first used, but as radio, television, and the Internet became more widely used in the 20th century, the phrase came to refer to all printed and electronic communication that covered

current affairs<sup>6</sup>. Other reports have it that the *Acta Diurna*, a newsheet believed to have originated before 59 BCE and circulated in ancient Rome was the first known example of journalistic work. Public speeches were among the significant everyday occurrences that *Acta Diurna* contained. It was displayed prominently and published every day. A *bao*, or "report," was a court circular that was distributed to government officials in Tang dynasty China. Up until the 1911 end of the Qing dynasty, this gazette appeared in numerous versions and under several names. Around 1609, the first regularly published newspapers appeared in Antwerp and places in Germany. The *Weekly News*, the earliest English newspaper, debuted in 1622. The *Daily Courant*, one of the first daily newspapers, debuted in 1702<sup>7</sup>. In any case, newspapers were the primary medium for reporting on current events when the term "journalism" was first used, but as radio, television, and the Internet became more widely used in the 20th century, the phrase came to refer to all printed and electronic communication that covered current affairs<sup>8</sup>.

The concept of journalism is evolving globally to take into account the increased impact of non-professionals using the internet to assist in electronic mass communication. Scholars have therefore suggested that the term "journalist" should not be interpreted narrowly and instead should be focused on the behaviours and practices that draw people into the realm of carrying out journalistic activities. In essence, journalists and journalism have been defined in newer ways. For instance, a journalist was described as "individuals who are dedicated to investigating, analysing, and disseminating information, in a regular and specialised manner, through any type of written media, broadcast media, (television or radio), or electronic media" in the Special Rapporteur on the Right to Freedom of Expression's 2010 Annual Report. With the advent of new forms of communication, journalism has extended into new areas, including citizen journalism<sup>9</sup>.

A person or people who write about events that have transpired, such as in news reports, or who write features that express opinions or inform readers about a particular subject are referred to as journalists. They work for newspapers, magazines, radio stations, or television networks. Today, they also work online. Due to the nature of their work, trustworthy operations that provide the public with news and information must operate with autonomy, independence, flexibility, and ease. They report on topics that might enrage certain interests, but more dangerously, they conduct sensitive investigations that frequently outrage certain individuals or groups. However, in addition to their regular duties of covering and analyzing current events, journalists also serve as society watchdogs by conducting investigative reporting<sup>10</sup>.

Journalism has been described as a noble profession that is deep in creating an ecosystem of meaningful conversations that will grow a society. It has been described as a noble profession that requires a lot of in-depth knowledge, reading, curiosity, style of writing, and passion for the job and practice within the sense of ethics. When journalism fails to abide by its ethics, then, it raises concerns that are capable of throwing society into confusion because people who have put their trust in journalism to provide adequate information may then be misled to act or react wrongfully under false impressions<sup>11</sup>. These assertions explain why journalism has been described as a “social work or work-craft” that informs people in a society “to some non-trivial degree” the news of the day, “analysing data” and “distributing facts of current interest”<sup>11</sup>.

### **2.1.2 Growth of Journalism**

In the 20th century, journalism was characterised by a rise in professionalism. Four key elements contributed to this trend, they included the growing organisation of working journalists, journalism-specific education, the expansion of the literature on the development, issues, and methods of mass communication, and the growing sense of social responsibility among journalists<sup>12</sup>. As early as 1883,

when England's chartered Institute of Journalists was founded, journalists began to organize. The institute served as a trade union and a professional association, much to the American Newspaper Guild, founded in 1933, and the Fédération Nationale de la Presse Française. Most journalists started their trade as apprentices before the latter part of the 19th century, starting as copyboys or cub reporters.

The University of Missouri (Columbia) became the first university-level journalism where the course was taught between 1879 and 1884. The first graduate journalism school was started at Columbia University in New York City in 1912, funded by a donation from editor and publisher, Joseph Pulitzer of New York City. It was acknowledged that extensive specialized training was necessary due to the increased complexity of news reporting and newspaper operations. Additionally, editors discovered that specialised reporting on news topics like politics, business, economics, and science frequently required reporters with backgrounds in these fields. The emergence of radio, television, and the moving image as news media necessitated the development of a never-ending array of fresh methods for acquiring and disseminating information. By the 1950s, institutions frequently offered courses in journalism or communications.

In terms of literature, the literature on journalism expanded significantly by the late 20th century from the two textbooks, a handful of collections of lectures and essays, and a handful of histories and biographies that existed in 1900. It included a wide range of topics, including histories of journalism, manuals for reporters and photographers, and works written by journalists about their beliefs and disagreements over the ethics, tactics, and skills of journalism<sup>12</sup>. Once more, the late 19th and early 20th centuries were significantly responsible for the concern for social responsibility in journalism. Early newspapers and journals were typically partisan as far as politics was concerned and believed that promoting their own party's position and condemning that of the opposition was the best way to fulfill their social obligation.

However, the newspapers expanded in size and income as well as independence as the readership increased. Newspapers started launching their own well-known and sensational "crusades" to expand their readership. The conflict between *The World* and *The Journal*, two newspapers published in New York City, in the 1890s marked the peak of this tendency. Due to specialized education, extensive discussion of press obligations in books and journals, as well as at association meetings, the sense of social responsibility witnessed discernible growth. The *Royal Commission on the Press* report from 1949 in Great Britain and the less comprehensive *A Free and Responsible Press* report from a non-official commission on the freedom of the press in the United States both served as major catalysts for practicing journalists to examine their conduct. Studies conducted in the late 20th century revealed that journalists as a whole had a largely idealistic view of their responsibility to present the facts to the public in an unbiased manner.

In contrast to conventional journalism, which developed in an era of information scarcity and high demand, 21st-century journalism had to compete in a market where information was abundant and, in some ways, undervalued news. Information became more widely available and easily accessible thanks to developments in satellite, digital, and Internet technology, which increased journalistic rivalry. Media organizations developed alternative channels of distribution, such as online distribution, electronic mailings, and direct interaction with the public via forums, blogs, user-generated content, and social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, to meet the growing consumer demand for up-to-the-minute and highly detailed reporting. Social media platforms in particular helped spread politically motivated "fake news" in the second decade of the twenty-first century. Fake news is a type of misinformation created by for-profit Web sites masquerading as legitimate news organizations and intended to attract (and mislead) specific readers by taking advantage of ingrained partisan biases<sup>12</sup>.

In essence and due to the introduction of digital technology and the publication of news on the internet, the news media, which serves as the primary source of information and opinion about public affairs through the mass media, has undergone significant changes over the last 20 years, particularly in modern society. As a result, the digital age has brought about a new type of journalism in which regular people take an active part in the news-gathering process as *citizen journalists*, mostly using the internet and the web as their platforms<sup>13</sup>. *Citizen journalism* has also been described as *mojo journalism* or *mobile journalism*. Mobile journalism is a form of reporting that involves using tiny, linked mobile devices like smartphones, DSLR cameras, laptops, or GoPros to cover events, and stories, or create multimedia content. Mobile journalism, according to its proponents, is about enabling each storyteller to use the consumer technology at their disposal to create the most compelling visual tale possible<sup>14</sup>.

The growth as described in the foregoing, particularly the influx and activities of citizen journalists, has brought up debates on professional journalism practice. A profession is defined as "a form of job that requires specific training or skill, especially one that requires a high level of education," by the Oxford Advanced Learners' Dictionary. Conceptually speaking, a profession is an occupation that calls for a high level of education or specialized training. A profession is a career that includes intellectual talents, such as those needed in the fields of medicine, law, pharmacy, engineering, etc., and needs advanced education and training. A few of the standards used to evaluate professionals. Some of these include having a specialized education committed to the benefit of the public, having a particular body of knowledge, having an enforceable code of conduct, which is a set of beliefs and norms that everyone adheres to, and having personal accountability<sup>12</sup>. By implication, to be referred to as a professional journalist means that you must be practicing within the code of conduct of the profession. In essence, a professional journalist must be ethical.

### 2.1.3 Historical Perspective of the Nigeria Mass Media Industry

To get a clear picture of issues of ethics in Nigeria media practice, it is pertinent to have a look into the journey of the Nigeria mass media and this might assist the researcher of this study about the likely challenges, prospects, and problems (s) if any the media must have which perhaps may be the root cause of our problems. A close observation of the Nigerian press can be appreciated through the following eras, which he categorised as the Colonial era (1800-1949), the Pre-independence era (1950s-early 1960s), the Post-independence era (1960-2000), and the present era (2000 to date).

The colonial era marked the introduction of the press in Africa by the missionaries. Newspapers were established in Africa by the missionaries to spread the gospel among the people<sup>12</sup>. That is why in the field of journalism, it is widely accepted that the Nigerian press was borne and nurtured in the waters of colonialism<sup>11</sup>. Nigerian press had its debut in Rev. Henry Townsend's newspaper *Iwe Iroyin fun awon ara Egba ati Yoruba*, which began publication in 1859. Later, the pre-independence era shows a considerable growth of political awareness by Africans as they demand independence and self-governance<sup>12</sup>. Indigenous newspapers sprang up during this era and waged a dogged war against the socio-political and economic injustices of the colonialists. Newspapers such as the *Nigerian Pioneer* established in 1914 by *Kitoyi Ajasa* and Ernest Ikoli's *African Messenger* established in 1921 came on the news stand during this period<sup>11</sup>.

Also during the post-independence era, communication and mass media research received a tremendous improvement. The leaders and stakeholders began to advocate for development journalism while lots of legal barriers were mounted against the press. There was a sudden shift from national aspirations to regional politics. From 1959 to 1966, the press took regional and ethnic posture. This was as earlier stated due to the struggle for power by the nationalists who now formed the bulk of local politicians since no press operates independently of the society on which it operates, the regional

politics of post-independent Nigeria ultimately gave rise to the regional government establishing regional newspapers: radio and television were meant to champion their parochial interests on national issues<sup>12</sup>.

Furthermore, in the present era, the mass media in Nigeria performs well in terms of improvement in the training of professionals and communication research. There is a remarkable improvement in both broadcasting and the print media. That notwithstanding, the press is still inhibited by endogenous and exogenous problems like economic challenges, technological impotency, censorship, and social mishaps<sup>13</sup>. The number of Nigerian journalism/mass communication institutions continues to increase at a very high rate in the same way that the number of Nigerian journalists continues to increase. For example, in 1999, there were only fifteen (15) accredited journalism institutions in Nigeria at both the University and Polytechnic levels. But today, in 2007, my latest research findings on this reveal that there are fifty-eight (58) journalism institutions in Nigeria. And that Nigeria is being serviced by three hundred and fifty (350) radio and television stations; a number considered by media researchers too low for a population of over 140 million people<sup>14</sup>.

#### **2.1.4 Concepts and Issues of Journalism (Media) Ethics**

Media ethics, for instance, pertains to topics like impartiality, objectivity, balance, prejudice, privacy, and the public interest when it comes to news coverage. Media ethics is crucial for any journalist who wants to uphold a respectable reputation in the practice, produce objective media material, and adhere to an ethical code that is consistent with the principles. By adhering to these rules, a journalist may increase his or her acceptance and trust among the audience<sup>14</sup>. Media freedom and media law are separated and co-joined by media ethics. Media ethics focuses on what "good" standards of conduct or codes of conduct in the media ought to be. It deals with evaluating the "rightness or wrongness" of the behaviour of those who have the authority to govern the media and of those who manage and

operate the media- to know if their action is “responsible or irresponsible”. It also deals with evaluating value judgments on media law and media freedom. As a result, journalists are frequently forced to make decisions that are generally based on their values.

The journalists face these value-based considerations about all four of the main roles of the mass media. These choices go from the point of surveillance, which is the process of gathering and broadcasting news and information, to the process of interpretation or correlation, which deals with improving the audience's comprehension of the news and information that was disseminated. Providing information in the form of facts and numbers to aid in knowledge acquisition, assisting individuals in making their own decisions, encouraging them to do certain actions in response to social problems, and advocating solutions all fall under the area of providing education for which value-based decisions must be taken. Even in providing information that would entertain the people, ethical considerations take place<sup>15</sup>.

The main issue of whether a course of action is ethical or not stems from the fact that different practitioners have varied standards and ideas of what is right and wrong. However, there are frequent examples that show the line separating right from wrong, moral from immoral action, or proper professional conduct from misconduct. In any case, the journalist must understand that the public has a right to the truth, and only accurate information can serve as the foundation for quality journalism and maintain the public's confidence. Every journalist has a moral obligation to respect the truth and to publish or prepare for publication only the truth, to the best of their knowledge, and it is their responsibility to publish only the facts, never to withhold information they are aware of, and never to falsify information for their own or anyone else's benefit<sup>16</sup>.

So far, the review has provided pieces of evidence that ethical journalism requires the deliberate effort of the journalists to abide by the rules and regulations guiding the journalism profession to provide factual and truthful information to the public in recognition of the freedom he or she has to do so within the ambiance of the law. Ethical journalism does not provide an opportunity for peddling fake news either in the form of mal-information, dis-information, or misinformation, and neither does it allow for alternative facts or alternative truth that may alter the discernment of the audience to make informed decisions. However, current trends in news reporting, particularly those perpetuated by citizen journalists who use social media, the internet, and the web as their media create major ethical challenges for the practice of journalism. Many scholars and professionals have argued for and against the influence of fake news on professionalism in journalism and the development has called for some reviews<sup>17</sup>.

The question of what is good or terrible, for instance, changes from society to society. These are formalised in many professions to act as a point of reference and a gauge of professionalism. This is not unique to journalism; laws and standards governing the profession have been established by journalists all around the world. A code of journalistic ethics was developed in Nigeria by professional and regulatory organizations to define the minimally acceptable conduct required of their members. How closely had Nigerian journalists followed this rule of conduct? What moral standards are these journalists upholding? Do journalists uphold or disregard this standard? Do people in the public voice complain about journalists' moral behaviour? These are some of the questions that many scholars have pondered<sup>18</sup>.

There have been several reported grievances against journalists. In some instances, they have been classified as purveyors of lies, insinuations, and gross exaggerations, in breach of ethical norms. These actions have been perceived as capable of undermining the fragility of the state. It is a fact that there

are ethical breaches in journalism. Sources have paid journalists in the past. Advertising has been published by news organisations under the pretext of news. The general public has a right to scrutinize everything reported in the news media when this occurs. When journalists act unethically, all journalists and all news organisations lose because the credibility of the profession is called into question. When a news organisation's reputation declines, its capacity to remain profitable also does. If journalists act unethically, it amounts to abuse of the media's authority because the profession gained respect and honour as a result of the enormous duty placed on the flag bearers. Since journalists work for the public, the public should hold them responsible for their actions. The rights and privileges to gather information on behalf of the public have been granted to the media by society and even the constitution. Journalists are then expected to do it in a fair, accurate, and knowledgeable manner<sup>19</sup>.

Unfortunately, some journalists frequently regard their privileges as absolute rights that must prevail despite opposing moral principles. Because of this refusal to acknowledge the worth of validly opposing values and the worry that admitting mistakes will result in punishment or government interference, the media is now largely regarded as arrogant. Although this impression may not be profound, an intimidated or defensive media is unlikely to act in a way that will earn the public's trust. The media should be disturbed when the public exhibits the disaffection it has been exhibiting because ultimately, the freedom of the media belongs to the sovereign citizens. The general public has the impression that the press believes its power is limitless, that the freedom of the media is unassailable, and that accountability is almost non-existent. Interestingly, the public relies on and even praises the information provided by independent news sources during emergencies. However, those who value knowledge often enjoy complaining, and they tend to become irate when they believe the media has an agenda that is different from their own<sup>20</sup>.

Since Edmund Burke, a British conservative statesman, referred to the press as the "fourth estate" in the 18th century, implying that it was equally important and influential to the other three estates, or branches, of government, attempts have been made to articulate ethics for the profession, according to Marianne Jennings. The ethics are well-stated and contain many sound notions. But they commit a fundamental mistake by prioritizing the "public's right to know" over the conduct of journalists. In other words, they discuss press liberties quite a bit but not much about press responsibility. It has been shown that those who depend most heavily on written codes of conduct are also the least ethical. They want to be able to provide people with a good piece of paper attesting to their sincerity, but they do not want to be restricted by it. It makes sense why H.L. Mencken, the American Mercury's publisher and one of the country's most well-known journalists in the early to mid-20th century, described journalistic ethics as "flapdoodlish and unenforceable"<sup>21</sup>.

In any situation, it is still crucial that journalists uphold moral standards that will not always put them at variance with the audience they are intended to serve, especially in this digital age where fake news is rampant across all platforms. The media must continue to find a method to faithfully carry out its responsibilities, which include monitoring the environment, correlating the many elements of the environment, and passing along the cultural heritage from one generation to the next<sup>22</sup>.

The profession of journalism must be explained and examined in large part in terms of a set of fundamentally ethical values, including freedom, impartiality, truth, honesty, and privacy. Even democracy, the setting for so much media discussion, is ultimately an ethical phrase because it refers to the proper or ideal system of social and political organization. Since ethics and journalism go hand in hand, discussing ethics is essential to understanding journalism, its practice, and its issues. Inaccuracy, lies, distortions, bias, propaganda, favouritism, sensationalism, trivialization, lapses in taste, vulgarity, sleaze, sexism, racism, homophobia, character assassination, cheque-book journalism,

deception, betrayal of confidence, and invasions of privacy are just a few of the ways the media can offend without going above and beyond the law. Although the list is not exhaustive, it is for these reasons that ethical discussion becomes essential<sup>22</sup>.

A study reported gave indications of what the true situation might be. Both the general public and the press agree that journalists commit far too many factual and grammatical errors. These mistakes damage the public's trust in the media. The general population thinks that newspapers do not constantly show that they appreciate and understand their readers and communities. Readers hold the opinion that journalists will put others at risk to publish a story. The general public thinks that journalists' prejudices and points of view affect which stories get covered and how. The general public believes that influential figures like advertising and politicians manipulate the media to convey their perspectives. Newspaper readers tend to believe sensational tales are over-reported because they are entertaining and help the publication sell more copies. For years, journalists have stated that they are just giving readers what they want (which, they believe, is why sensational stories sell newspapers). The phrase "If it bleeds, it leads," which emphasizes sensational material, is frequently used in television news. Circular arguments and unfavourable feedback are produced by these kinds of presumptions but neither the issues nor the debate is resolved. The public at large thinks that journalists are too eager to invade people's privacy. According to the public, the media should hold off on publishing a report until facts can be verified twice, suspects' names should not be released until charges are brought against them, and long-ago infractions by public officials should be disregarded<sup>23</sup>.

Regarding who benefits from the code of ethics, scholars have argued that most frequently, the public is seen as having benefited from the establishment of norms of conduct. There is frequently a demand that the profession involved create a code of conduct or improve an existing code to make such behaviour illegal when regular people suffer at the hands of dishonest professionals. The existence of

a code, however, should not be taken as a guarantee of greater protection, as its requirements may be disregarded. If this occurs, the code's list of elegantly worded clauses may do the opposite of protecting professionals by leading a credulous public to place unwarrantedly high levels of trust in them. The specific persons or groups of the public with whom members of the profession have some sort of interaction will benefit directly from a code's provision of public protection, not the broader public as a whole. For instance, there are three different sorts of direct beneficiaries with codes for journalists. The readers of the newspaper or magazine the journalist writes for come first.

Articles that stipulate that reporting must be genuine, accurate, and objective, etcetera can be considered as protecting readers from manipulation and enabling them to rely on the information provided in those articles while making everyday decisions. Second, there are people the journalist gets information from. A code of conduct might, for instance, mandate that a journalist does not violate the trust of a source that has provided information solely under the condition that his or her name not be revealed<sup>24</sup>. There are those whose tales a reporter is looking into. Thus, a reporter should not harass or invade the privacy of the person or people about whom he or she is writing, according to several ethics. Although only individuals who have a relationship with the journalist to whom it applies may directly profit from a code, the general public may nonetheless get benefits as a result of the code's existence.

If the existence of the code results in a higher standard of journalism, this could inspire even those who are not covered by it to embrace more moral behaviour, as individuals generally follow the accepted moral code among their friends and co-workers in all spheres of life. Additionally, it might help the profession as a whole by increasing public respect for it and giving its members more confidence in one another's moral character.<sup>38</sup> However, journalists often face a major challenge with fake news

which often dehumanises the profession and its role in society even when they strive to remain ethical as the codes of their profession dictates<sup>25</sup>.

### 2.1.5 Concept of Ethics

As it is with every profession, there are rules guiding every single activity else, there will be some unwarranted collision of thoughts that may put the practitioners in jeopardy. A code of ethics or set of guidelines guides how media professionals interact and disseminate information. To become a proficient communicator, whether as a writer, journalist, news broadcaster, or creator of social media material, it is important to learn about media ethics in mass communication. Due to the collection of principles and ethics that exist within the business of communication, media ethics shapes the way journalists perform their duties within the context of mass communication<sup>26</sup>.

Ethics is a branch of philosophy that deals with the moral component of life. It is concerned with fundamental principles of morality where some actions are labelled as good or bad, right or wrong, ethical or unethical and the various criteria for making such a judgment. It could also be referred to as a normative science of conduct which stipulates guidelines, rules, principles, and codes that are designed to lead an individual to make moral decisions. Ethics use social norms as a basis for the evaluation of human conduct or behaviour<sup>27</sup>. The term "ethics," which derives from the Greek word "*ethika*," refers to a set of moral guidelines, attitudes, and standards that typically define a society or system. The typical attitude of a professional body toward what makes up the morality of work is therefore referred to as ethics. This extends beyond the issue of one's feelings toward their line of work and touches on traits like honesty and accountability as well as how one fulfills their obligations<sup>27</sup>.

Ethics differ from laws, religious ideas, and what is generally seen as acceptable. It is possible to interchange language while talking about ethics and morals, even if there is a distinction. Ethics deals

with the standards by which judgments about what is right or wrong are formed, whereas morality deals with appropriate behaviour. As a result, morality refers to both the moral standards by which individuals are evaluated as well as the moral standards by which people as a whole are evaluated in their interactions with one another. On the other hand, ethics includes the entire morality system. As a result, the study of ethics explores moral laws and develops codes of conduct, providing an explanation of the principles behind moral obligations<sup>23</sup>.

The foregoing shows that ethics are needed to guide human conduct because humans are rational by nature and endowed with intellect and the power to reason. Also, as social animals, we find fulfilment and happiness only with our fellow man. Therefore, a person would act ethically or morally only when he relates or identifies himself in principle to all mankind. This means that ethics help to attain social stability because, without ethics, society would be reduced to the type of animal behaviour that exists in the wilderness. Ethics brings about the moral hierarchy, a situation that leads those norms that are important enough to be described as moral and the hierarchy of ethical norms vis-à-vis their relative standing in the moral pecking order. Ethics help with conflict resolution particularly when an individual or group's selfish interest becomes a challenge to the existing order in society. Ethics will help to evaluate the moral conduct in such assumed selfish behaviour and clear the situation. Ethics helps to clarify competing values and principles inherent in emerging and moral dilemmas<sup>24</sup>.

In essence, ethics serve as a legacy through which members of a professional body can show others the correct way to act and behave under given conditions. They also provide a profession with a structure for comprehending the principles of right and wrong, help encourage an understanding of how to respond to certain scenarios long before they occur, and help foster a fully understanding attitude among members of a professional body<sup>25</sup>. Some values are identified as essential for ethics to be agreed upon or accented. According to the Josephson Institute for the Advancement of Ethics, these

values are honesty, integrity, promise-keeping, fidelity, fairness, caring for others, respect for others, responsible citizenship, the pursuit of excellence, and accountability<sup>26</sup>.

Ethics is the general science of right or wrong. Ethics as a concept can be traced to Aristotle when he argued that happiness can be achieved from a contemplative use of the mind: the cultivation of the virtues of prudence, temperance, courage, and justice. Ethics belong to the mind and one's conscience is the judge. Every profession is governed by certain norms of conduct as ethics or code of conduct. Ethics is the study of human action in respect of being right or wrong or the study of human conduct in the light of moral principles. Ethics are codified rules or codes of conduct. In the case of mass media, these ethics are also known as canons of journalism which have been defined as prescriptions guiding all journalists in behaving right while carrying out their functions to inform, to educate, to entertain, and to lead the public<sup>24</sup>.

The major advantage of ethics is captured in a study thus: These professional ethics have the advantage of infusing a dose of morality into the crude performance of a particular profession to which they refer. They enhance competence in the exercise of the profession<sup>27</sup>. They constitute a means of control and discipline among members of the profession. Invariably, professional ethics regulate the relationship between professionals and their particular publics. The above views further buttress the fact that ethics are instruments of professional sanity and moral uprightness. Ethics are placed on a higher pedestal than law because what is considered lawful in a society may be unethical. Let us look at this example, no law forbids a male lecturer from sleeping and impregnating his female students as long as there is mutual agreement between them.

However, such an act may be considered unethical. Nigerian Society and the Mass Media for a proper understanding of the ethics of journalism in Nigeria, it is necessary to examine Nigerian society

because it is believed that institutions are a reflection of their immediate environment. The mass media is a by-product of the larger society hence; the nature of the society determines the kind of media systems the society would have. A society is the web of social relationships; it is the whole complex scheme or whole tissues of social relationships. Society includes several individuals connected by interactions<sup>28</sup>. Equally, society is any group of people who have lived and worked together long enough to think of themselves as a social unit with well-defined limits. Nigeria has up to 250 tribes and there is diversity in terms of culture in the country<sup>29</sup>. The economic, political, social, and religious activities in the country among different tribes or subgroups reflect the diversity of Nigerian society. Commenting on the ethnic chauvinism in the Nigerian press, why did the press sink into a low ethnic ebb? Ethnicity is so entrenched in the Nigerian psyche that the political stratification cannot be anything but ethnic; economic and cultural activities in the country cannot be anything based on ethnic principles<sup>30</sup>.

#### **2.1.5.1 Ethical Issues in Nigeria Mass Media**

There is no doubt that all journalists would like total freedom and autonomy to publish or broadcast what they like. But considering the great powers they wield in the shaping of society, the freedom and the autonomy they want must be tempered by a commensurate sense of responsibility, because modern media's all-pervasive reach touches virtually all aspects of life. It is time someone undertook the task to fill the ethical vacuum that is at present occupying the hearts of most media establishment<sup>24</sup>. From the views expressed, it is apt to state that ethical issues have become very sensitive issues in modern society. In Nigeria for instance, corruption is one of the nagging issues in the media.

- ❖ A journalist is not supposed to take or accept bribes to suppress a story.
- ❖ Journalists are also not supposed to disclose their sources of information to anybody.
- ❖ Plagiarism and many other ethical issues are addressed by professional bodies in Nigeria.

Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and news medium to observe the highest professional and ethical standards. In the exercise of these duties;

- ❖ A journalist should always have a healthy regard for the public interest.
- ❖ Truth is the cornerstone of journalism and every journalist should strive diligently to ascertain the truth of every event. Conscious of the responsibilities and duties of journalists as purveyors of information, Nigerian journalists, give to themselves the Code of Ethics. The Imperatives of Mass Communication Ethics It has been pointed out that ethics is self-imposed and self-enforced. Mass communication ethics is therefore the set of moral guidelines that the mass communication professionals have articulated to guide their professional conduct. Ethics compel the professional to consider his/her basic principles and values, and his/her obligations to himself/herself and others. It compels the professional to decide how to live, how to conduct his/her professional affairs, and how he/she will think, act, and react to people and issues around him/her. Journalistic ethics is subsumed in mass communication ethics since journalism is only a part of mass communication. Journalistic ethics is a branch of philosophy that helps journalists determine what is right to do, by giving the journalist standards by which he can judge actions to be right or wrong, good or bad, responsible or irresponsible<sup>31</sup>.

Furthermore, ethics is what is good or bad journalism and entails the obligations of journalists to the profession, to society, and democracy<sup>31</sup>. This brings us to the question who is a virtuous journalist? A virtuous journalist has respect for and tries to live by the cardinal virtues that Plato prescribes in 'The Republic'<sup>31</sup>. The cardinal virtues that Plato prescribes in The Republic are wisdom, courage, temperance, and justice. Wisdom can be defined as the correct application of knowledge. It is what gives direction to moral life and it is the rational, intellectual base for any system of ethics. Wisdom is partly natural and partly acquired. It is acquired through the following ways: maturing, life

experiences, study, association, etcetera. Courage is needed to resist the temptation to do the wrong thing, that is, to deviate from the path of wisdom. In other words, it helps a person to pursue the goal that wisdom has helped set for him/her.

On the other hand, temperance is a virtue which demands reasonable moderation. It helps people to avoid fanaticism in the pursuit of any objective knowing where to apply the brakes, as it were. Equally, justice is the virtue that considers a person's 'deservingness'. It refers more specifically to a person's social relations. All men should be treated equally, but equal treatment simply does not satisfy 'deservingness'. A person gets what he deserves. For example, if there is one seat available for two persons, justice, at least in the African culture, demands that the older person should be offered the seat while the younger person stands until another seat is fetched for him. Looking at another scenario, should a young man be stoned to death for snatching a wallet at a bus stop? Does he deserve to die for that minor offence? That is jungle justice, which is no justice at all.

➤ **The Regulation of the Mass Media:** All over the world, governments regulate various fields of human endeavour. Thus, education, banking health, tourism, etc. are regulated. This means that these industries are provided with basic structures for their operations. The mass media industry is equally regulated. However, because of the peculiar nature of the mass media as vehicles for free expression, which is a fundamental human right, the government is careful to regulate the media only to the extent consistent with the expectations of a democratic society. Thus, over-regulation of the media will stifle free expression and give rise to underground press and even rebellion. A study identifies four formal regulatory mechanisms of the mass media which operate today as follows: constitutional provisions, statutes, ethical guidelines, and informal restraints.

- **Constitutional Provision:** The 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, Section 39. Statutes (e.g. The Official Secrets Act, Laws of Seditious, Contempt, Obscene and Harmful Publications Act, Defamation, Copyright, Advertising Laws, National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Code, Newspaper Act, Media Council Decree, which establishes the Nigerian Press Council (NPC), the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Act, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) Act, etc.
- **Ethical Guidelines:** Professional bodies provide mechanisms for the regulation of their members, each having a constitution and a code of ethics. Informal Restraints Examples are beat associations and other arrangements that impose certain demands on members. These codes of Ethics cannot bring the desired result if these under-listed obstacles to objectivity are not taken into consideration. These include:
  - **Limited Space:** In all mass media, reporters and editors do not have the space to include all the materials they would want to include always. This is particularly so in newspapers where limited space often results in the abridging of stories during makeup. On radio and television also, the anchor must abridge a statement as soon as he/she receives the signal that the programme must come to an end. In essence, the sudden end of a story or a narration for space constraints may result in the inability to present all sides of an issue fairly and equally, thus undermining objectivity.
  - **Laziness of the Reporter:** If a reporter is not resourceful enough, he may not take enough pain to obtain all the sides of a controversy. Objectivity suffers thereby.
  - **Lack of Openness of the News Source:** Some news sources would not open up to the reporter for one reason or the other. A lady in a divorce suit, a jilted lover, a fired employee, or the victim of an ugly incident such as robbery, fraud, rape, etc. may find it difficult to talk to the press. And this robs the reporter of the ability to present the facts objectively.

- **Conflict of Interest:** The concept of interest ranges from accepting gifts and travel junkets to political involvement and all forms of divided loyalty. If a journalist's conscience has been compromised in any way, he/she can't maintain objectivity either as a reporter, editor, or programme presenter on radio and television or as a producer or even a contributor.
- **Advertiser Control:** Since a substantial amount of media revenues comes from advertising it follows that pressure from advertisers is also a fact of life. There is no doubt that pressures affect the effort of the media to present all sides of an issue fairly and balanced.
- **Government Pressure:** Pressure from the government can come in the form of written and unwritten laws. National security must be protected at all costs and government policies sold to the people. For this reason, the government is usually impatient with the media when they do not show sufficient understanding and sympathy with the government's position, they would abdicate their responsibility to the people.

#### 2.1.5.2 Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists by the Nigerian Press Council

Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and news medium to observe the highest professional and ethical standards. In the exercise of these duties, a journalist should always have a healthy regard for the public interest. Truth is the cornerstone of journalism and every journalist should strive diligently to ascertain the truth of every event. Conscious of the responsibilities and duties of journalists as purveyors of information, Nigerian journalists, give to ourselves this Code of Ethics. Every journalist has to observe its provisions<sup>33</sup>.

- **Editorial Independence:** Decisions concerning the content of news should be the responsibility of a professional journalist.

- **Accuracy and Fairness:** The public has a right to know. Factual, accurate balance, and fair reporting are the ultimate objectives of good journalism and the basis of earning public trust and confidence. A journalist should refrain from publishing inaccurate and misleading information. Where such information has been inadvertently published, prompt correction should be made. A journalist must hold the right to reply as a cardinal rule of practice. In the course of his duties, a journalist should strive to separate facts from conjecture and comment<sup>34</sup>.
- **Privacy:** As a general rule, a journalist should respect the privacy of individuals and their families unless it affects the public interest. Information on the private life of an individual or his family should only be published if it impinges on public interest. Publishing of such information about an individual as mentioned above should be deemed justifiable only if it is directed at Exposing crime or serious misdemeanour, exposing anti-social conduct, protecting public health, morality, and safety, and preventing the public from being misled by some statement or action of the individual concerned<sup>34</sup>.
- **Privilege/Non-Disclosure:** A journalist should observe the universally accepted principle of confidentiality and should not disclose the source of information obtained in confidence. A journalist should not breach an agreement with a source of information obtained as “off- the-record” or as “back ground information<sup>33</sup>.”
- **Decency:** A journalist should dress and comport himself in a manner that conforms to public taste. A journalist should refrain from using offensive, abusive, or vulgar language. A journalist should not present lurid details, either in words or pictures, of violence, sexual acts, abhorrent or horrid scenes. In cases involving personal grief or shock, inquiries should be carried out and approaches made with sympathy and discretion. Unless it is in the furtherance of the public’s right to know, a journalist should generally avoid identifying relatives or friends of persons convicted or accused of crime<sup>34</sup>.

- **Discrimination:** A journalist should refrain from making pejorative reference to a person's ethnic group, religion, sex, or any physical or mental illness or handicap.
- **Reward and Gratification:** A journalist should neither solicit nor accept bribes, gratification, or patronage to suppress or publish information. To demand payment for the publication of news is inimical to the notion of news as a fair, accurate, unbiased, and factual report of an event.
- **Violence:** A journalist should not present or report acts of violence, armed robberies, terrorist activities, or vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies such acts in the eyes of the public.
- **Children and Minors:** A journalist should not identify, either by name or picture or interview children under the age of 16 who are involved in cases concerning sexual offenses, crimes, rituals, or witchcraft either as victims, witnesses, or defendants.
- **Access to Information:** A journalist should strive to employ open and honest means in the gathering of information. Exceptional methods may be employed only when the public interest is at stake.
- **Public Interest:** A journalist should strive to enhance national unity and public good.
- **Social Responsibility:** A journalist should promote universal principles of human rights, democracy, justice, equity, peace, and international understanding.
- **Plagiarism:** A journalist should not copy, wholesale or in part, other people's work without attribution and/or consent.
- **Copyright:** Where a journalist reproduces a work, be it in print, broadcast, art work, or design, the proper acknowledgment should be accorded to the author. A journalist should abide by all rules of copyright, established by national and international laws and conventions<sup>33</sup>.
- **Press Freedom and Responsibility:** A journalist should strive at all-times to enhance press freedom and responsibility.

### **2.1.5.3 Ethical Standard of Media Practices in Nigeria**

The first consideration is editorial independence, which is a definitive prerequisite for media quality. Traditionally, editorial independence has been defined as a separation between decisions that are taken by media owners and those that are taken by editors. In reality, however, the interests of the editorial board and the media outlet's advertising, marketing, and finance departments interweave, which means that the existing understanding of editorial independence at each media company is crucial<sup>35</sup>. Editorial independence is one of the most important principles in media operations because, at the level of the practices of media organisations, it reveals how freedom of the press operates and how pluralism is ensured<sup>36</sup>. Editorial independence is also a part of normative views about media operations in that it is linked to honesty, truth, neutrality, objectivity, and a professional understanding of journalism. Several other terms have been used to describe editorial independence, including editorial freedom and editorial autonomy.

Editorial independence or freedom usually means that editors-in-chief must have full authority over the editorial content of their media unit. Descriptions of editorial independence usually emphasise the right of the editor to be independent of the owners and top managers of the media organisations, whose decisions cannot affect the selection and choice of media content, the editorial process, or the form of publications. For that reason, appropriate circumstances must be created at media outlets following the aforementioned principles. Editorial independence or freedom usually refers to the professional work of media professionals, while editorial autonomy refers to the structure of media organisations, in which the development of content at the management level is kept separate from cooperation with advertisers or other business partners, as well as from the company's financial operations, marketing, and other functions, which are essential in media operations. The term also covers the autonomy of journalists<sup>37</sup>.

In everyday situations, however, editorial independence is not something unambiguous and stable in terms of editorial operations, because the process of shaping content at media organisations is influenced both by external factors (sources of information, partners, advertisers) and by internal factors (business interests and the goals of the media owner and the managers of the outlet). Editorial independence depends on the business models of the media, as well as on the commercialised media environment of the present way – one in which many decisions are taken based on their advantages and profit potentials<sup>36</sup>. Studies related to the media in Eastern Europe regularly identify violations of editorial independence because of the ability of politicians or political parties to influence media content<sup>37</sup>. Editorial independence in present-day media practices can be evaluated based on the extent to which the media outlet, its manager or editor and each journalist can collect, correlate, and publish information, viewpoints, and interpretations. There are three levels at which editorial independence can be evaluated by various players in the media environment – the level of the individual, the media organisation, and the media industry.

Editorial independence at each of these levels, in turn, depends on self-regulation and media regulation mechanisms. Editorial independence is also influenced by the overall status of the media industry, the legal status of journalists, wage and compensation systems, and the operations of media regulators. There is always interaction among legal regulations, self-regulations, and private regulations which apply to each specific media organisation. These and other issues are analysed in detail in the European Council, which finds that the greatest threats against editorial independence relate to the liberal and commercialised media system. The study was focused on an analysis of media policies and media freedoms in the European Union, and it concluded that in countries with powerful traditions related to the education of journalists and with strong labour unions there are fewer problems with editorial independence and the autonomy of journalists<sup>38</sup>.

Although editorial independence is an inviolable component of media policy and is of unquestionable importance, the fact is that editorial independence is not absolute in any country or any segment of the media world. Because of this approximate situation, a critical evaluation of the real manifestations of media practices leads to a situation in which the concept of editorial independence is seen as old-fashioned or as one that is not realistic and is more of a myth because it sometimes reflects the desire of media professionals to avoid the changes which occur in the media environment. Editorial independence in a commercial media system is understood as the obligation of the editor not only to ensure free media content and to be responsible for it but also to satisfy the duties of media directors. This usually relates to specific ratings, the obligation of reaching a specific target audience, and the need to take responsibility for the financial results of the media content as the content is put together. For a true evaluation of the everyday nature of the media, writing that it is naïve to think that editors can fail to count on the business strategies of their media companies. An editor cannot act at the national level and spend money for this purpose if the relevant media outlet is focused on the local audience<sup>39</sup>.

Invariably, the editor cannot change the owner's attempts to develop or not develop content for the Internet audience, and editorial independence does not allow the editor to influence the place on the page where a specific advertisement will be placed alongside a specific article<sup>30</sup>. In other words, editorial independence is not similar to the Sunday best suit of an editor. It changes and must be defended at all phases of creating media content. Editorial independence is discussed not just by the media, but also by specific publications such as scholarly journals in the field of medicine and other niche publications that link it to intellectual liberty<sup>34</sup>. As the media system, policies related to media regulations, and the condition of the media business change, there are also alterations in views about editorial independence, interpretations of the concept, and the use of the concept in the work of every media professional.

Events occurring during the first decade and the early part of the second decade of the 21st century

offer a good reason to analyse the situation with editorial independence. In many countries, the media industry has experienced an economic recession, finding it necessary to adapt to operations in the Internet environment, to seek out new business models, and to experiment with media content. Latvia's media environment lost more than 50% of its advertising investments over the past five years, and those investments are returning to the environment very slowly. Moreover, there have been ownership changes in all media sectors, and there has been an exacerbation during the period of economic difficulties of previously identified problems with media responsibilities their commercial orientation, and the use of hidden advertising in the business models of the media<sup>32</sup>. The Latvian media system is currently undergoing increased concentration in the media business. The nature of the work of journalists and editors is changing, and the modern communications environment means that editors have less and less of an opportunity to dictate media content. The job market for journalists is unstable and shrinking. The principle of editorial independence that was enshrined in Latvian law in 2010 is only declarative. Can we hope during this period of change that the situation with editorial independence has remained unchanged?

The next consideration is truth and accuracy: It is a journalist's top priority to report and write the truth, this is the reason why truthfulness and accuracy make up one of the most important standards in the code of ethics<sup>39</sup>. Reporters are always expected to look for trustworthy sources and to be as accurate as they possibly can with the size of the project given to them. When editors come across different errors, the writers need to correct them most accurately and truly as possible. Most journalists fact-check alongside another employee or writer to help verify everything is in line before submitting to the editor as well<sup>39</sup>.

When reporting on crimes or incidents, journalists must remember to consider that those under trial or being regarded as suspects are always innocent until proven guilty. If this is not followed, there is the possibility of wrongful conviction. The best word reporters use in this incident is "allegedly", until sentencing. Afterward, the crimes can then be reported as fact. A basic rule journalists follow is when there are two or more individual witnesses of an event, it can be reported as fact. If there is only one witness, the event is conveyed with acknowledgment to the witness. This also goes for controversial facts. Journalists cannot always guarantee 'the truth', but getting the facts right is the cardinal principle of journalism. We should always strive for accuracy, give all the relevant facts we have, and ensure that they have been checked. When we cannot corroborate information we should say so.

Fast is good, but right is better. There is a need for the strongest possible commitment to accuracy and its close cousin, fairness. After news organisations, including the *New York Times*, wrongly identified the perpetrator of the Newtown school shootings in the US, Margaret Sullivan said a reader wrote to say "she had always believed that if 'I read it in the *New York Times* it's always true,' but her belief in that truth had been shaken"<sup>37</sup>. Being accurate has always been a core tenet of journalism, but in an age of viral news, verification is an increasingly essential skill.

The sheer volume of material requiring verification is crippling news organisations whose budgets are shrinking. Writing in the *New York Times*, the study claims "truth has never been an essential ingredient of viral content on the internet. But in the stepped-up competition for readers, digital news sites are increasingly blurring the line between fact and fiction, and saying that it is all part of doing business in the rough-and-tumble world of online journalism"<sup>36</sup>. Some media outlets are placing the responsibility for scepticism with the audience, thereby absolving the journalism outlet of the responsibility to fact-check because it's physically impossible to keep up with the information deluge. "We assume a certain level of sophistication and scepticism of our readers," says John Cook, editor-

in-chief of Gawker. Further, former BBC director of news and Cardiff University journalism professor, Richard Sambrook, also identifies that “some now believe the responsibility for assessing the accuracy and quality of information should switch from the providers of news to the consumers; that in an age of plenty the consumer has a greater role to play and responsibility for what they consume<sup>35</sup>.” Others see this out-sourcing of fact-checking as a way to free up limited resources within a newsroom for other tasks. Those other tasks may include interpreting and contextualising the information, a skill that can move the trained journalist to a position of greater power. “The journalist has not been replaced but displaced, moved higher up the editorial chain from the production of initial observations to a role that emphasises verification and interpretation, bringing sense to the streams of text, audio, photos and video produced by the public<sup>36</sup>.” This gets us into deterministic ‘truth’ versus probabilistic ‘truth’ territory. In other words, from: Here it is, take it or leave it, to: Here it is, subject to arbitrary ongoing revision.

The next consideration is the right to privacy. Journalism is a public service that permits its practitioners to write and publish information about groups, governments, and individuals. This places a high degree of responsibility on journalists. Journalism is not a job for men and women who have no respect for the hard-earned reputation of their fellow countrymen and women<sup>37</sup>. Rather, it is a profession for sober and mature people who would act in the interest of society as a whole by treating every story with fairness and, of course, by obeying the laws that affect media practice.

It is a universal fact that news is all about human beings- their activities, actions, inactions, mistakes, foibles, achievements, and others. However, in reporting these activities, the reporter must show a high level of professionalism and introspection so that an individual’s reputation is not needlessly destroyed or his/her privacy unnecessarily invaded. This is because every individual deserves a measure of privacy, depending on the level of intimacy he/she has with other members of society. A person whose

privacy is recklessly invaded is empty and even naked. This affects his/her mental and emotional stability, with negative consequences on his reasoning and by extension, productivity. Such a person is often not in a position to meaningfully contribute to national development efforts. Therefore, is the careless use of personal information often provided by internet users? The need to protect the privacy of an individual has been widely acknowledged, perhaps all over the world, except in authoritarian regimes.

The Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists draws attention to the need to protect the privacy of an individual in the following words: As a general rule, a journalist should respect the privacy of individuals and their families unless it affects public interest: Information on the private life of an individual or his family should only be published if it impinges on public interest, publishing of such information about an individual as mentioned above should be deemed justifiable only if it is directed at, exposing crime or serious misdemeanour; exposing anti-social conduct, protecting public health, morality, and safety, preventing the public from being misled by some statement or action of the individual concerned. The above code of ethics clearly shows that the individual deserves privacy in his/her every activity but also provides the circumstances under which such protection could be vitiated or annulled. For instance, an armed robber, having shattered social harmony and caused perhaps bodily harm or economic adversity, loses his right to privacy, as he/she is paraded before television cameras. Even if such a person seeks legal protection, it is unlikely that he/she would have any legal reprieve.

The last consideration is privilege/non-disclosure. Source protection, sometimes also referred to as source confidentiality or in the U.S. as the reporter's privilege, is a right accorded to journalists under the laws of many countries, as well as under international law. It prohibits authorities, including the courts, from compelling a journalist to reveal the identity of an anonymous source for a story. The right is based on the recognition that without a strong guarantee of anonymity, many would be deterred

from coming forward and sharing information about public interests with journalists. Regardless of whether the right to source confidentiality is protected by law, the process of communicating between journalists and sources can jeopardise the privacy and safety of sources, as third parties can hack electronic communications or otherwise spy on interactions between journalists and sources. News media and their sources have expressed concern over the government covertly accessing their private communications<sup>40</sup>. To mitigate these risks, journalists and sources often rely on encrypted messaging.

Journalists rely on source protection to gather and reveal information in the public interest from confidential sources. Such sources may require anonymity to protect them from physical, economic, or professional reprisals in response to their revelations. There is a strong tradition of legal source protection internationally, in recognition of the function that confidential sources play in facilitating 'watchdog' or 'accountability' journalism. While professional journalistic practice entails multi-sourcing, verification, and corroboration, confidential sources are a key component of this practice.

➤ **Taste, Decency, and Acceptability**

Audiences have different reactions to depictions of violence, nudity, coarse language, or to people in any other situation that is unacceptable to or stigmatized by the local culture or laws (such as the consumption of alcohol, homosexuality, illegal drug use, scatological images, etc.). Even with similar audiences, different organizations and even individual reporters have different standards and practices<sup>32</sup>. These decisions often revolve around what facts are necessary for the audience to know.

When certain distasteful or shocking material is considered important to the story, there are a variety of common methods for mitigating negative audience reactions. Warning of explicit or disturbing material may allow listeners or readers to avoid content they would rather not be exposed to. Offensive words may be partially obscured or bleeped. Potentially offensive images may be blurred or narrowly

cropped. Descriptions may be substituted for pictures; graphic detail might be omitted. Disturbing content might be moved from a cover to an inside page, or from daytime to late evening when children are less likely to be watching. There is often considerable controversy over these techniques, especially concern that obscuring or not reporting certain facts or details is self-censorship that compromises objectivity and fidelity to the truth, and which does not serve the public interest. For example, images and graphic descriptions of war often depict violent, bloody, shocking, and profoundly tragic. This makes certain content disturbing to some audience members, but it is precisely these aspects of war that some consider to be the most important to convey.

Some argue that "sanitising" the depiction of war influences public opinion about the merits of continuing to fight, and about the policies or circumstances that precipitated the conflict. The amount of explicit violence and mutilation depicted in war coverage varies considerably from time to time, from organisation to organisation, and from country to country. The implication is that reporters have also been accused of indecency in the process of collecting news, namely that they are overly intrusive in the name of journalistic insensitivity. War correspondent, Edward Behr recounts the story of a reporter during the Congo Crisis who walked into a crowd of Belgian evacuees and shouted, "Anyone here been raped and speaks English?"<sup>41</sup>

### ➤ **Discrimination and Persons with Disabilities**

The fact that disabled people have a substantially poorer standard of living than that of non-disabled people is no longer in doubt. Orthodox medical explanations suggest this is because impairment has such a traumatic physical and psychological effect on individuals they are unable to achieve a comparable lifestyle by their efforts. Disabled people and their organizations reject this view as a sound basis for understanding the problems associated with disability<sup>42</sup>. They, along with a growing number of professionals and policy makers - particularly overseas, maintain that it is not impairment, which

prevents people from achieving a reasonable lifestyle, but restrictive environments and disabling barriers. 'Disability', therefore, represents a complex system of social constraints imposed on people with impairments by a highly discriminatory society; to be a disabled person means to be discriminated against. The problem is worse for disabled members of the gay and lesbian communities, black people, and women with impairments.

Research by the British Council of Organisations of Disabled People (BCODP) focusing on 'Disabled People in Britain and Discrimination: A Case for Anti-Discrimination Legislation' shows that the type of discrimination encountered by disabled people is not just a question of individual prejudice; it is institutionalized in the very fabric of our society. Institutional discrimination - attitudes and policies that deny equal opportunities to disabled people - are evident in education, employment, the benefit system, support services, the built environment, the leisure industry, and politics<sup>42</sup>.

#### ➤ **Violence**

Most studies on the effects of media violence have examined passive visual media (dramatic television and movies, television news, and music videos), in the form of media that viewers only observe. However, there have also been a limited number of investigations into interactive visual media (video games and the Internet), media that viewers both observe and interact with. In this section, we examine both kinds of studies.

Within each genre, we begin with experimental studies, in which cause and effect are unambiguous, but the effects observed are short-term. Necessarily, the outcomes in these experiments tend to be physical aggression that is not life-threatening, or else verbal aggression, aggressive thoughts, or aggressive emotions. Next, we examine surveys, also known as cross-sectional studies, that provide a snapshot of the relationship at one point in time between individuals' habitual consumption of media violence and their aggressive behaviour<sup>29</sup>.

These surveys often deal with more serious forms of physical aggression, but this type of methodology by itself is not as conclusive about causation as experimental studies are. In genres where longitudinal studies have been conducted, it can be said that youths' habitual consumption of violence affects their violent and aggressive behavior later in life. Similarly, longitudinal studies often examine serious physical aggression, but they generally provide better evidence about causal influences than cross-sectional studies.

Due to space limitations, we present illustrative examples of carefully selected key studies in each area, rather than an exhaustive review of the research literature. However, in addition to discussing these selected studies, we describe (if available) meta-analyses that have aggregated the results of most major investigations to reach overall estimates of effect sizes. A meta-analysis essentially averages the effect sizes of multiple studies and allows the researcher to ask whether a particular factor (e.g., exposure to media violence) is significantly linked to a particular outcome (e.g., violent behavior). There are several commonly used measures of effect size, any of which can be applied to experimental, correlational, and longitudinal types of studies. To establish a common metric for this discussion, we converted all effect sizes to correlation coefficients ( $r$ s)<sup>43</sup>.

➤ **Access to Information** is the ability of an individual to seek, receive, and impart information effectively. This sometimes includes "scientific, indigenous, and traditional knowledge; freedom of information, building of open knowledge resources, including open Internet and open standards, and open access and availability of data; preservation of digital heritage; respect for cultural and linguistic diversity, such as fostering access to local content in accessible languages; quality education for all, including lifelong and e-learning; diffusion of new media and information literacy and skills, and social inclusion online, including addressing inequalities based on skills, education, gender, age, race, ethnicity, and accessibility by those with disabilities; and the development of connectivity and affordable ICTs, including mobile, the Internet, and broadband infrastructures<sup>42</sup>."

Michael Buckland defines six types of barriers that have to be overcome for access to information to be achieved: identification of the source, availability of the source, price of the user, cost to the provider, cognitive access, and acceptability<sup>43</sup>. While "access to information", "right to information", "right to know" and "freedom of information" are sometimes used as synonyms, the diverse terminology does highlight particular (albeit related) dimensions of the issue<sup>41</sup>.

While there has been an increase in countries with freedom of information laws, their implementation and effectiveness vary considerably across the world. The Global Right to Information Rating is a programme providing advocates, legislators, and reformers with tools to assess the strength of a legal framework<sup>39</sup>. In measuring the strength and legal framework of each country's freedom of information law using the Right to Information Rating, one notable trend appears<sup>40</sup>. Largely regardless of geographic location, top-scoring countries tend to have younger laws<sup>41</sup>. United Nations Secretary General's 2017 report on the Sustainable Development Goals, to which the United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) contributed freedom of information-related information, of the 109 countries with available data on the implementation of freedom of information laws, 43 percent do not sufficiently provide for public outreach and 43 percent have overly-wide definitions of exceptions to disclosure, which run counter to the aim of increased transparency and accountability<sup>42</sup>.

Despite the adoption of freedom of information laws; officials are often unfamiliar with the norms of transparency at the core of freedom of information or are unwilling to recognize them in practice. Journalists often do not make effective use of freedom of information laws for a multitude of reasons: official failure to respond to information requests, extensive delays, receipt of heavily redacted documents, arbitrarily steep fees for certain types of requests, and a lack of professional training<sup>43</sup>.

Debates around public access to information have also focused on further developments in encouraging open data approaches to government transparency. In 2009, the data.gov portal was launched in the United States, collecting in one place most of the government's open data; in the years following, there was a wave of government data opening around the world. As part of the Open Government Partnership, a multilateral network established in 2011, some 70 countries have now issued National Action Plans, the majority of which contain strong open data commitments designed to foster greater transparency, generate economic growth, empower citizens, fight corruption, and more generally enhance governance. In 2015 the Open Data Charter was founded in a multi-stakeholder process to establish principles for 'how governments should be publishing information'<sup>44</sup>. The Charter has been adopted by 17 national governments half of which were from Latin America and the Caribbean<sup>45</sup>.

➤ **Freedom of the Press or Freedom of the Media:** The principle that communication and expression through various media, including printed and electronic media, especially published materials, should be considered a right to be exercised freely. Such freedom implies the absence of interference from an overreaching state; its preservation may be sought through the constitution or other legal protection and security. Concerning governmental information, any government may distinguish which materials are public or protected from disclosure to the public. State materials are protected due to either of 2 reasons: the classification of information as sensitive, classified, or secret, or the relevance of the information to protecting the national interest. Many governments are also subject to "sunshine laws" or freedom of information legislation that are used to define the ambit of national interest and enable citizens to request access to government-held information.

The United Nations' 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights states: "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference,

and to seek, receive, and impart information and ideas through any media regardless of frontiers<sup>41</sup>. This philosophy is usually accompanied by legislation ensuring various degrees of freedom of scientific research (known as scientific freedom), publishing, and press. The depth to which these laws are entrenched in a country's legal system can go as far down as its constitution. The concept of freedom of speech is often covered by the same laws as freedom of the press, thereby giving equal treatment to spoken and published expression. Sweden was the first country in the world to adopt freedom of the press into its constitution with the *Freedom of the Press Act* of 1766<sup>44</sup>.

➤ **Copyright:** The evolution of copyright has been closely linked to technological development. Whereas most of the technologies made copyright protection more difficult, digital computers managed to alter the fundamental concepts behind copyright. Copyrights have a great influence on the majority of library activities. They shape the type of services offered by libraries to their users and the conditions on which a library can offer access to materials protected by copyright. As a result, copyright affects the way libraries can function and conduct activities such as storing, protecting, and making their collections available. Copyright is “a procedure whereby the originator of a piece of intellectual property (book, article, piece of music, etc.) acquires a series of rights over the work created, including copying, publishing, performing, broadcasting and adaptation. The changing world and multiplicity of items led to substantial changes in copyright legislation and international agreements, current technological advances have put copyright law under stress again <sup>52</sup>.”

➤ **Plagiarism** has always been a difficulty in publishing but the problem has aggravated with the unauthorised re-use of material found on the Internet. It can be intentional or no intentional. Harrod's Librarians' Glossary explains plagiarism as “using another person's work and publishing it as one's own without payment or acknowledgment”<sup>43</sup>. Plagiarism is not the same as copyright infringement. While both terms may apply to a particular act, they are different terms, and false claims of authorship may be subject to plagiarism regardless of whether the material is protected by copyright or not. It is

considered an ethical offense and can be harmful to one's academic reputation and honesty. Plagiarism is a "wrongful appropriation" and "stealing and publication" of another author's "language, thoughts, ideas, or expressions" and the representation of them as one's original work<sup>45</sup>. Plagiarism occurs by mentioning various elements in a document and presenting them as if they are yours. Plagiarism occurs when someone uses words, ideas, or work products, attributable to another identifiable person or source, without attributing the work to the source from which it was obtained, in a situation in which there is a legitimate expectation of original authorship and to obtain some benefit, credit, or gain which need not be monetary. The above definition clearly explains that plagiarism is mainly harmful because someone is trying to get credit for some work, ideas which he is not his own.

➤ **Children and Minors:** Children are regarded as precious gifts from God. It is rather curious and unfortunate that these same children are subjected to abuse and neglect. Universally, childhood is recognised as a period of sensitivity requiring special care, attention, and protection. Perhaps it is in recognition of this fact that a study opined that Children's rights have been a world focus since 1979, when the United Nations designated that year as the International year of the child and developed a list of children's rights. Among the rights suggested are the rights to love and understanding, adequate food and health, free education, play, an identity, and special attention to the handicapped regardless of colour, sex, religion, and national or social origin. To further concretise global efforts and attention on child development and protection against any form of abuse or mistreatment, the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child was passed on November 20th, 1989 by the United Nations General Assembly. The instrument which is in three (3) parts with fifty-four (54) articles opens with a preamble<sup>46</sup>.

The preamble states the aims and objectives which the convention seeks to accomplish for the child. It states: Recognising that the child, for the full and harmonious development of his or her personality, should grow in a family environment in an atmosphere of happiness, love, and understanding. In Africa, the Organisation of Africa Unity (now African Union) at its Heads of State Summit in Addis

Ababa in 1990 adopted a Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the African Child. The charter which derives from the United Nations Convention takes cognisance of the sociocultural peculiarities of the African Child. The African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child notes: that the situation of most African children, remains critical due to the unique factors of their socio-economic, cultural, traditional, and developmental circumstances, natural disasters, armed conflicts, exploitation, and hunger, and on account of the child's physical and mental immaturity, he/she needs special safeguards and care<sup>47</sup>.

To further the mobilisation of attention on the African Child, a reported noted that: The Organization of Africa Unity (OAU) subsequently proclaimed in Abuja 1991, the 1990s as the "Decade of the Africa Child" and set June 16 of every year as the "Day of the African Child". The documents also report that every child must be protected against all forms of exploitation, and indecent or degrading treatment including child labour, abuse and torture, sexual exploitation, sale, abduction, and drug abuse. Every nation that is a signatory to the convention is expected to make a concerted effort to protect children against all forms of abuse, through the enforcement of relevant instruments. Again, Section 34 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides for the right of every individual to the dignity of his/her person. This section further prohibits "all forms of torture, inhuman or degrading treatment, and slavery, forced or compulsory labour". In other words, it ensures the child's right to the dignity of his/her person. Accordingly, children should not be subjected to any form of torture or inhuman or degrading treatment, forced or compulsory labour. Despite these provisions in the United Nations Convention and the Nigerian Constitution, children in Nigeria suffer cruelty, abuse, inhuman and degrading treatment, and child labour, and some are forced into prostitution<sup>44</sup>. These saddening experiences have a strong emotional impact on the victim. Often, abused and neglected children are overwhelmed and shattered. This usually results in emotional imbalance which eventually manifests in delinquency and deviance.

In Nigeria, for instance, youth crime and the breeding of street children are direct consequences of child abuse and neglect. But a situation where the government ratifies international conventions it cannot enforce locally is intolerable. A situation where the Child Rights Bill is passed and mere lip-service is paid to its implementation amounts to hypocrisy and apathy as far as issues of child abuse and neglect are concerned. A study observed that “It is common knowledge that children in Nigeria are bludgeoned into child labour and prostitution by highly placed persons under the guise of philanthropy<sup>48</sup>.” Given these circumstances, the average Nigerian does not seem to be aware of the provisions of the Child Rights Bill needless to say the instruments before it. It is even more worrisome because most forms of youth violence, unrest, and riots are linked to child abuse and neglect. The media are undoubtedly persuasive instruments in man’s struggle for self-liberation and development. In line with this, it was advanced that the mass media select and bring to waiting multitudes a constant flow of detail related to those fruitful dialogues of differences and concordance upon which free societies thrive<sup>49</sup>.

Concerning child rights issues, the media most especially television medium coverage has been used as a weapon of awareness creation. In this regard, The United Nations Fund for Population (UNFPA) and the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) have produced “I Need to Know” a drama serial that is shown weekly on most TV stations in Nigeria. In the Oredo local government area of Edo State for example, the programme is a regular feature on Edo Broadcasting Service (EBS), Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), and Independent Television (ITV). It addresses child rights, abuse, and welfare issues. Similarly, the Women Trafficking and Child Labour Eradication Foundation (WOTCLEF), at the instance of Mrs. Titi Abubakar the wife of the then Vice President bankrolled the production of “Izozo” a drama serial on national television. This programme which shows weekly (NTA network service) is mainly on child labour and its evils<sup>40</sup>.

➤ **Public Interest:** The public interest means anything relevant to the lives and well-being of all of us, to society, and our communities. It concerns the “common good”, meaning matters that affect

our health, livelihoods, quality of life, security, and governance. The public interest does not mean what the public might find interesting. Broadly speaking, the difference here is between what is relevant to members of the public, as opposed to what might merely entertain, fascinate, or titillate some of them<sup>46</sup>. News journalism is reporting matters of societal relevance. Not gossip and titbits about well-known figures or about personal events and circumstances of others that do not affect broader society, but merely pander to voyeurism. A journalist with a brief to report news should therefore apply a public interest test before deciding whether to cover a story. In most cases, it is clear what is and what is not in the public interest. But in some cases, such as stories concerning the private lives and actions of public figures in positions of power, the distinction is not clear.

The public interest is in having a safe, healthy, and functional society. In a democracy, journalism plays a central role in that. It gives people the information they need to take part in the democratic process. If journalists are good at their job, they hold governments and other institutions to account. All serious journalism, then, contains a public service ethic. To fulfil this public service role, journalists must build and retain the trust of their audiences by behaving ethically and professionally. A journalist must have compelling reasons to deviate from standard good practice: if it is the only way to bring an important subject to the public's attention. For example, journalists should be honest about who and what they are; they should always give their names, and say for which news organisation they work. However, there are times when a journalist might have to go undercover and hide their true identity and the real reason for their actions. Such cases could include the investigation of crime or political wrongdoing. This is an act of deception, which is generally to be avoided, but if it brings justice and an end to criminal activity, it may be justified in the wider public interest<sup>47</sup>.

Journalists should not intrude into people's private lives – but there might be a case for doing so if the person being investigated is a public figure whose private behaviour is at odds with what they advocate in public life, especially when their position can influence legislation. In this case, media intrusion –

normally an objectionable practice – could expose hypocrisy and dishonesty. However, such intrusion must be clearly shown and seen to be in the wider public interest. Things become more difficult when the story in question may involve a journalist breaking the law, or encouraging someone else to do so. Here you need to have a serious discussion with colleagues about the circumstances, the public interest benefit in covering the story, the risks involved, and the likely consequences. Some countries build “the public interest” into their legal systems. So if you want to publish a difficult or controversial item because it is “in the public interest”, you should check whether the legal framework gives you the protection you need in every case<sup>48</sup>.

In some countries, those in power might actively oppose journalists revealing information which, although in the public interest, might threaten their control of society. In such cases, the public interest test takes on another meaning. How those in power define the public interest might be more about control than freedom of information. Here, extra care is required.

➤ **Violate:** As a profession that serves the interest of the public. Journalist have degree responsibilities in society. Every day, journalists face challenges that test their ethical values and responsibility to the truth despite the professional code of ethics, journalists may violate the rules by accepting bribes white covering news or features. This is some cases lowers the journalists’ credibility and undermines a professional career. Corruption is dangerous to society and can be extremely devastating to media<sup>48</sup>. Therefore, while acknowledging the attempt by the federal government to fight corruption and economic and stake holder to adopt a zero-tolerance attitude to corruption in the media and indeed in the society at large. Some protagonists of African tradition have argued seriously that corruption in its present world and character is part of our colonial heritage. Gratification is indeed a cankerworm that has eaten deep into the fabric of Nigeria society. It is a most that all sundry blame for the economic woe facing the country. This is because bribery and corruption are seen as the major impediments to the economic development of the nation. It is perhaps, the only reason why nothing seems to be working<sup>49</sup>.

Journalist may use the media for their ends or for the greater social good to serve the public. As human needs are insatiable, there are chances were some may sacrifice the public interest for their selfish motives ignoring social responsibility. Such miss behaviour damages journalists and the profession's integrity and reputations. A study poised that journalism practice involves the gathering packing and disseminating of news to the general public, general in today's society the mass media are seem as veritable instruments of information dissemination, social mobilization, and control<sup>50</sup>. It is one of the means through which the public is educated and sensitized about important issues affecting the lives of people. And as such our ethical pitfalls like "brown envelope" money and favour journalist collect their source to journalists in the hope of attracting or shaping information. Such reporting may colour news content or brighter stories with hidden agenda. However, journalism practice as a noble profession demands discipline and ethical behaviour to uphold the crucial dependency of society on the mass media for survival.

A study proposes that ethics should give the journalist a standard by which he can judge an action to be right or wrong, good or bad, responsible journalists today need to know their limitations so as not to abuse the power of the media in the coronation of this view. Regrettably, communication in Nigeria is mainly influenced by economic extremism on the one hand and government pressure on the other hand, in developing nation like Nigeria, poverty debases human dignity and causes the scale of honour and trust for money through gratification to influence news as opposed to editors of sense of too poor considering their enormous task they perform in sociality thereby making him or her compromise.

### 2.1.6 Key Functions of the Mass Media

Radio as part of mass media performs three social functions which include surveillance of the environment, correlation of different elements of society, the transmission of culture, from one generation to the next, and entertainment<sup>37</sup>.

1. **Surveillance of the Environment:** The media teach us most of what we know about the world through the process of surveillance. The media exposes us also to other societies. The media reveal to us about the stock market, impending danger, business opportunities and risks, travellers guide, weather conditions great discoveries. Surveillance is not just for the masses, but also for the entire nation. For instance, the government and industry leaders watch CNN and BBC world or read the Guardian or Time magazine to know what other world leaders are saying and thinking. Above all, the media also gives status to individuals. This is achieved by exposing the individuals to large audiences for one good reason or the other, to make them appear important and esteemed. This process is known as status conferral<sup>46</sup>.

2. **Correlation of Different Elements of the Society:** This is an important function of the mass media. It involves selection, evaluation, and interpretation of events. It helps impose structure on the news and it is accomplished by persuasive communication through editorializing, commentary, advertising, and propaganda. It categorizes news and directs the importance of each news item, by deciding whether the news item should appear on the front page, the first headline on the broadcast, or whether it should be accompanied by a teaser on the magazine cover promoting the story<sup>42</sup>.

3. **Socialisation and Transmission of Culture:** Socialisation is the process of integrating people into society through the transmission of values, social norms and knowledge to new members of the group takes place<sup>46</sup>. We learn the values of our society through the media, friends, clubs, school, church, etc. Accordingly, the mass media provides socialisation in the following ways:

- a. Through role models in entertainment in programming
- b. Through goals and desires as presented in media citizenship values, portrayed in the news

c. Through advertisements for products that may be useful to us in different stages of our lives.

4. **Entertainment:** This is a communication package, which is intended to amuse, even if it serves other functions. For instance, television dramas on HIV/AIDS can be considered entertaining even though they educate people living with HIV/AIDS on how to cope with the challenges of the ailment. Same thing with poverty-related issues.

#### **2.1.7 Enforcement of Code of Ethics**

The enforcement of professional ethics in journalism can be affected by professional bodies, media houses, and the public. Besides, the role of the press council cannot be over-emphasized<sup>50</sup>. The Nigerian Press Council is an autonomous body set up by Decree No of 1992 and amended by Decree No 60 of 1990 to promote high professional standards for the Nigerian Press, and to deal with complaints emanating from members of the public about the conduct of the journalists in their professional capacity or complaints from the press about the conduct of persons or organizations towards the press. The NPC decree provides it with a wide range of responsibilities to wit: - Enquire into complaints about the press and the conduct of any person or organization towards the press. - Research into contemporary press development and engage in updating press documentation. - Review development likely to restrict the flow of information and advice on means aimed at remedying such development. - Ensure the protection of the rights and privileges of journalists in the lawful performance of their professional duties and - Foster the achievement and maintenance of high professional standards by the Nigerian press. In the submission on the limitations of the Nigerian press council. The decrees establishing the Nigerian press council have not met the acceptable standards of self-regulatory mechanism, pointing out that such provisions impede on press freedom as enshrined in the 1999 constitution and other international human rights instrument<sup>51</sup>.

#### 2.1.7.2 Ethical Dilemma in Nigerian Journalism

Despite the introduction of a code of ethics for Nigerian journalists and the setting of the Nigerian Press Council, there are other ethical issues, which are part of the overall problems in the society. These include sycophancy character assassination pressure, Afghanistan, bribery, moonlighting, sensationalism, self-censorship, plagiarism, advertorial, deception, and faking stories among others.

i. **Sycophancy:** A sycophant is a “person who tries to win favour by flattering rich or powerful people”. Such excessive and insincere praise is a common ethical problem in journalism. The sycophant journalist flatters political leaders, wealthy citizens, and owners of media houses who are employers and have formidable powers over journalists<sup>52</sup>.

This is more glaring in the political sphere. For, the majority of the mass media in Nigeria, and in many Third World countries, are owned by the government, and as a result, the media more often than not praise the activities of government officials and government policies. During elections, sycophancy leads to the abuse of the power of the mass media, and unethical journalists use the media to confer status and legitimacy on their favourite politicians.

Writing on 126 years of the Nigerian press in Newswatch special edition of October 1985, it was noted that “between 1979 and 1983, many a journalist sold his souls and his craft to the highest political bidder or indeed to anyone who put up the bid”. Without exception, he observed, “government-owned newspapers became organs of whatever political party seemed likely to control the state in which they were published or the centre”<sup>52</sup>. Cases of sycophancy by Nigerian journalists again became glaring in the present political dispensation, to the extent that the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) on May 29, 2001, had to warn ten erring broadcasting stations to desist from “furthering the political views of the owner state government to the detriment of opposition views, thereby mortgaging public trust as well as confidence of citizenry<sup>53</sup>. This practice denies the public the correct information, which is the duty of the journalist to give them.

ii. **Character Assassination:** Closely related to sycophancy is the ethical problem of character assassination. While flattering favoured prominent and powerful people, the sycophant journalist could

indulge in verifying the opponents of such people. When the press makes a statement that damages a person's reputation, the press is guilty of character assassination. An example of character assassination was the late Ohonbamu's accusation of the former Head of State, the late Murtala Muhammed of corruption and acquisition of ill-gotten wealth. Ohonbamu, a Senior lecturer in Law at the University of Lagos and also the publisher of African Spark magazine published the allegation in his magazine. He was charged to court and towards the end of the trial he pleaded guilty. He was verbally reprimanded and set free<sup>56</sup>. Whereas there is no legal punishment for sycophancy, character assassination is both unethical and illegal, a journalist could face court action for defamation or damaging somebody's reputation.

iii. **Pressure:** Pressure is any force or influence, which causes a journalist to feel strongly compelled to act in a manner desirable to the source of each force or influence. This can be internal or external. Internal pressure emanates from within the organization in which the journalist works. The Publishers of a newspaper, for instance, could pressurize an editor to write an editorial written by the publisher or his surrogate. As a journalist in the Daily Times during the Abacha regime, it was observed that some editorials published by the newspaper emanated from the minister of information's office in Abuja. External pressure, on the other hand, comes from the wider community or society. These range from advertisers, politicians, or even friends and families of journalists can constitute sources of this type or pressure. Pressure can cause a journalist to be irresponsible or unethical if the source of the pressure compels the journalist to carry out an action that is contrary to his/her ethical principles<sup>57</sup>.

iv. **Afghanistanism:** This is the practice of writing about far-away issues while shying away from tackling the problems at home. It originally applied to editorial writing but had come to be applied to all forms of journalistic writings<sup>58</sup>. During the Buhari era, commentators and analysts took to Afghanistanism, writing earnestly and candidly about tyranny and human rights violations in virtually every spot on the globe except Nigeria. He however added that all those other places were simply a metaphor for Nigeria. Afghanistanism can be a result of fear or lack of courage. Since charity should

begin at home, if the mass media shy away from tackling serious local or national problems by pre-occupying themselves with harmless discussions of issues that are largely irrelevant to a majority of their audience, then the journalists who work in these media are irresponsible and unethical, failing in their duty which the society expects them to perform with courage and dedication<sup>58</sup>.

v. **Bribery:** In journalism, the ethical problem of materialism is manifested in the form of bribery and acceptance of gifts. In the course of their duties, some journalists usually accept money and other non-monetary gifts. These might compromise their integrity and that of their respective media organizations. In Nigeria, the most common type of bribe in journalism is the so-called brown envelope which is a monetary bribe handed out to unethical journalists to pressurize him or her into doing what the giver wants. Once accepted, monetary bribes and other gifts tie the hands of journalists who then become incapable of being objective in reporting events and issues involving the people who give the gifts. Also, some publishers are in the habit of getting contracts from the government, such publishers always try to discourage their newspapers and magazines from publishing stories that are critical of the government. Objectivity is thus first casualty in reporting when journalists succumb to the evils of materialism as they attempt to please people whose bribes they have accepted<sup>58</sup>.

vi. **Sensationalism:** When a newspaper or any other mass media presents news in a way designed to arouse a quick and excited reaction, it is said to be guilty of sensationalism. This type of reaction is evoked when a newspaper, for instance, seizes on the most sordid disgusting aspect to play up in its new story. Some newspapers and soft-well magazines deliberately encourage this practice and thrive on it in Nigeria<sup>59</sup>. Examples of headlines that could be termed sensational include “OPV vs Ijaw Youth claims Five”, “Horror as OPC and Ijaw Youth Clash”, “Ethnic Conflicts in Ajegunle”, “Zamfara Governor Dares Obasanjo” and “Zamfara Goes Islamic”<sup>60</sup>.

vii. **Moonlighting:** To make ends meet, journalists sometimes take two jobs, by working for competing employers, ‘moonlighting’ is the act of holding two different jobs simultaneously and being paid for both creating room for conflict of interest and divided loyalty which constitutes fertile ground for

unethical behaviour by journalists<sup>59</sup>. Again, objectivity is usually the causality of this type of situation, if a moonlighting journalist is required to write a negative story about his or her second employer, such a journalist may not have the courage to carry out this assignment objectively and responsibly. Considering that objectivity and responsibility occupy a central position in journalistic performance, journalists who lack these two virtues could be considered as having been weighted in the balance and found wanting.

viii. **Self-Censorship:** Socially irresponsibility and unprofessional, is the practice of withholding information from viewers, listeners, and readers, especially during crises. This is touted as a crisis management tactic whose advocates fail to appreciate how much damage it does to their credibility. The Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) have a policy of maintaining stolid silence during crisis<sup>61</sup>.

ix. **Advertorial:** For many Nigerian newspapers, magazines, and the NYA, advertorial, the practice of failing to differentiate and separate advertisements from editorial matter is a survival strategy. They do not see anything unethical in this practice, adding the readers and the viewers are the losers, for they no longer know where editorial matter begins and where advertisements take over<sup>62</sup>. Where payment has been specifically made for the dissemination of news, such should be fully disclosed to its consumer.

x. **Deception:** Deception covers a wide range of practices, but at its heart is not being truthful with someone in order to get a news story. Some journalists practice deceit when they mis-represent themselves, go undercover, or use a hidden camera or tape recorders. For example, consumer reporters commonly do this when they are doing price comparisons. The absolutists would say no to this method, however, others would argue that there is nothing wrong if the method is used to get information to correct an abuse.

xi. **Fakery:** One of the major ethical issues confronting the media is fakery-the publishing of false stories. According to him, only the thoroughly unethical and unprofessional editor or reporter would

knowingly publish falsehoods as Lawrence Akapa (Top News) and Bop Opene (Prime People) did. Of course, both men paid the price as the Nigerian Union of Journalists promptly rose to the occasion, and nipped in the bud the dangerous development by blacklisting the erring newsmen. Also, according to The Press a publication of the NPC, several complaints of false stories have been received and adjudicated by the council<sup>63</sup>.

### **2.1.8 Press Laws and Guidelines Guiding Journalism Practice in Nigeria**

#### **Newspapers Laws of selected states of the Federation and the Obscene Publications Act**

(a) Criminal Code Act (i) Chapter 7 which runs from sections 50 to 60 deals with sedition and the importation of seditious or undesirable publication.

Section 51 makes it an offence to, inter-alia, utter seditious words, print, publish, sell, offer for sale, distribute, or reproduce or import any seditious publication and prescribes imprisonment of 2 years or a fine of N200 or both and for a subsequent offence, imprisonment for 3 years and forfeiture of any seditious publication to the state. It is also an offence to publish false news (s.59) and to publish defamatory matters against any foreign sovereignty.

(ii) Chapter 33 which is made up of sections 373 to 381 makes it a misdemeanour to publish any defamatory matter and prescribes a term of imprisonment of 1 year. Where the publisher knows the publication to be false he is liable to imprisonment for 2 years (section 375). However, that section is subject to the other provisions in that chapter 33, e.g. publication is not an offence if at the time it is made is for public benefit and the defamatory matter is true. The chapter goes on to make provisions for cases where certain publications may be absolutely or conditionally privileged.

Note: The Criminal Code Act is the major legislation on criminal matters. Although it is a federal legislation, it has been enacted by all the states in southern Nigeria as Criminal Code Law.

### **Penal Code Act**

The Act which prescribes sedition as an offence, also listed provisions in sections 416–421 for offences relating to the publication either by words, spoken or written or by mechanical means which are capable of inciting disaffection to the government (s.416); inciting hatred between classes (S.417); false news with intent to offend public peace (S.418) and possession of seditious articles (S.419); power to prohibit importation of publications (S.420) and punishment for the importation of prohibited publication (S.421).

Various terms of imprisonment extending to 7 years or fine or both are prescribed under the chapter. The Penal Code Act is the equivalent of the Criminal Code Act in the northern states of Nigeria.

### **Official Secrets Act**

This Federal Legislation restricts access of journalists and other persons to official information. It makes it an offence on the part of any person to transmit any classified matter to a person to whom it is not authorized on behalf of the government to transmit it or who obtains, reproduces, or retains any classified matter which he is not authorized on behalf of the government to obtain, reproduce or retain, as the case may be (see section 1).

Section 9 of the Act defines “classified matter” as “any information or thing which, under any system of security classification from time to time in use by or by any branch of the government, is not to be disclosed to the public and of which the disclosure to the public would be prejudicial to the security of Nigeria.”

### **Newspapers (Amendment) Act/Newspapers Laws**

(i) This Federal Legislation is meant to be regulatory, but it also makes the publication of certain statements in a Newspaper an offence (section 4(1)). Some states of the Federation have a similar

provision for the offence of publication of false statements in Newspapers. Some of these states are Edo and Delta States created from the old Bendel State (section 28 of Newspapers Law of Bendel State); Cross River and Akwa Ibom states created from the old Cross-River State (sections 16 & 17 Newspapers Law of Cross River State); Lagos State (section 21 Newspaper Law of Lagos State); The South Eastern States of Nigeria (see Newspaper Law, Laws of the South Eastern States of Nigeria).

Section 21 (1) of the Newspapers Law of Lagos State Cap N2 Laws of Lagos State, 2003 states as follows:-

“21(1) Any person who authorizes for publication, publishes, reproduces or circulates for sale in a Newspaper any statement, rumour or report knowing or having reason to believe that such statement, rumour or report is false shall be guilty of an offence and liable on conviction to a fine of N400 or to imprisonment for a term of 1 year.”

(ii) Aside from creating the offence referred to supra, this Federal Legislation generally sets out to regulate the operation of Newspapers. Thus it makes provision for the establishment by every Nigerian Newspaper of an office in the Federal Capital Territory; Appointment of the Editor of a Newspaper to be notified to the Minister; delivery of a signed copy of the Newspaper to the Minister and publication of the name of its editor in the Newspaper.

(iii) In Lagos State, the Newspapers Law CAP N2 (supra) makes extensive provisions in 27 sections for the Registration of Newspapers and other purposes in connection with Newspapers.

### **Obscene Publications Act**

This is also a Federal Legislation that seeks to prohibit the publication or distribution of any article or object deemed to be obscene and provides a fine not exceeding £200 or imprisonment not exceeding 3 years or both (section 4 (1)). The test of obscenity is provided in section 3(1).

### **The National Broadcasting Commission Act**

This is a Federal Legislation that sets out amongst other things to regulate and control the Broadcasting Industry and set policies with respect thereto. Section 1 of the Act establishes the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the regulatory authority, and section 2 lists the extensive powers of the Commission ranging from receiving, processing, and considering applications for the establishment or ownership or operation of Radio and Television stations.

Section 2(2) prohibits transmission by cable, Television, Radio Satellite, or any other medium of Broadcast except by the Act. Furthermore, the Act provides for the procedure for obtaining licenses and the granting of licenses as well as the terms of a license and renewal thereof. The Commission is imbued with the power to enforce the National Broadcasting Code made under the Act.

The NBC is viewed by many as lacking in independence as it is directly under the control of the Minister of Information and Communications as well as the President. It has been repeatedly accused of being quick to muzzle privately owned broadcast stations with little or no justification while turning a blind eye when government-owned stations violate the provisions of the Broadcasting Code, particularly during electioneering periods.

### **Nigeria Press Council Act**

(i) This is a Federal Legislation that provides for the establishment of the Nigerian Press Council “to promote high professional standards for the Nigerian press, and deal with complaints emanating from members of the public about the conduct of journalists ... and for other matters connected therewith.”

(ii) The Council is also charged with monitoring the activities of the press to ensure compliance with the code of professional and Ethical Conduct of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (sections 3 and 9)

## **Electoral Act**

(i) Although this legislation is not strictly a one in respect of the press, but to regulate the conduct of federal, state, and Area Council elections and for related matters, there are provisions therein for rules and regulations in the conduct of the press (print and electric media) regarding campaigns for elections by political parties and candidates.

(ii) Thus in sections 100 and 101 of the Act, provisions are made regarding media time and coverage to be allocated among the political parties and candidates, the use of public media, and the prohibition of broadcast at certain hours preceding the election and on election day

(iii) The Act makes a contravention of these provisions an offence and prescribes monetary fines on conviction.

## **Printing Presses Regulation Act/Printing Presses Regulation Law**

(i) The Printing Presses (Regulations) Act is a Federal Act for the regulation of printing presses and books and Newspapers printed in Nigeria.

(ii) There are corresponding Printing Press Regulation Laws in the States of the South-West of Nigeria. In Lagos State, it is the Printing Presses Regulations Law, Cap P12 Laws of Lagos State 2003. it is a short legislation of five (5) sections with S.5 giving the Governor the power to make regulations, inter alia, generally for carrying out the purposes of the law into effect. The subsidiary legislation made under S.5 contains general provisions relating to the operation of printing presses in the state.

## **Freedom of Information Act**

(i) The Freedom of Information Act which was signed into law in 2011 is one of the most revolutionary pieces of legislation ever made in the area of access to information in Nigeria.

(ii) It came about after years of constant and persistent but aggressive agitation and campaign by non-governmental organisations and media groups spear-headed by the Media Rights Agenda, a Lagos-based NGO with a bias for freedom and rights of the press. In a country where its leaders have an uncanny reputation for keeping public information from its citizenry, it was a famous victory indeed.

(iii) The Act makes records and information more freely available, provides for public access to public records and information, protects public records and information to the extent consistent with the public interest and the protection of personal privacy, protects serving public officers from adverse consequences for disclosing certain kinds of official information without authorization and establish procedures for the achievement of those purposes and for related matters.

(iv) Perhaps to remove any doubt about its intention to see that the Act achieves its purpose, the Attorney-General has rolled out guidelines to aid in the implementation of the Act.

(v) However, being still relatively new, the efficacy of the Act to achieve its aim is yet to be tested. It is still a laudable effort on the part of the Government.

### **The Rights of Journalists**

Although now expressly entrenched in the fundamental law i.e. the Constitution, the right to freedom of expression like the other fundamental rights is not absolute and is therefore subject from time to time to a host of exceptions and qualifications mostly from the government in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public health or to protect the rights of other persons. See section 45(1) of the 1999 Constitution, Cap C1 of the LFN, 2004. It has been argued that the right to freedom of expression is one granted to all citizens and not restricted to be enjoyed only by journalists, as such.

## **Legal Constraints on Press Freedom**

We have examined earlier the legal constraints on press freedom stemming from the restrictions and derogations on the fundamental right to freedom of expression contained in the Constitution itself, as well as the other legislations already mentioned and from the activities of the regulatory bodies. Other existing legal constraints to press freedom can be found in the Nigeria Press Council Act Cap N128 LFN, 2004. This decree established a council most of which members are appointed by the government with a mandate to supervise the conduct, work, administration, registration, and deregistration of journalists.

However, with democracy taking deeper root in Nigeria, especially since the commencement of the current experiment in democracy in 1999, there has been a noticeable improvement in the area of respect for the rights of journalists and the right to freedom of expression and the press. There is now less incidence of arbitrary arrests and detentions (in some cases killings) of journalists which characterised the hey-days of military dictatorship in Nigeria.

### **2.1.9 News in Journalistic Codes of Conduct**

Information journalism is based on several main assumptions:

1. The communicated items of news are true;
2. The classical model of a news story has an upside-down pyramid structure, and its text answers the questions of who, what, where, when, why, etcetera
3. The information must be reliable, precise, and credible.

Those are the principles that have accompanied journalism for many years. However, that paradigm is now in danger. Truth is being replaced by post-truth, and stories news by fake news. The creation of fake news is nothing new. Alexandra Kitty in her book *Don't Believe It! How Lies Become News* (2005) discusses many such cases. In 2002, Christopher Newton, an Associated Press reporter, quoted

the statements of two criminologists regarding the extent of crime. One of them supposedly worked at Stanford University, the other was supposed to be an expert at the Institute for Crime and Punishment, a Chicago-based think tank. The story was reprinted by several American newspapers, i.e. *The Washington Post*. The deceit was only discovered by a New York Times reporter. It turned out that none of the quoted experts had ever existed. Neither had there ever been a think tank of that name<sup>54</sup>. In the San Jose Mercury News newspaper, a student intern there quoted over thirty times sources with whom he had never spoken (1999)<sup>52</sup>.

In 2003, there was the widely-discussed case of Jason Blair of *The New York Times*. Blair copied other people's news stories, included interviews with people he had never met, and wrote reports from places he had never visited. His plagiaristic journalism was condemned, and he was fired from the NYT together with his superiors: Howell Raines and Gerald Boyd. A few years earlier, in 1996–1998, Stephen Glass of *The New Republican* wrote 27 articles partly or entirely made up (out of 41 he wrote in total); he mixed actual events with fabricated ones and quoted people who had never existed<sup>53</sup>. In 1980, Janet Cooke of *The Washington Post* fabricated a report on an 8-year-old boy who had been injected with drugs by his step father<sup>54</sup>. Even if the first case could be classified as plagiarism news, the other two surely belonged to the so-called fake news referred to herein. Many such stories would not have occurred if the editorial boards had observed their obligation to verify facts closely, and if the above-mentioned journalists/fabricators of news stories had not enjoyed the excessive trust of their superiors.

The problem of fakes (fake news) is certainly part of a more general category of journalistic deception. Elliot and Culver defined it as “an act of communicating messages not only by lying but also by withholding information, as to lead someone to have a false belief”<sup>56</sup>. Concealment of information is one of the methods of manipulation. In this context, fake news may also be considered a form of

disinformation and manipulation. However, in this article, I will consider fake news mainly as a type of false information existing both in traditional media (press, radio, television), and electronic media (websites, e-newspapers, Twitter, Facebook).

TVP S.A.'s journalist code of conduct includes guidelines stating that information ought to be separated from commentary and opinions, and be balanced and precise; it should be based on reliable sources so that the viewers can differentiate facts from speculation and hearsay<sup>56</sup>. Similar entries are included in the Code of journalistic conduct of the Association of Polish Journalists<sup>57</sup>. In its very first sentence, the Journalistic Code of Conduct of the Association of Journalists of the Republic of Poland states that "The basic ethical responsibility of a journalist is to seek and publish the truth". It then goes on to state that "any manipulation of the facts is prohibited"<sup>58</sup>. The entire journalistic community holds in high esteem the Ethical Media Charter. Its first principle is the principle of truth which stipulates that "the communicated information be in line with the truth and reliable, and to report facts without any distortions in their appropriate context, and if an incorrect piece of information was propagated, it should be corrected immediately"<sup>56</sup>. The Declaration of the Principles on the Conduct of Journalists of the International Federation of Journalists states that "Respect for truth is the first obligation of a journalist"<sup>57</sup>.

The American Code of Conduct states the need to "seek truth and report it" (Code of Ethics, Society of Professional Journalists) while the ASNE Statement of Principles in a section regarding Truth and Accuracy states: "Every effort must be made to assure that the news content is accurate, free from bias and in context, and that all sides are presented fairly"<sup>56</sup>. That short review of codes indicates that none of them permits any manipulation of the facts, and the assumption that a news story communicates truth or is an expression of a search for such is the central notion around which the communication of information is organised.

### 2.1.10 Concept of Fake News

Like a bug, fake news appears to have come to stay in the lexicon of journalism. While gathering and reporting news remain a core function of journalism, the struggle against fake news has made it difficult in some instances to decipher what is the truth and what is false. Before delving into what is fake news, it may suffice to first examine what is news. News is the description of a timely and uncommon event in society<sup>39</sup>. This definition is confining in light of other observations that the old understanding of the news as a report of an uncommon event has shifted in the present digital context, which is characterised by the proliferation of social media<sup>40</sup>. In other definition, the news is the primary format in which media of all kinds carry current information on a public event<sup>41</sup>. Therefore, it is sufficient to state that news is information concerning recent or on-going occurrences. Any information that makes it easier to understand significant societal events is news. A thorough account or report of an event or occurrence could be regarded as news. Furthermore, news aims to tell people what they want to know, need to know, and should know. Any story must be thorough and include all pertinent information to qualify as news. This information must be true in all respects. Anyone who narrates an incident or occurrence should not tamper with facts. He needs to report them truthfully and objectively<sup>42</sup>.

The definitions reflect currency as a major determinant of news and that news can be distributed through many mediums including social media. However, the old idea of the news is dying due to the imposition of new media technologies on the news processes, such as the collapse of gatekeepers and the blending of the lines separating news, advertising, and entertainment. Questions therefore may arise regarding what is news in the contemporary sense given the limitations and biases of all media, especially those of the digital environment. The genre of news is rapidly evolving. Thus, news has become a process of involvement and interactions, not merely a series of messages, a communication

system, or a commodity. In a setting of shared knowledge, influence, access, and circulation, the news is participatory engagement<sup>43</sup>.

Any news item that has elements contrary to that which are identified as ingredients of “original” news is fake news. In other words, information that fails to meet up with these professional definitions of news is fake news. When facts and figures in a specific narrative or article are purposefully misrepresented, fake news emerges. News is deemed distorted when it favours one ideology over another, is unfair to one group of public officials over another, is overtly superficial, is overly focused on people rather than on issues, or is overly prone to dramatic action and exaggeration. It may also be deemed distorted when it focuses too much on a social disorder or other unfavourable news. They are news stories that purposely and deliberately mislead readers by being untrue<sup>44</sup>.

Historically, the advent of fake news is as old as the existence of man. Scholars have traced the beginning of fake news to the incident that occurred between Adam and Eve and Satan. The serpent misrepresented the direction God provided to Adam, the first man to walk the earth when he spoke to Eve, Adam's wife. God had warned Adam not to eat from the tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the middle of the garden and that if he did, he would undoubtedly die<sup>45</sup>. The account, however, revealed that the serpent told Eve she would not die while her husband was away, despite God's instructions against eating the fruit because the moment they do, their eyes will be opened, making them as wise as gods who can distinguish between good and evil. That misinformation was spread on purpose and with the intent of destroying the friendly bond between God and man<sup>46</sup>.

Scholars have established that fake news has been studied as far back as 1925 as evident in Harper's article Fake News and the Publics published the same year<sup>47</sup>. In contemporary times, especially since the most recent U.S. presidential election, concerns about "fake news" have increased. Millions of

misleading or outright false headlines were shared online during 2016, causing many to believe that "fake news" has emerged as a potent and malicious force in the world of online news media, with grave ramifications for democracy. For instance, the CEO of Apple Tim Cook claimed that false information is "destroying people's minds," while Hillary Clinton described the spread of false information as "an epidemic" with "real-world effects." As a result, news outlets like *BuzzFeed* and *Slate* as well as digital giants like *Facebook* and *Google* have taken action to stop the creation and spread of fake news, while teachers continue to educate elementary and middle school children on how to spot false information<sup>48</sup>.

On the other hand, some scholars have argued that since news is a social construct, the term 'fake' should not be attached. They believe that the concept is slippery and not applicable and posit that such fake information should be called a lie without mincing a word. However, the issue around the medium through which the fake information emanates and spreads presents a genuine consideration in working with nomenclature as fake news<sup>49</sup>.

Fake news also refers to a wide range of phenomena, including daring political campaigning and propaganda. Although there are many definitions of fake news, it can be contended that the term consistently refers to either inaccurate or misleading information (misinformation) and false information that is deliberately circulated to deceive people (disinformation)<sup>50</sup>. The duality of the misinformation/disinformation discourse makes the concept clearer. Disinformation is stories in which the main sender is unaware of the deception included in his message. While there is a significant amount of misinformation in the media and public debate, the issue of intent as a contributing factor to damage is of importance in discussing what fake news is. The disinformation genre of discourses, which always has the goal of manipulating minds and influencing public behaviour in favour of a specific ideology or belief system is the more extreme and destructive type of narrative that has been used throughout human history<sup>51</sup>.

Another explanation of the concept of fake news identifies three dimensions which are fabrications, hoaxes, and humorous fakes. Both traditional and new media outlets utilize sensationalism and "fake news," which includes significant fabrications, to draw readers and generate revenue. Falsification, fabrication, and exaggeration are their hallmarks. Hoaxes are purposeful mass deceptions disseminated as news in social media or traditional media, and they frequently get picked up and wrongly confirmed by presumably reliable news sources, harming the subject. Satire and news parodies that use irony and humour to impersonate legitimate, reputable news sources are examples of humorous fakes. Another example is a news game show where strange news items are read aloud and listeners are asked to call in and guess which is real or fake<sup>52</sup>.

Even with advanced technology, scholars have raised an alarm about the possibility of a more entrenched fake news practice. The creation of fake research paper submissions that were accepted by prominent conferences has already been made possible by advanced algorithms. At the same time, news outlets have started utilising artificial intelligence (AI) technologies to produce accurate articles on common subjects like sports results. These discoveries collectively imply that someday even more sophisticated algorithms will automatically produce false information that is believable<sup>53</sup>. This assumption lays some credence to why many scholars and analysts have blamed technology, particularly social media for the unprecedented spread of fake news vis-à-vis its implication on journalism practice across newspapers, broadcast stations, and even online news platforms.

More than any other developments in the history of mass media, social media's phenomenal rise over the past few decades have elevated it to the centre of social interactions. Social media has transformed people from being providers to processors to the end users of all information. This evolution is typically based on the idea that information is essential for effective modern social, economic, and

political development. The problem of fake news is spreading like wildfire thanks to the development of new media, and its detrimental effects on well-known online newspapers are clear to see. It has been further argued that the rise in popularity of fake news may be both a cause of and a result of the waning faith in traditional media. If fake news influences traditional newspapers, consider what it will do to major online publications. In light of the need to maintain the prominence that the print newspaper once held in agenda setting and, among other things, in holding the government accountable to the people, society stands to lose out greatly if well-known online newspapers, in the face of disappearing hardcopy editions, lose the widely acknowledged and documented influence of the media as a result of fake news on social media channels that are lifted for publication.

Government and news managers are diverted from ensuring that the true position prevails over fake news that has been misrepresented as real because fake news is more likely to be completely believed given its salacious and sensational nature along with its ability to feed into the sentiment of the general public. In essence, having two different versions of a news story may confuse readers and perhaps damage their confidence in the easily accessible news media. When this occurs, the media's crucial informational functions that make them the fourth estate of the realm are compromised<sup>54</sup>.

No doubt, the notions of political freedom of citizens seen as autonomous thinkers able to freely exercise their judgment without state interference and empowered to actively participate in civic life, as well as the idea that (fair, objective, and independent) information is an essential component of democratic government has been put under strain by the fake news controversy<sup>55</sup>. More so, Fake news is not an isolated phenomenon. They are socially located, expressed, and created with certain goals in mind. Therefore, the structure of Nigerian society, the nature of its politics, politicians, and other elite groups, the media's structure, the mediatisation of politics with all its sensationalism and cantankerousness, easy access to technologies of production and consumption, and the alienation of

citizens from the political and economic system have made the spread of fake news and their consumption and interpretation quite easy and common<sup>56</sup>.

A summary of the factors that influenced fake news presents a concern regarding the practice of journalism. First, the first amendment and the declaration of human rights granted citizens the right to hold and express their ideas in any form they wish to do so. Again, this is an information era. Information of all kinds serves as the primary motivating force or source of producing power in today's society, which is referred to as an information society- a civilisation that depends more on information flows. Now, there is a notable increase in the creation, flow, and consumption of information of all kinds because people can produce, distribute, and consume information of all kinds, whether true or false, thanks to the content production platforms provided by new communication and information technology. Additionally, information must be generated and disseminated for the platforms to be used actively although it has been noted that the spread of fake news is more about it being a social phenomenon rather than a technology advancement predicament. In other words, fake news is a social upheaval that has been enhanced by advanced technology like social media. For instance, it was reported that The Washington Post published around 7,600 pieces in 2017 that contained false information and photographs. It stands for a troubling media dilemma in the twenty-first century<sup>57</sup>.

Another major factor that has been identified as responsible for the proliferation of fake news as empowered by social media is the structure and configuration of the mainstream media which some have tagged as elitist and beyond the reach of the citizenry. To ensure simpler media access for all potential users and customers, a study of the structure and operations of the mainstream media proposed that the existing bureaucracy as well as commercial and professional predominance in media systems be broken down. It is crucial to note that only wealthy and influential members of society have access to the media, particularly the mainstream media. The likelihood of fake news and

misinformation spreading increases significantly with access to the mainstream media restricted to the wealthy and influential, who are interested in competing for, or retaining power. Therefore, it can be suggested that potential consumers' inability to access mainstream media drove them to become interested in alternative media, specifically social media<sup>59</sup>. This situation gave birth to a new phenomenon in citizen journalism and its baggage of challenges within the sphere of journalism practice<sup>58</sup>.

The term 'fake news' is “false, often sensational information disseminated under the guise of news reporting”<sup>58</sup>. The term has been gaining global attention over the years it was named the Collins Dictionary Word of the Year in 2017 due to its increased usage by 365% in the Collins Corpus. Fake news is information deliberately fabricated and published to deceive and mislead others into believing falsehood or doubtful messages. The British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) defines fake news as “completely false information, photos or videos purposefully created and spread to confuse or misinform; information, photos or videos manipulated to deceive, or old photographs shared as new; satire or parody which means no harm but can fool people”<sup>56</sup>. Globally, the issue of fake news has assumed increased concern because of its impact on the 2016 US Presidential election campaigns and the Brexit referendum. Furthermore, one of Nigeria’s independent verification and fact-checking platforms, Dubawa, which is supported by the Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ) defines fake news or false information as fraudulent, inaccurate, or false verbal or visual messages disseminated for public attention through the conventional or social media, hugely to mislead, misinform or misdirect. It is a fluid subject that is differently perceived, interpreted, and understood by individuals depending on many factors.

Fake news is often embellished, sensationalised, and made alarmingly attractive. Sometimes, it can be difficult to detect fraudulent news especially when such stories contain authoritative lies except through critical examination of the words mostly designed to capture and retain the attention of

receivers in uncommon ways. Fake news is subtly and sophisticatedly presented to hide its falsity with unverifiable sources or claims. Fake news violates contextual and multicultural realities through mischief and ignorance presented as valid information. Furthermore, Steinmetz (2018 September 6, online) notes that fake news debases the truth and causes “confusion of fantasy and reality” in the minds of the audience. Three significant factors characterise the current brand of fake news. First, the ease by which people can create content; second, the distribution patterns across new and social media, and third, the political economy of the online domain which enables and incentivises the creation of these forms of news. She further noted that anyone with internet access can effectively produce and distribute content of any kind of quality and that “people can avail of the various functionalities of computer software such as Photoshop and create highly believable contents. Fake news can travel very far on the internet<sup>57</sup>. The ‘profile’ of fake news was facilitated by the advent of the internet; the rise of populism politics in different parts of the world like the 2016 US presidential election; the rise of tyrannical leaders, and; the Brexit referendum<sup>59</sup>.

Fake news is a complex phenomenon that can be defined based on three parameters as suggested, the type of content created and shared; the intentions of those behind this, and; the forms of dissemination. The study further identified seven different categories of fake news in the following order: satire/parody, misleading content, impostor content, fabricated content, false connection, false context, and manipulated content. In another way, one can collapse the seven categories into two broad forms of fake news, namely:

- i. high-profile fake news
- ii. low-profile fake news

High-profile fake news refers to misleading information and other contents that emanate from prominent sources while low-profile fake news is simply the opposite of high-profile fake news, that

is, disinformation that emerges from subtle, inconspicuous, or ordinary sources. In addition, four specific sources of fake news have been variously identified:

- i. state/government fake news
- ii. organisational/institutional fake news
- iii. group-based fake news
- iv. individual fake news

Fake news is a real challenge in Nigeria, especially given the country's fragile social setting, loose democratic culture, poverty, illiteracy, depressing human conditions, inflation, weak economy, intolerance, and high tendencies for disunity among the people of the country. As Nigeria rises to curb the negative impact of fake news on its democratic process, a study offers some recommendations to help individuals and newsrooms instantly identify and avoid being victims of fake news:

1. Check sources: individuals are encouraged to fall back on the most trusted news brands they can rely on for their news
2. Fact-check from multiple sources
3. Use verification tools
4. Check metadata
5. Think before broadcasting/publishing
6. Media literacy: increase the standard of education and media literacy particularly for young people to be highly critical of what to trust on conventional and social media platforms
7. Use fact-checking sites
8. Individuals and newsrooms should institute a culture of fact-checking for stories and claims.

A good introduction answers these questions in just a few pages and, by summarising the relevant arguments and the past evidence, gives the reader a firm sense of what was done and why. Why fake

news spreads fast. It should be noted that fake news is not new. It is as old as one can remember. However, its intensification has more in recent times because of the wide usage of the internet and cheap access to social media platforms, competitive politics and deepening poverty, and ethno-religious fight for supremacy. Other reasons could be adduced for the fast spread of fake news in the country. Some of them include:

1. General distrust of elites, leaders, and politicians by the majority of Nigerians. Nigerian elites and politicians enjoy low credibility ratings among the population because of their record of failures, lies, and unworthy conduct in several respects. Because of that, many Nigerians tend to believe whatever negative information dished out by opponents.
2. Absence or most often late arrival of official information on issues. This creates a vacuum conveniently filled in by rumors and disinformation.
3. The availability of cheap data services is facilitating explosive use of social media platforms (Facebook, WhatsApp, Twitter, and YouTube) to spread rumors, propaganda, and fake information.
4. Sensationalised fake news is disseminated for economic reasons, especially on social media, where efforts are often made to attract people to pages and timelines of bloggers and senders for clicks
5. Desperate politicians, ethnic and religious jingoists, foreign interests, and mischief makers generate fake news to influence or persuade the audience
6. The low capacity of the media to be able to gather, process, and verify immediate and distant information in real-time exacerbates fake news through the internet or social media platforms where the majority lack gatekeeping processes
7. Government tight control as well as excessive commercialisation in the broadcast media excludes alternative ideas and the opposition thereby forcing them to respond even if mischievously by spreading fake news on social media that lack gatekeepers.

8. Authoritative lies are very common from government sources at all levels. Such lies are reported as news with little effort to investigate their veracity by the media.

➤ **Fake News and the Debates over the Emerging Concept of ‘Post-truth Political Era’**

One key reason that makes fake news spread fast nowadays, especially during political election times in developing countries such as Nigeria is, arguably, what Professor Pate calls “executive intimidating” while describing the relationships between journalists and politicians during a Mass Communication undergraduate class in 2004 at University of Maiduguri<sup>56</sup>. Fake news thrives in Nigeria because nowadays objective facts are fast becoming as illusionary as a mirage to many Nigerians, especially citizens of social media. Stories and news appealing to emotion and personal beliefs appear to be more believable and capable of shaping public opinion, a phenomenon that seems to erode the credibility of gate-kept news and reports and verified content. This situation perfectly matches what is lately referred to as the “post-truth” time. Unsurprisingly, though, lying is often attributed to politicians; many of them do not regard telling a lie as bad behaviour, an argument Colin Wight, a Professor of International Relations at the University of Sydney agrees with, saying, “lying is not an aberration in politics”.

However, Professor Wight argues that “there is nothing new about politicians and the powerful telling lies, spinning, producing propaganda, [or] dissembling,” behaviour that is in tandem with Machiavellianism, that “all leaders might, at some point, need to tell lie.” Historically, this can be traced back to Plato’s coinage of the term “noble lie”, which refers to false information deliberately spread by a crème de la crème of the society, especially political elites to preserve social accord or promote an agenda. Post-truth as “circumstances in which objective facts are less influential in shaping public opinion than appeals to emotion and personal belief”<sup>60</sup>. As Professor Pate noted, looking at the strong affinity between fake news peddling and social media vis-à-vis the skyrocketing levels of social media use among Nigerians, in no time could the post-modernist Machiavellianism, noble lie, or

untruth permeate the Nigerian polity and cause unimagined topsy turvy, a phenomenon the Nigerian Information and Culture Minister, Lai Mohammed describes as “the greatest threat to democracy and security” hence, the need for urgent action to tackle the menace.

#### **2.1.10.1 Effects of Fake News in Nigeria**

The term fake news is not new in the country. However, the attachment of the negative word, ‘fake’ to the word ‘news’ heightens the degree of the perceived effect of the term. News, simply put, is an account of what happened. Because of the value attached to it, news is envisaged to be the truth. However, in the era of post-truth and for a Nigeria that has lived in non-truth for years even “the two fundamentally contradictory terms can occupy the same textual space”<sup>61</sup>. Recently, the BBC interviewed a group of Nigerian experts on their opinion about the greatest challenges of the 21st Century. Many of them indicated that the failure of credible information sources is one of the serious problems facing Nigerians, indeed, mankind. In a related development, Professor Umaru Pate has criticised the Nigerian media, particularly broadcast media for allotting greater percentages of their news, reports, and programmes to political matters, “feast on hatred and incitements... Everything political is news but burning issues poverty and violent conflicts do not seem to worry us. This is bad.”

The scholar went further to blame the rising levels of fake news in the country on the “absence of patriotism, ethnic and religious bigotries, political affiliations and foreign interests” The Zonal Director of Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) in charge of the North-Central zone of Nigeria, Dr. Igomu Onoja cited in Itedge News argued that, “it [is] part of media ethics to ensure balance reporting and give all parties equal hearing” and desist from journalism capable of spreading fake news that could undermine the Nigerian democratic process. Dr. Onoja cites an example of fake news broadcast over a media outlet in Jos, Plateau State (north central of Nigeria) saying, “we have radio

stations in Jos clapping for people that say that the Plateau governor is mentally deranged” (Itedge News, 2018 September 10, online).

As a matter of “post-truth” fact, truth has nowadays shifted to becoming relative; facts now have alternatives, and news is weaponised, a phenomenon Abdullahi (2017 March 13, online) quoted Nigeria’s Information and Culture, Minister, Lai Mohammed describing it as “the greatest threat to democracy and security as it played a role in the civil war in the country and that Nigeria could not afford to fall victim to the same circumstances that led to the war”. Furthermore, realising the dangers of fake news, the Federal Government of Nigeria launched a national campaign against fake news on July 12, 2018, to enlighten Nigerians and counter its prevalence. Indeed, fake news is summarily unethical, dangerous, provocative, and subversive to peace and societal serenity especially in a multicultural setting like Nigeria as it heightens tension and builds fear and mistrust among people. Fake news could “threaten and destroy” the country as the Minister of Information cautioned<sup>63</sup>. “The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people<sup>64</sup>”. Section 39 of the 1999 Constitution states that:

- i. every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and receive and impart ideas and information without interference; and
- ii. without prejudice to the generality of Sub-section (1) of this Section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish, and operate a medium for the dissemination of information, ideas, and opinions.

The constitution was framed to promote, promote and uplift the process of democratisation. The constitution has recognised freedom of expression and freedom of the press as fundamental elements in our democracy. Democracy thrives when people have free access to genuine and correct information about issues and matters that affect them to make informed decisions and choices<sup>65</sup>. Therefore, the escalating effects of fake news and ‘alternative facts’ are direct assaults on fundamental principles and

practices of democracy. This is because while Section 39 of the Constitution provides for freedom to hold and impart opinions, ideas, and information without interference, “interference is exactly what fake news does”. In fact, by battling for space and vying for acceptability with authentic information and news, fake news deprives people of the very constitutional right to hold opinions and receive and impart ideas and information.

Side by side with authentic information, the creation of alternative facts often makes it difficult for people to distinguish truth from untruth. When people get confused as to what is the truth, or genuine information, they cannot create shared meanings in conversations, let alone hold their political representatives accountable for their stewardships. The Information and Democracy Commission (IDC) notes that: “Political control of the media, subjugation of news and information to private interests, the growing influence of corporate actors who escape democratic control, online mass disinformation, violence against reporters and editors, and the undermining of quality journalism, threaten the exercise of the right to knowledge.”

1. Selective reporting and promotion of prejudices about groups and individuals based on stereotypes, incomplete facts, mischief, and ignorance.
2. Spreading of manipulative or fabricated stories and pictures regarding the complexities of our composition; often, matters are ethnicised, religionised, regionalised, or politicised to the detriment of the collective good.
3. Presentation of poorly researched information due to low capacities of media professionals thereby manifesting in shallow reporting and fake news.
4. Common tendency of reporting inter-group conflicts out of their fundamental sociological, economic, political, and other contexts, often resulting in fakery.

5. The promotion of statements of politicians, ethnic champions, religious zealots, and other interested parties without being critical or fact-checking information about specific contentious issues.
6. Generalised statements not supported by facts and figures on very sensitive national integrative issues.
7. Official lies from governments and officials through established sources have highlighted the manner of dissemination of fake news in Nigeria. Some of these are through:

### **2.1.10.3 Consequences of Fake News**

Some critical repercussions of fake news in the society could include the following:

- a. Fake news can undermine the unity and peace of the country with explosive consequences
- b. By its nature, democracy looks adversarial, but fake news makes it worse
- c. Fake news can exacerbate distrust, division, and violence in the already divided diverse polity
- d. Fake news can undermine the confidence and certainty of the citizens in the media; and
- e. Fake news can promote anti-democratic tendencies that can subvert confidence in the system, and undermine.

### **2.1.10.4 Types of fake news**

Based on the above-mentioned examples, one can develop a general classification of fake news items, which differ mainly in terms of their intentionality, and precision of description. The topic is not important, just like in the case of a real news story, as it does not determine the genre features of a text.

Therefore, fake news can be divided into:

1. Intentionally untrue fake news, satirical, “with a pinch of salt” (satire news, etc.), sometimes referred to as truthiness<sup>27</sup>
2. Fake news which imitates real news, but is completely fabricated

- 3 Fake news created based on real news, subjected to manipulation
- 4 Real news is referred to as fake only because someone did not like it.

One should not consider fake news as those pieces of information which were reported “in good faith”, corrected pieces of news, accidentally incorrect or unverified, which were later shown to be false. In the case of news stories in 1 and 2, those are news stories that were completely made up (2) or which in a satirical way commented on actual events (1), thus shifting the emphasis of official interpretations towards the satirical interpretation. The third type applies to news stories which were created by adding a fabricated “fact” (or “facts”) either to stories already present in the public sphere, or to just create stories that mainly include real information, but the additional component turns them into fake news. Fake news of the third type is particularly dangerous as it is difficult to question its authenticity, and it is only possible upon multi-faceted comparative studies of the event itself using proper observation and seeking its sources, or through juxtaposing (triangulating) all available descriptions of a given event published by the media, with particular consideration of those media which are considered trustworthy<sup>64</sup>.

#### **2.1.10.5 Overview of Fake News Issues in Nigeria**

Nigeria is a country in tension characterised by security threats in different parts of the country. These threats are manifested in the forms of multiple conflicts, systemic and widespread corruption, debilitating poverty, weak institutions, threats of secession as well as perceived marginalisation, anger, hatred, and economic challenges in a time when the preference for untrue information is rising – i.e., post-truth era<sup>64</sup>. These issues are offensively, progressively, and relentlessly destroying relationships, heightening animosities across communities, and threatening democratic survival in the country. Arguably, all of that is facilitated by the revolution in information and communication technologies (ICT) that have democratised and simplified access and dissemination of information across space and

time, many other countries, Nigeria, too, is battling with the rise in populism politics, youth radicalisation, extremism, terrorism, drug and human trafficking, ethnic nationalism, hate, and dangerous speech, fake news and the rewriting of the country's history, among others. Indeed, these are critical times for the media and the country<sup>66</sup>.

The political climate in the country has changed rapidly in recent years, signaling innovative developments and strange challenges in the country's democratic system. By and large, the current political culture in the country is inextricably linked to the growing development of information and communication technologies (ICT). Fake news can mislead the public and cause tension in an already tense political climate with communal and reprisal attacks here and there in addition to the Boko Haram conflict. He stressed that if the media would cultivate the culture of verifying information and fact-checking (if necessary) before going to press, the spread of fake news could be contained. This has severely affected the delivery and form of political communication and the communication of political ideas in our democratic system, as well as shifted and undermined the accountability for those messages. For instance, what was labelled 'yellow journalism' and 'character assassination/slander' have metamorphosed into what is today known as 'fake news' and 'fraudulent news'; these are terms that sound 'big' and portend devastating effects in the society.

These terms are fuelled and spread by the power of modern technology. In the words of Egan, "online, lies and truth look the same. This has been a boon for professional liars, (who) use these platforms to market falsehood; as vehicles for personal fame, or, as a way to spread propaganda". These have raised concerns that Nigerians are constantly and increasingly accessing inaccurate and/or misleading content without verification (gatekeeping) or verifiable attribution<sup>67</sup>. Fundamentally, the breed of 'yellow journalism', 'fabricated or manipulated stories' 'fraudulent content' and 'character assassination' and 'fake news' are largely new technology-dependent (e.g., social media platforms and the internet) rather

than traditional technologies such as radio, TV, newspaper or magazine<sup>66</sup>. Thus, while we grapple with what modern technology has enabled us to do, “we also face a new wave of change, which we have only started to understand the ramifications of<sup>68</sup>.

The concerns around recent, or newer technologies such as ‘artificial intelligence’ and ‘machine learning’ show that any regulatory response to stem fake news peddled via new technologies, whether by state actors or technology developers, needs to be as “dynamic as the technological mischief it seeks to contain”<sup>67</sup>. The critical question is: how can politics aid regulations to spur the development and sustainability of our democratic system while preserving its legitimacy to embrace internet-based and social media platforms in the context of promoting the integrity and values of the democratic process in a multicultural Nigeria? This paper focuses on the trend of fake news and the emerging post-truth political era and their potential impacts on the Nigerian polity. Recommendations for mitigating the negative effects of fake news and post-truth political circumstances in society are offered in the concluding sections.

#### **2.1.10.6 Fake news in the History of Journalism**

The existence of false news which did not include descriptions of an actual state of reality has a very long history reaching as far back as antiquity. The Acta Diurna, a proto-newspaper of 47 AD a fact which was reported by Pliny the Elder included information on the phoenix, a mythical bird which was supposedly displayed in Rome<sup>14</sup>. In 1747, Benjamin Franklin published in the London General Advertiser the statement of a young mother Polly Baker accused of extramarital sex. The speech was supposed to have made such an impression on the jury that they acquitted her of the charges. 30 years later Franklin admitted that he had invented Polly Baker<sup>15</sup>. The 19th and 20th centuries offered many news stories that resulted in wars (not always directly but through manipulated influence), e.g. the Spanish- -American War of 1898, a news story on the Gulf of Tonkin incident that started the war in

Vietnam, and the story on weapons of mass destruction which were supposedly held by Saddam Hussein<sup>68</sup>.

The existence of Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) was used as a pretext to start the Second Iraqi War. These latter could be referred to as propaganda news considering the goal for which they were fabricated. One of the biggest scandals was the fabrication of a media fact by the Cable News Network (CNN) journalist Peter Arnett, who accused the USA of using the prohibited sarin gas against the civilian population during a covert operation in Laos. It later turned out that what was used was not sarin but tear gas, and not against the civilian population but armed Vietnamese. In TVP, the Polish public television, the host of an opinion show released a fabricated news story that one of the leaders of the opposition had been arrested. It was supposed to serve as an illustration of a discussion on post-truth, yet it had become an example of fake news<sup>69</sup>. There have been “news” stories published via Twitter or Facebook regarding the death of the singer Gotie, the assassination of Barack Obama, stories on the stealing of furniture from the White House by Hilary Clinton and her collaboration with terrorists, and many others which constituted examples of the so-called post-truth. In her book, Kitty provided examples of dozens if not hundreds of fake news items. They included some amusing stories. In 1917, a New York Evening Mail journalist Henry Louis Mencken wrote an article about the history of the bathtub recalling the reasons and events that led to the installation of the first bathtub in the White House by President Millard Fillmore<sup>70</sup>. It turned out that Mencken had fabricated his story.

Other newspapers repeated it indiscriminately with The Washington Times quoting Mencken’s report 75 years after it had originally been published. In the Polish media market, there have also been instances of fake news. Some of the more widely known included the alleged death of actor Andrzej Grabowski, the false news on the early death of Gen. Wojciech Jaruzelski, and the manipulations associated with the statements made by the French presidential candidate Marine Le Pen, who, during

a meeting with journalists, was supposed to have said that she would dismantle the EU in cooperation with Jarosław Kaczyński, the leader of the Polish party Law and Justice (PiS)<sup>71</sup>. Tabloids have long specialised in fake news, however, the news stories about a whale swimming up the Vistula towards Warsaw, extraterrestrials, and flying hamsters were entertainment-focused and were rarely considered as serious or real. Today, much fake news is created in posts underneath e-newspaper articles and in information sections of websites. They may refer, for instance, to fabricated cases of aggression of refugees/immigrants from Arabic countries against the indigenous inhabitants of Europe. It is difficult to combat such news stories as there are no tools for verifying them, though some European states (e.g. Norway, Germany, France, and Sweden) are introducing complex procedures for verifying their reliability which will enable them to exclude fake ones from circulation<sup>72</sup>.

Twitter is particularly sensitive to people publishing fake news as it is considered by various media outlets and journalists as a reliable source of information, which it is not<sup>73</sup>. On 11 November 2013, there appeared on Twitter posts by one of the leaders of Ruch Narodowy (National Movement) Artur Zawisza, who supposedly complimented the actions of rioters who tried to set fire to the fence of the Russian embassy. He allegedly posted on his profile: “God, honour, fatherland! The Marshal would have been proud”, to add a day later: “The time of true patriots will come one day”<sup>74</sup>. It turned out that Zawisza had a different account, and the quoted @ZrturZawisza1 was a fake one. Fake news was also posted on the profiles of the former president of Poland Bronisław Komorowski, and the alleged accounts of PiS politicians: Jarosław Kaczyński and Antoni Macierewicz. The best known and resounding slip-up was made by Tomasz Lis, a journalist, in a talk show he hosted when he assigned to Kinga Duda, daughter of Andrzej Duda, a candidate in the Polish presidential election, a statement published on her fake Twitter account. She was supposed to have posted that when her father becomes president, he would return the Oscar for the film “Ida”<sup>72</sup>. The account was fake and the journalist had to apologise for his mistake.

Differences between fake news and news the ontological difference is of first importance, as all others result from it. Its essence is that fake news has no reference, i.e. does not refer to any 'extranews' reality. Even if one takes the constructivist view that a news story is a construct of reality, then fake news items are constructs devoid of that reality. A real news story – considered as such by journalists – possesses, i.e. qualities of genuineness, objectivity, materiality, authenticity, reliability, precision, credibility, and verifiability. That is why fake news is usually difficult to verify as it does not include as its reference any objective reality understood, e.g. within the categories of inter-subjectivity. Fake news is subjectively hollow, its objective marker is nonexistent, and therefore (usually) cannot be verified. Its ontology remains fictional, while its epistemology is the inability to recognise this and reach the truth due to the subjective solipsism of the recognising subject.

Stating the matter simply, a fabricated news story “sits” inside the head of its creator. Creators of fake news do not care for the truth; they are only focused on achieving favourable results through communicating untrue pieces of information<sup>73</sup>. Another difference is ethical. A news story which is a real piece of information should be objective, carefully selected, precisely studied with care for maintaining the relationship between the piece of information and the described reality, diligently communicated, and based on the honest attitude of a journalist who is not trying to fabricate reality, but to seek the truth, while fake news does not include any of those features. It is intentionally fraudulent, its goal is to deceive the receiver, often with an underlying aim of achieving a material, political, personal, or group gain. The goal of fake news can also be to entertain or excite (such a function was fulfilled by the stories about the whale in the Vistula, the Loch Ness monster, the extraterrestrials in Emilcin, etc.), but even in that case, it would be difficult not to notice their commercial aspect.

However, one should differentiate fake news from journalistic provocation, which is also sometimes based on deceit, intentionally misleading the interlocutor, or creating a false situation through which the investigative journalist can achieve her/his intended goal which could not be achieved otherwise

(e.g. the provocation of The Chicago Sun-Times journalists who opened the Mirage bar to catch corrupt officials red-handed)<sup>74</sup>. In the latter case, the fabrication is, however, only a method leading to a goal impossible to be achieved through traditional means, and the fabrication is revealed to the receivers in the journalistic material and described as a part of the journalistic investigation. It is to the contrary with fake news items, the “real” essence of which remains hidden from the reader, and they do not serve “the truth” as they are lies, fabrications, serving political, entertainment, or commercial ends.

### **2.1.10.7 How to Identify Fake News**

The last few months have been filled with news worthy items, ranging from the 2020 Edo State and Ondo State elections, Ruga bill, hate speech bill, coronavirus, revolution now protest, end SARS protest, etc. Even as all these items of news made waves, so also are their fake versions. But how does one identify fake news?

1. Publisher’s credibility: Does the publishing site meet academic standards? What is the domain name? What is the publication’s point of view? Who is the author? All these questions will help you identify the authenticity of the news.
2. Pay attention to quality and timeliness: Do you notice spelling errors? If so abort your reading mission. Reputable sources have high proofreading and grammatical standards. Is the story current or recycled? Make sure an older story is not taken out of context.
3. Check the sources and citations: How did you find the article? What is the story saying? Is the information available on other sites? If not something is missing. Credible journalism is fed by fact-gathering<sup>74</sup>.
4. Always visit a fact-checking website. There are many good ones such as factCheck.org, Internationalfact Checking Network (IFCN), Politifact.com, and snopes.com. Do your detective work and feel more confident being able to identify fact versus fiction<sup>75</sup>.
5. Check if the content is sponsored content; that means an individual or organization is paying to

display the content.

6. Try and read beyond the headlines, because some stories carry a different headline from the details of the news story<sup>76</sup>.

#### **2.1.10.8 How to Tackle Fake News in Nigeria**

Fake news is dangerous to society; it makes the world anxious and threatens national security. All relevant stakeholders - government agencies, media houses, libraries, telecommunication companies, social media owners and others have the responsibility of tackling the spread of fake news. From the telecommunication perspective, “it is believed that fake news is financially motivated; and one of the most effective approaches to fighting it is by removing the incentives for traffickers of misinformation who make money by masquerading as legitimate news publishers and posting hoaxes to make people visit their site”<sup>77</sup>.

Government communication needs to be faster and more pro-active. Pro-activity is an opportunity to establish the facts in any given controversy, as well as to build credibility and trustworthiness. There should also be a public campaign on social media literacy to help people question more effectively what they read. “Not many people can make a distinction between the real media and social media, and this has posed a serious challenge to the country at large”<sup>77</sup>.

There are approaches explored by some election assistance providers such as ECES, IFES, the Centre for Democracy and Development, and BBC Media Action that can tackle fake news. These include public awareness through different media engagements and building people’s capacity to spot and call fake news disinformation and misinformation. Others include supporting the increasing number of fact-checkers, especially during general elections, establishing traditional and social media monitoring operations to build hard data- based records of incidents and profiled perpetrators, and pro-active engagement with social media companies like Facebook to design and introduce a more effective and fast-acting system to police fake news. The symbolic relationship between fake news and hate speech is well documented. Avenues are open to election assistance providers, like the

European Centre for Electoral Support (ECES), with the EU and its implementing partners to support and advocate legislative measures to combat both. Supporting capacity to those engaged in building counter-narratives to fake news, particularly where it affects trust in institutions that still retain some degree of public trust (such as INEC)<sup>78</sup>.

Quantitative and qualitative, data-based media monitoring, of the type provided by ESCS in Madagascar, and soon Nigeria, can support this by providing statistics and insights into trends. The Nigerian-based Centre for Democracy and Development (CDD) also suggests active support for the traditional media to reinforce their credibility as a means of reducing the space in which fake news thrives. Additionally, the news industry should focus on high-quality journalism that builds trust and attracts a greater audience. It is important also for news agencies to call out fake news and disinformation without legitimizing them. Technology companies should invest in technology to find fake news and identify it for users through crowdsourcing. There should also be funding efforts to enhance news literacy among Nigerians<sup>80</sup>.

#### **2.1.11 Implications of Fake News to National Peace and Security**

Recently during the launch of a new TV station in Abuja, Nigeria's capital, the Minister of Information, Lai Mohammed said that fake news is destroying the media industry and sowing national disunity. He further described fake news as a 'time bomb' waiting to explode. Misinformation and hate speech he said "threaten the peace, unity, security and corporate existence of Nigerians. "The biggest prank that can consume the world today is fake news and if not curtailed its consequences might be worse than the entire crisis that the world had witnessed<sup>81</sup>.

Presently, Nigeria is facing a lot of security challenges and one of the factors fuelling insecurities is fake news. Some of the causes of insecurities as identified are weak security systems, porous borders, persuasive material, inequalities and unfairness, unemployment/poverty, corruption, and ethno-religious conflicts<sup>81</sup>. Additionally, the causative factors of insecurities in Nigeria include the absence

of institutional capacity resulting in government failure, disconnection between the people and the government, weak and poorly funded military establishment, and non-prosecution of perpetrators of violence in Nigeria<sup>82</sup>. Due to all these factors, there is a continual surge in banditry, terrorism, armed robbery, insurgency, kidnapping, militancy, and herdsmen/farmers clashes among others. “National security is an appropriate and aggressive blend of political resilience and maturity, human resources, economic structure and capacity, technology competence, industrial base and availability of natural resources and finally the military might”<sup>83</sup>. The dynamics of our society have since altered the configuration of security to now include consideration of societally generated crises such as terrorism, riots, demonstrations, secret cult-related criminal acts, drug trafficking, inter and intra-ethnic strife, religious intolerance, armed robberies, kidnapping, advanced fee fraud and a host of others that threaten lives and properties, and indeed the peace and tranquility in the society<sup>82</sup>.

In Nigeria now, nothing threatens the peace and security of the nation like fake news because it has been spreading rapidly, and with social media platforms such as Facebook and WhatsApp it keeps growing faster and stronger and gradually it is penetrating the traditional media. Fake news has the potential to set up one community against the other and one country against another. The recently released report of another.

The recently released report by BBC revealed that fake news is responsible for the escalation of the herdsmen and farmers crisis. Fake news in Nigeria has instigated a degree of hatred between the mainly Muslim north against the predominantly Christian south. In early 2019, BBC organised a symposium on fake news attracting some of Nigeria’s best thinkers including Nobel Prize laureate Wole Soyinka who described the threat thus: “I have said this before that fake news may cause World War 3 and the fake news will be started by a Nigerian”<sup>87</sup>.

The chief of Army staff, Lt-Gen. Tukur Buratai says fake news not only poses a threat to national security but makes the ongoing counter-terrorism operation in the north more difficult. In his words “it is inimical to the morale of the troops, it is one of the demoralizing factors making the

counterinsurgency operation more difficult.” He urges those spreading fake news on the ongoing operations, including a section of the media to desist from it. He added that the army, which is on the ground fighting the terrorists, bears the consequences of the fake news. He recalled that in the recent attack on troops of the 157 task force Battalion at Metele, many casualty figures on the part of the army were bandied. “So many figures were bandied around but this is far from the figure. Even if it is one, it is unfortunate, but to go out of the reality, to continue to spread false information is unfortunate.” The implications of fake news cut across all the social vices in Nigeria ranging from electoral violence/disruptions, jungle justice, ethno-religious crisis, terrorism, etc. How does fake news fuel such vices in Nigeria?

i. **Election Impact:** During elections in Nigeria, there was so much fake news and information circulating on social media. According to a journalist and digital specialist at the Guardian newspaper, “fake news has been steroids.” For example, a claim that Mr. Buhari’s main opponent Atiku Abubakar was being supported by the LGBT community was designed to damage his support in the religious and socially conservative north. A political analyst, claims that the two big parties ran media operations to disseminate misinformation and fake news during elections. President Buhari’s special adviser posted a video on Twitter that shows his supporters at a big rally when in reality the images were from a religious gathering the year before. She also posted a photo of a major road construction, citing it as an example of President Buhari’s public work.

The photo was later discovered to be from Rwanda. She later rendered an apology saying “my big mistake, apologies to all, friends and wailers; it won’t happen again. Months later, fake news emerged during the campaign period showing Mr. Abubakar sharing food and money during his campaign. It came with a food pack with money and a caption saying “Keep them in poverty, then give them handouts, Atiku in Sokoto yesterday.” The image was investigated by a coalition of journalists brought together by the International Centre for Investigative Reporting, which comprises 16 leading Nigerian media houses as well as Agence FrancePresse (AFP). They discovered the image

was from an earlier charity event. Those involved in spreading fake news and hate speech are information traffickers. “We saw how these affected the electoral processes.

Fake news is a modified system of propaganda, which has metamorphosed into falsehood. Its credibility cannot last”. WhatsApp which is another social media widely used in Nigeria is another great platform of spreading fake news in Nigeria especially during elections. CNN says an 8-year-old reported about weapons being smuggled into Nigeria, close to the 2011 elections. It was shared as if it was current news during the 2019 elections on WhatsApp. The 2011 elections were among the most violent in the country’s history. To what extent fake news influenced the election’s result is not clear. INEC claimed the server was hacked. The public believed the elections were rigged and so many other conspiracy theories fueled by fake news and misinformation fueled the electoral processes and uttered voting patterns in Nigeria.

ii. **Religious Crisis:** Nigeria is ranked one of the most religious countries in the world. Almost every street has at least a mosque or a church and religious leaders are seen as celebrities or demi-gods. The religious crisis is one of Nigeria’s biggest sources of violence. Nigeria has predominantly Muslims in the north Christians in the south and other mixed traditional worshippers. However, the conflicts are usually between Christians and Muslims. Fake news has fuelled a lot of conflicts in the religious sector in Nigeria over the years. Security threats include Boko Haram activities in the north east and violence between farmers/herders. Kolawole, a former editor with This Day newspaper and founder of the cableonline news, said manufactured lies in the guise of news were “further endangering the delicate ethno-religious fabric of Nigeria and it was also “hampering the credibility of news outlets in the country.” There are a lot of fake and fabricated stories circulating the social media inciting fear, anxiety, suspicion, and disunity amongst Nigerians.

iii. **Public Health:** Fake news constitutes a potential threat to the public health system. The rise of fake news could be making disease outbreaks worse - according to new research from the University of East Anglia (UEA). The research has shown that fake news or misinformation could harm human health, especially during the outbreak of an infectious disease such as corona virus. When it comes to

COVID-19, there has been a lot of speculation, misinformation, and fake news circulating on the Internet about how the virus originated, what causes it, and how it is spread. Such fake news hurts a nation's health security. Health misinformation is nothing new to Nigeria. At the height of the Ebola outbreak in 2014, fake news circulated round the country that all Nigerians should take salt and bathe with it to prevent contracting the disease. A reasonable percentage of the country took it and it had drastic implications for some people who originally had sicknesses such as high blood pressure. The fake news resulted in two deaths while the Ebola itself killed eight people in Nigeria. This same fake news is circulating amid the COVID-19 outbreak.

According to Lagos State health officials, three people were hospitalized after taking an overdose of chloroquine. This is because of the endorsement by President Trump that the drug could kill the virus. A review by the Centre for Democracy and development since the virus reached Nigeria suggests that fake news has bought panic buying, proffers fake cures, undermines medical advice, promotes hate speech, particularly towards individuals of Chinese origin, and promotes polarisation along political lines. People are more likely to share bad advice on social media than good advice from trusted sources such as the Ministry of Health or the World Health Organization. Misinformation during outbreaks or pandemics of infectious diseases could make the outbreak more severe. Social media activists, influencers, and self-styled warriors are using their social media platforms and fringe websites to misinform and propagate conspiracy theories and promote the denial of COVID-19.

Sometimes they intend to grow their online followers. For instance, the controversial online blogger Kemi Olunloyo tweeted that President Muhammadu Buhari is sick with a persistent cough and that a makeshift ICU had been set up to treat him. Within hours the tweet had been liked 3,300 times and retweeted more than 2,000 times. In other instances, some acclaimed health experts have been spreading fake messages on WhatsApp concerning the virus like an audio clip making waves on WhatsApp from an alleged World Health Organization (WHO) official predicting that 45 million Nigerians would die in the pandemic. The audio drew the attention of the NCDC. Other so-called experts proffered cures such as constant sex, sitting in the sun, or claiming African blood is immune

to the virus. All these instances of fake news on delicate health matters such as the COVID-19 outbreak pose a great threat to national security because, without preventive measures, it will make the outbreak spread widely and become more challenging. There is an urgent need in Nigeria to combat fake news because it has contributed a lot to insecurity in the nation. But how do we tackle fake news?

### **2.1.12 Concepts and Perspectives of Citizen Journalism**

The rise of citizen journalism is frequently attributed to the advent and development of digital technology and social media, according to communication specialists.<sup>60,61</sup> Media organisations in most nations are engaging their audiences more frequently as a result of the growing audience control, media convergence, disintermediation, and mobile mobility emerging as new trends in mass communication.

These organisations have individualised websites, mobile applications, and social media accounts on sites like YouTube, Facebook, and Twitter, among others, through which they make their content easily accessible to their audience and invite them to engage with them by joining the conversation or sharing reports of incidence around them<sup>62</sup>.

Due to the uncertainty around its true nature, some individuals refer to citizen journalism as "public," "participatory," "democratic," "guerrilla," or "street" journalism. Despite these ambiguities, the term was commonly thought to reflect the opposite philosophy of the average person's capacity to contribute to professional news coverage, providing critics with an appropriate term to define an allegedly new genre of user-generated content<sup>63</sup>.

Given that the mainstream media is no longer the only source of information, citizen journalism is a rapidly expanding branch of the journalism industry that enables average people to report on significant occurrences in their areas. Public journalism that aims to see people as citizens rather than as spectators, readers, viewers, zombies, listeners, or members of homogeneous audiences is known as citizen journalism. The strict, nearly unidirectional top-down communication paradigm used by

the mainstream media is completely at odds with the citizen journalism style because it involves the public reporting of news utilizing the internet to disseminate information<sup>65, 66, and 67</sup>.

Therefore, citizen journalism is “when citizens, amateurs, report on events in society. Professional journalism is done by educated journalists who are employed by a media outlet. Acts of journalism can be done by citizens, without the intention of doing it”.<sup>68</sup> Scholars have contended that the act of a citizen, or a group of citizens, actively participating in the gathering, reporting, evaluating, and dissemination of news and information is necessary to supply the impartial, trustworthy, accurate, comprehensive, and pertinent information that democracy demands. The key responsibilities that these "citizens" take on are professionally those that trained journalists are expected to perform<sup>69, 70</sup>.

Six categories have been established for citizen or participatory journalism in light of the variety and form of interaction. The first category is audience participation at mainstream media outlets, which includes staff weblogs, newsroom-approved weblogs, discussion forums on news media websites, reader-written articles, reader-submitted photos, videos, and reports, as well as other reader contributions. The second category is independent news and information websites, which also contain diverse personal blogs for publications created specifically for local news, consumer news, politics, or any other specialized subject. These periodicals occasionally rely on skilled amateur and freelance writers to contribute original interviews, research, and reporting. The websites occasionally publish editorial digests with varying degrees of commentary as their main product. While some of these websites barely dabble in journalism, others prioritise citizen reporting.

The third group consists of fully developed citizen journalism platforms that welcome substantial contributions of news content from contributors. Such websites exist in Nigeria, such as Nairaland. The fourth type is comprised of collaborative and contributory media sites, such as those that link discussion boards and weblogs to access user-contributed editorial content. Links to news stories and ratings are included, along with some content that would be fit for a newspaper or magazine. Another community website with tools for self-publishing, self-ranking, and self-organization is the

collaborative newspaper. The "thin media" category is the fifth, and examples include mailing lists, internet-native news and issue lists, email newsletters, and social media including specialised digital media. Personal broadcasting websites fall under the sixth category and include both video broadcast sites where the proprietors conduct news interviews and provide daily news reports that have been compiled from various media sources. It must however be noted that these categories are not mutually exclusive<sup>71</sup>.

Other categories exist for the classification of citizen journalism. As an example, citizen journalism has been divided into independent and semi-independent categories. In semi-independent citizen journalism, information is contributed by the public to professional (mainstream) news sites already in operation. Such contributions can include readers leaving comments next to articles written by trained journalists. Although readers are invited to register as users before posting their remarks, these comments could be thought of as the Letter to the Editor of the twenty-first century.

The Punch, The Guardian, and This Day newspaper in Nigeria, among others, allow online users to make comments on interesting items on their websites. This also covers television stations like Television Continental (TVC), Channels TV, and radio stations like Lagos Talks FM, Classic FM, and Nigerian Info. Readers participating in semi-independent citizen journalism have the option of adding to the information already posted on news items in addition to commenting on ready-made posts. For instance, the "citizens" can update such information by providing updates on the potential number of casualties when a case of violence is reported in a certain location. When readers actively collaborate with professional journalists during the news gathering and processing process, this is another example of semi-independent citizen journalism. Professional journalists may ask readers with knowledge of specific topics or fields of study to provide material, with the possibility of it being used in the finished report. The final type of semi-independent citizen journalism involves integrating blog posts from readers into established news websites. These blogs may include those that assess how well news organizations perform.

Independent citizen journalism, on the other hand, entails citizen journalists working independently of established or professional news organizations. This category of journalism includes blogs run by people who cover news events or provide commentary on current affairs, such as Linda Ikeji, Bella Naija, and Pulse. Ng in Nigeria. Independent citizen journalism can also take the shape of blogs or websites run by a single person or group of people that cover a news story. While some of these websites have editors who review user-submitted information, others might not<sup>72</sup>.

In the case of Nigeria, scholars have argued that citizen journalism predates the digital era- an era which many agree has pushed the frontiers of the practice due to advancements in communication technology. The audience has had access to means of connecting to and interacting with traditional (mainstream) media long before the advent of new communication technology. Newspaper readers (citizens) who felt strongly about a particular topic in the polity and wanted to share their views could submit letters to the editor. In the guise of what was formerly referred to as "semi-independent citizen journalism," the broadcast stations would occasionally invite specialists to express their opinions as either new perspectives or supporting facts on a subject.

It was further suggested that between the pre-internet era of the 1980s and the introduction of social media in the middle of the 2000s, traditional media in Nigeria had a limited window for audience engagement or participation. This was restricted to letters to the editor, submission of opinion pieces, the right of reply, and, typically, paid advertisements by readers who had strong opinions on a subject. User-generated content and citizen journalism in Nigeria were greatly influenced by the traditional media's almost total lack of public involvement, interaction, and democratic structure<sup>73</sup>.

Since the turn of the millennium, the story has changed in favour of more citizen participation and engagement by the mainstream media including newspapers and broadcast stations. For instance, Channels News' flagship news program "News at 10" features an "i-witness" segment where the station presents noteworthy tweets, photos, or videos posted or contributed by people on their social media platforms utilizing the "i-witness" platform on the station's App. A 25-minute programme called "i-

witness report" was also created based on some of the chosen items on the platform; an internal

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

journalist would produce an expanded report that would offer more perspectives on the subject matter as originally reported by citizens, who the station referred to as "eye-witness reporters."

Another television network, *Television Continental*, takes a slightly different approach. The station asks a question on any current events on its traditional and social media platforms during a programme called "Question of the Day," and invites the audience to react using their social media accounts. The audience is encouraged to read the remaining responses on their social media platforms while a selection of the responses is then displayed during their flagship newscasts. Regarding the newspapers, the story is the same as that of the broadcast stations. For instance, *The Punch* has a page called "i-punch" where it collects and displays reader comments on the internet and social media platforms about hot-button political matters. *The Guardian* and *Daily Trust* newspapers both have similar elements in the "e-Guardian" platforms, which connect readers' opinions from the publications' social media accounts while, the Daily Trust also has the "HAS#TAG," which offers comparable features with "e-Guardian"<sup>74</sup>.

Although the benefits of citizen journalism are enormous it appears to be breaking the boundaries that were hitherto associated with the mainstream media, particularly as it concerns the formulation and spread of fake news. It has been noted that there is a significant quantity of false information spread on social media, and its propagators take advantage of people's vulnerabilities by occasionally acting as amplifiers and multipliers. The threat of fake news and its nomenclatures to society as well as the risk associated with the improper use of social media for the spread of information have led to conflicting emotions among individuals, even among professional journalists. Therefore, there are ethical questions about how citizen journalism affects or shapes what is reported to the public<sup>75</sup>.

These questions have resulted from concerns about the potential dangers of active audience participation, although authors have highlighted how citizen journalism may complement mainstream media coverage while also acting as a watchdog regarding professional journalists' performance. As citizens participate in news collecting and processing, these hazards centre on anonymity, irresponsibility, and ethical standards which are important in journalism.

The components of ethical principles include correctness, objectivity, fairness, honesty, independence, balance, relevance, and watchdog. These guidelines, which also govern internet journalism where citizen journalism plays a significant role in the modern news sphere, set good writers apart from con writers<sup>76, 77, and 78</sup>. The Society of Professional Journalists defined online journalism ethics, which include not plagiarising, disclosing the information's source, refusing gifts or payment for coverage, verifying the information while telling the truth, and honesty. In 2014, the ethics were reviewed as four main principles which are seeking the truth and reporting it; minimising harm; acting independently; being accountable, and being transparent<sup>79</sup>.

Despite the concerns over citizen journalism and adherence to journalism ethics, there exist arguments in favour of citizen journalism as a compliment for the mainstream media like the newspapers. Journalists who wish to focus on improving coverage and restoring the reputation of media outlets accused of presenting events superficially through more audience participation are becoming more. When reporters from the mainstream ask their audience for further information on an event, they refer to this cooperative effort as "hyperlocal coverage." How to use these new connections to boost the caliber of media reporting is a crucial topic in the discussion about how the internet and individuals (citizens) outside the newsroom are changing the interaction between journalists, their audience, and their sources of information. What constitutes trustworthy information such as accurate reports, moral and ethical consideration, and honesty remains the greatest obstacle for those who enjoy blogging. Another question is whether news from citizen journalists can be a true replacement for quality news produced by full-time, professionally educated reporters and editors<sup>80</sup>.

Regulation is a key topic in the internet-based journalism discussion, which is why citizen journalism is so successful today. Many societies throughout the world are lobbying for legislation that would forbid the use of social media or digital media as a "credible" source of public information. The European Parliament has been debating the appropriate way to regulate blogs since 2008 for several reasons. Although the parliament acknowledged that blogs have increased citizen engagement, the members disagree on how to regulate blogs and identify when their articles go beyond merely reporting the events and become perhaps influenced by personal or group interests <sup>81,83</sup>.

In Nigeria, the aforementioned situation is identical. Two laws aiming to control social media usage were proposed to the National Assembly in 2019. The bills' names were the National Commission for the Prohibition of Hate Speech Bill 2019 and the protection from Internet Falsehood and Manipulation Bill 2019. Major players, including journalists, social media influencers, bloggers, and several civil society organisations, reacted strongly against the unveiling of these measures. The opponents said that the new legislation will further impede the freedom of speech and expression granted by the Nigerian constitution because of several existing regulations on the use of digital space, such as the Cyber Crime Act and the Anti-Terrorism Acts. The publication of offensive, pornographic, indecent, vulgar, and menacing characters is forbidden by the Cyber Crime Act. Additionally, online media must refrain from disseminating misleading information that could irritate, inconvenience, endanger, impede, offend, hurt, criminally intimidate, incite hostility, hatred, ill will, or unnecessarily worry others. A fine of no more than N7 million or a sentence of no more than three years in jail will be imposed for violating this Act<sup>84</sup>. Nonetheless, citizen journalism is still regarded as a source of false information, despite some of the excellent work it has promoted. The rise of fake news produced by citizen journalists has been noted by analysts as a problem that could endanger Nigeria's democracy, and this claim has spawned a protracted discussion regarding social media regulation in Nigeria <sup>85,86</sup>.

## 2.2 Theoretical Review

Two theories underpin this study as their propositions and assumptions provide some background to the understanding of the interplay of the variables of this study. The theories are the theory of ethics and the social responsibility theory.

### 2.2.1 The Theory of Ethics

The study of how false news influences ethical journalism often requires strong and effective perspectives from which to approach significant ethical decisions. The topic of ethics is examined from a variety of angles, much like a great number of other significant and complicated topics. It is possible to categorise and analyse ethical theories and systems in a variety of ways. Names and labels have evolved as philosophers have explored the boundaries of moral philosophy over time, seeking novel insights and establishing new "schools." As a result, there are many names for the different ethical systems and conceptions, although they all presumably lead to the same goal of achieving ethical journalism<sup>87, 88</sup>.

The ethical theory has been defined as “a principle put forward to explain, describe, prescribe or predict human ethical behaviour”<sup>89</sup>. Ethics is a “philosophical perspective that deals with the pursuit of *good*, that is, what *ought to obtain or be done* in the judgment of those concerned”<sup>90</sup>. Although there is no consensus among philosophers regarding the main criteria for making an ethical decision, there is a concurrence among them that the theory is a complete philosophical system through which answers can be derived when asking questions about what is right to be done at a time<sup>91</sup>. However, earlier studies have attempted to narrow the ethical theory into four major areas, although with some variations across different extant literature. These four categories are the Deontological, Teleological (Egoist and Utilitarian), Situational, and Dialogical<sup>92</sup>.

#### 2.2.1.1 Deontological Ethics Perspective

The deontological perspective of ethics was derived from the Greek word “deon” which means duty. Deontological ethics are non-consequential ethics that is; ethical issues are not subjected to the

demands of consequence or context because they are determined by principles or certain universal standards no matter the consequence of the action so long as it conforms to the standards. The actions should, however, be based on good intentions that satisfy formal objective conditions and duties. In line with Immanuel Kant's *Categorical Imperative* propositions, deontological ethics follow certain maxims some of which were derived from religion, reason, moral mentors, employers, etc. These categorical imperatives imply that the *good* is the act that is based on the maxim that we aspire to become a universal law.

The deontological perspective of ethics does not believe that the end justifies the means but rather stresses the means which are the principles that must guide the process to the end. In essence, even if the end becomes "favourable", it becomes faulty if the principles have been violated. Therefore, actors are expected to act as if they are setting standards by also following the principles on the assumption that if everyone follows the process the world would be a better place<sup>93,94,95</sup>.

Deontological ethics essentially does not regard someone's emotions, status, or circumstances. It stands for the principle of objectivity, which states that what is good or right is good or right regardless of who is injured. It is possible to uncover reality or the good, but it cannot be changed or corrupted once it has been found. However, proponents of this viewpoint acknowledge that this fundamental or super-principle can only succeed when there is the intellectual capacity to sustain high-calibre journalism and the moral fortitude to defend the truth. Deontological ethics, to put it plainly, would only work successfully in communities with high levels of education to enable informed judgment and strong moral probity to permit impartial judgments that are made with objectivity<sup>96</sup>.

### **2.2.1.2 Teleological Ethics Perspective**

Generally, proponents of teleological ethics posit that the consequences of an action should determine the morality of that action to be good or bad. According to these beliefs, the main goal of ethics is to produce the greatest amount of goods or the good life. Consequential theories, which aim to maximise positive outcomes and reduce negative ones, are among the ethical ideas in this school of thought.

What is morally right or ethical is derived from a teleological purpose.

To put it another way, teleological ethics is based on an action's morality on the value it creates. Instead of the deed itself, it searches for moral excellence in the results of our actions. In any situation, one should weigh the potential outcomes of doing different pertinent acts and pick the one that would result in the highest ratio of good to evil<sup>97,98</sup>.

There are two major perspectives on what constitutes teleological ethics. They are the egoistic and the utility or utilitarian perspectives. The egoistic perspective of teleological ethics posits that people should seek to maximise good consequences for themselves. According to this ethical philosophy, self-interest should be the only factor influencing moral judgments. Psychological egoism, the empirical thesis that advancing one's self-interest is the driving force behind all human conduct, is sometimes contrasted with ethical egoism.

The fact that ethical egoism does not allow for any potential conflict between self-interest and morality gives it a significant advantage over other normative theories. Another is that it renders moral behaviour rational by definition (under the tenable presumption that pursuing one's interests is rational). Regardless of how the activity affects other people, an egoist action is appropriate if the consequences or results are good or useful to the egoist, as egoism promotes encouraging one's good<sup>99</sup>.

On the other hand, utilitarian ethics or utilitarianism suggests that behaviour should be based on the principle of 'the greatest good for the greatest number.' The principle holds that what is good or right is the action or conduct that produces the greatest positive advantage or reward for the greatest number of people within the respective community. Based on John Stuart Mill's *Principle of Utility*, the tenet of utilitarian ethics is that for an action to be termed as good, it must yield the greatest balance of good over evil and the greatest happiness for the greatest number<sup>100,101</sup>.

End-based thinking necessitates carefully considering who will benefit and who will be hurt by a

decision, as well as to what extent. Examining ends-based thinking also needs to consider its tenet that minorities' rights should be respected. The flexibility of ends-based reasoning may allow a person to choose between conflicting ethical principles, which is one of its main advantages. However, this flexibility may also be the theory's weakness because it is susceptible to being influenced by self-serving justifications that prioritize convenience over principle. Another issue is that it might occasionally be impossible or very difficult to predict the outcomes of a choice<sup>102</sup>.

### **2.2.1.3 Situational Ethics Perspective**

The situational perspective in ethics states that what should determine good or bad conduct should be the circumstances around the action taken. In essence, situational ethics ask questions about what context facilitates the action. Aristotle's Golden Mean theory provides a strong basis for the assumptions of situational ethics. The golden mean rule states that moral value is an appropriate location between two extremes, that is what is good is not universally fixed but it is located at different points in different environments depending on the prevailing circumstances- right and wrong depend upon the situation because each case is unique and deserves a unique solution. Therefore, situation ethics rejects *prefabricated decisions and prescriptive rules*. That means reflective morality demands observation of particular situations, rather than fixed adherence to a priori principles.

Situational ethics teaches that ethical decisions should follow flexible guidelines rather than absolute rules, and be taken on a case-by-case basis. Situation ethics acknowledges diversity and socio-cultural differences. It recognises the distinctiveness of sociocultural and political conditions and the right of each people to determine measure or evaluate media behaviour on the distinctive demand of their particular situation. So a person who practices situational ethics approaches ethical problems with some general moral principles rather than a rigorous set of ethical laws and is prepared to give up even those principles if doing so will lead to the greater good. Situational ethics seem to support the 'interpretive rule' which states that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder" meaning that reality is not a fixed entity but created through actions that are extended after an appropriate and applicable

interpretation of the dominant circumstances.<sup>103, 104</sup>.

#### **2.2.1.4 Dialogical Ethics Perspective**

This perspective simply assumes that what is just or right is what must or has been agreed upon by all parties in a negotiation. That is what is right can only emerge after an open dialogue and negotiation that is devoid of social differences or restrictions but with equality and fairness on matters that concern everyone. Dialogical ethics assumes that active participation of the populace in decisions about matters bothering their livelihood will serve better in deciding what good and acting right is. Dialogic ethics starts with the simple mandate to appreciate and take seriously whatever is being presented to you. All we have is the reality in front of us, therefore whether we want it or not, we must learn from it. Dialogic civility employs a type of communication architecture that strives to create a space of safety in conversation, not permanently, but for a while, a moment in which difference can meet with the endeavour of learning, momentarily bracketing a triangle of domination that seeks to disparage, dismiss, and dissect the other notion<sup>105,106</sup>.

The dialogical ethics perspective is hinged on John Rawl's *Veil of Ignorance* principle which states that "to arrive at what is good or right, all parties to an issue or problem should step back from real circumstances into an 'original position' behind a barrier where roles and social differentiation are gone. This calls for equality, participation, and involvement". Mikhail Bakhtin, a Russian philosopher, is another admirer of dialogism. He postulated that certain literary works, languages, and possibly all thought did not exist in a static state but rather were dynamic and interconnected.

Thoughts and words are conveyed in anticipation of how others will react to what is about to be said as well as in response to things that have already been stated. Furthermore, moral reasoning always interacts with other, dissimilar moral reasoning or concepts to produce ongoing ethical re-descriptions of society. Individual ethical behaviour would always be impacted by opposing ethical theories and (in fact) by other people's ethical behaviour<sup>107,108</sup>.

As a result, dialogic ethics strives to negotiate new opportunities while paying attention to the past and the present. Dialogic ethics is a theoretical approach to conducting business that constantly pays attention to conversation partners and their contexts, the historical present, and the emergent "potential" that emerges between human encounters. It encourages learning and sees the urge to judge without first comprehending the other as a deterrent to the kind of moral involvement required in a society where differences are openly accepted.

This implies that subjects of general interest ought to be made available for public discussion. However, in such conversations, people who are smarter, more educated, or better informed should not impose on or disregard the knowledge they have already obtained. Instead, they should utilise their knowledge to guide the conversations from behind, employing a kind of Socratic method which is a form of a cooperative argumentative dialogue between individuals, based on asking and answering questions to stimulate critical thinking and to draw out ideas and underlying presuppositions. The method allows the less educated to be gently guided to independently ascertain the truth and thereby contribute to the group's decision-making<sup>109,110</sup>.

### **2.2.2 Relevance of Theory of Ethics to the Study**

An understanding of the dimensions of the theory of ethics as explained in the foregoing presents journalists with a solid basis for assessing the influence that fake news might have on ethical journalism. The perspectives on different ethical proposing also form an element of the research instrument to distill and help the respondents critically think and offer relevant responses in data that will help with the submissions in this study.

The adoption and application of the theory of ethics in this study are also relevant because it deals with value judgment concerning the degree of what is right or wrong in terms of the conduct of proponents of fake news in whatever form such appears. By extension, it also addresses the conduct of those who are saddled with the responsibility of regulating media activities and output which include the editors. In essence, the mass media are faced with the daunting task of making decisions

that are value-based for personal, organisational, and societal reasons amidst the diverse culture that exists in society. The surveillance, correlation, education, and entertainment functions of the media all require that the journalists, particularly editors, make value judgments that may be transformed to be ethical decisions. They are faced with questions ranging from what should be the best information to put out, to what should be the best way to present such information, to how best should news be sourced vis-à-vis the treatment and management of news sources all within the context of the society in which such information is required or presented.

### **2.2.3 The Social Responsibility Theory**

The social responsibility theory also provides the basis for this study. While other theories, including the Producers theory, Communitarian theory, Democratic Participant theory and public sphere model, and Theory of planned behaviour, have been used in some of the literature reviewed, it is believed that the social responsibility theory's assumptions will best advance the goals of this research<sup>111</sup>. Social responsibility emerged as a compromise to thwart media censorship by the government. It was compiled from the findings of the Committee on Freedom of the Press, which was funded by Time Corporation CEO Henry Luce and led by William Hutchins, chancellor of the University of Chicago. According to the theory of social responsibility, media ownership is not an unrestricted private franchise but rather a type of public trust or stewardship. It proposed that as freedom entails obligations, media should work to foster the Great Communities of the pluralistic group as advocated by the Chicago School. The social responsibility theory of the press is a normative theory that emphasises that while media outlets are free to report, they must take greater care to ensure that their stories do not disturb societal peace. This caution to the media comes with the understanding that the government may exert some control over what the media does, especially when issues of public safety are at stake. The social responsibility theory urges media workers to think creatively about new methods to help their communities and to regard themselves as front-line fighters in the campaign to defend democracy in a society that is gradually moving toward authoritarianism<sup>115,116,117</sup>.

The concept of social responsibility represents a middle ground between governmental paternalism and radical libertarianism. The theory contends that journalists have duties to society, employers, and the market, including upholding high professional standards of truth and balance, refraining from publishing material that would encourage crime, and refraining from offending minority groups. It acknowledges the First Amendment's promise of press freedom from governmental control. According to social responsibility theory, the media ought to represent the plurality of society and provide access to a range of viewpoints. And, despite advocating for self-control, social responsibility theory recognizes that government regulation may be required to control libertarianism's potentially harmful tendencies<sup>118</sup>.

In the justification for the free press theory, it should be mentioned that the commission was established to re-examine the idea of press freedom as articulated in the libertarian or free press theory. This was because the supposedly free market of ideas had not been able to ensure press freedom or provide society with the anticipated advantages. Instead, access to the media was restricted for both individuals and groups due to the commercialization of the press and unanticipated advancements in media technology, which also concentrated media power in the hands of a select group of businessmen and media professionals with the financial means to build media empires. It was necessary to maintain press freedom while also holding the media to a set of social standards. Therefore, social relevance, conscience, and general reality should all be reflected in media content. According to this theory, the media's responsibility is to bring controversial issues up for discussion and to rein in press excesses by holding them accountable to society rather than a select group of privileged individuals. This means that the media must self-regulate within the bounds of societal norms and journalistic ethics to uphold a high degree of ethics. In addition to being accountable to society, they must be informative, impartial, truthful, accurate, and balanced in their reporting<sup>102</sup>.

However, it must be noted that the media's restraint under this view is not directed at the government but rather at the nation's national security. The D-Notice is a contract that allows the government to

reach an agreement with the media but not to compel it to do anything. A D-Notice is a formal letter that is delivered to newspapers that forbids them from publishing specific security information and asks them to hold onto it out of concern for national security, often until a more appropriate time. Once an agreement has been made, both public and commercial media organizations are required to follow it<sup>101</sup>.

#### **2.2.4 Relevance of Social Responsibility Theory to the Study**

The general believe is that social responsibility is the foundation of journalistic ethics. This line of thought is in accordance with journalism's code of ethics that it is every journalist's responsibility to speak up against any attempt at information fabrication and slander and to not tolerate the distortion of the truth. Every journalist needs to be conscious of the duty that is his. This suggests that future generations of journalists should be raised with a sense of responsibility and objectivity, and all journalists should uphold professional ethics and morality. Often, editors are always required to demonstrate an understanding of this as they make their choices, considering information and their sources as they discharge their duties.

Furthermore, the social responsibility theory becomes pertinent to this study since it is believed that professional journalists, especially those in the mainstream media, would have been taught the standards of the expectations of the profession, including the tenets of the theory. Additionally, and in line with extant literature, concerns and viewpoints expressed by experts and academics revealed evidence that fake news which has been further enhanced by citizen journalists appears to be eroding the concept of responsibility endowed on the media. This intrusion has often caused social unrest. One of the main principles of the social responsibility theory is that journalists should be held accountable to society and that the media should embrace and fulfill specific commitments to society. The theory discusses media self-censorship or internal regulation. Understanding how mainstream journalists particularly editors view the implication and the interplay of these elements on ethical journalism and the intervening factor in fake news will add to the body of literature on the subject and probably expand

other areas of investigation on the subject matter.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## **2.3 Review of Empirical Studies**

Scholars have made profound attempts to study concepts, context, and other issues on the emergence, formulation, spread, implications, and other variables that interplay or interconnect with fake news and journalism, fake news and public perception, and fake news and national security, including intervening variables such as citizen journalism among others. Therefore, the reviews in this section examine the approaches in those studies to understand the scope, methods major findings, and some of their recommendations.

### **2.3.1 Citizen Journalism and Mainstream Journalism**

A study on "Citizen Journalism and news credibility: BBC and Al Jazeera networks - A Comparative Study revealed some issues with citizen journalism and the credibility of news. The author investigated how the use of new media techniques and citizen journalists influenced the credibility of news gathering. The study also examined how mainstream news organizations may ensure the accuracy and trustworthiness of reports from citizen journalists when they use them on their major platforms.

The author conducted in-depth interviews as well as focus groups to collect data for the study. 300 young adults in Egypt between the ages of 18 and 40 who are literate make up the sample for the focus groups. Thirty focus groups with ten participants each were held, and two in-depth interviews with media experts were conducted. The research's findings indicated that viewers would trust the BBC news network over Al Jazeera because they think Al Jazeera is leaning more toward propaganda in the form of advocacy journalism. The respondents questioned Al Jazeera's usage of data from Sharek, a platform for citizen journalism, and their website.

They stated that following the ethics of the journalistic industry as seen in the reports by BBC news Network, Al Jazeera takes information from this platform with little to no significant editorial assessment. Due to their diminished credibility, lack of objectivity, and heavy reliance on media volunteers (citizen journalists) as their primary source of information, Al Jazeera lost the trust of Egyptian news consumers. According to the participants, the political and religious messages that

are always present in the products produced by those volunteers serve the goals of Qatar, Turkey, and the Muslim Brotherhood group, all of which aim to destabilize Egypt.

The study, therefore, concluded that despite the importance of documenting events, the reliability of citizen journalism and citizen journalists would always be questioned and will never be fully believed. Citizen journalism is not regarded as a trustworthy source of information because it does not reflect or represent professional journalism and because its output is capable of deceiving and misinforming the audience. Documentaries, movies, and stories that result from citizen journalism will always be suspected of expressing specific points of view, beliefs, or political trends<sup>114</sup>.

Another study on "Citizen Journalism: Analysis of Opinions of Journalists from Spain, Italy, and Belgium" investigated how to value citizen journalism while comparing the experiences of the three nations. To acquire responses from respondents on a wider range of issues and to evaluate the changes introduced by the internet to the informational dynamic referred to as the interaction between experts and the audience, the study used a closed-ended questionnaire and a semi-structured interview. A sample of more than 70 journalists was included in the research.

The study's results had a surprising turn. Although the quantitative data supported the experts' good opinions about citizens' involvement in information processes, the qualitative data from the semi-structured interview revealed that this new participatory dynamic does not seem to be able to support the notion that citizen journalism is a spontaneous form of informed engagement from which critical and organized public opinion emerges. Because of this, journalists believe that audience communication adds value to the informative activity because news programmes can be supplemented with information that may be helpful.

However, this is not the same as confusing journalism with audience interactions because then the essence of journalism as the professional job of reporting with actual knowledge of the facts and the commitment to advance the public interest will be lost. The study also concluded that journalists should not wait for news items to come in because doing so gives the sender prominence; instead,

they should look for them, verify them, and present the facts with a whole picture of the events<sup>115</sup>.

In a study titled “From Personal to Professional: Exploring the Influences on Journalists’ Evaluation of Citizen Journalism Credibility” the author generated debates on mainstream journalism and citizen journalism from a Nigerian perspective. By examining this issue in Nigeria, a nation with a distinctly different political, economic, and cultural climate from past research, the study sought to internationalize this discussion. Extending this discourse to an area of journalism that has received relatively little research is important for understanding how media professionals in less liberal political environments navigate the complexities of their work in the increasingly networked and participatory news spaces.

In this context, the paper explored how the personal demographic characteristics of Nigerian mainstream journalists and their online media usage habits affect their opinions of the trustworthiness of citizen journalism. The impact of professional factors including Media Affiliation, Career Length, and Professional Ethics on journalists' perceptions of citizen journalism is further explored in this research. Therefore, using the Shoemaker and Reese’s Hierarchy of Influences model to draw its variables, the study examined the perception of mainstream journalists about the credibility of citizen journalism, the relationship between journalists’ online media use and their perceptions of citizen journalism credibility, the extent to which demographic factors like; age, gender, education and income, influence journalists’ perception of citizen journalism credibility and the extent to which media affiliation, career length and professional ethics influence their perception of citizen journalism.

The sample for the study was randomly selected from the database of the Nigerian Guide of Editors which has about 590 members. The study excluded journalists who were connected to unconventional media organisations from the list because the goal of this study is to analyse mainstream journalists. It is crucial to highlight that because practitioners who are not officially enrolled in the association are

not included in the database, it is not representative of the full journalistic community in the nation. The appropriate sample size was established using Qualtrics' sample size calculator, which was based on a margin of error of 5% and a confidence level of 95%. Using a systematic random sampling method, samples were chosen every tenth interval, yielding a sample size of 400. Data were gathered using an online questionnaire (Qualtrics). The participants' emails and social media accounts were used to invite them to the online poll. Data were gathered from April to May 2020.

The study's findings showed that journalists' perceptions of the credibility of citizen journalism are modest. The findings also revealed a statistically significant relationship between respondents' individual online media usage and their opinion of citizen journalism's credibility. The direction of the correlations between the variables was found to be positive with a p-value of less than 0.05. This means that greater usage of online media for both personal and professional reasons is linked to greater perceptions of citizen journalism credibility.

Except for gender, the results showed a substantial association between the demographic variables and the perceived credibility of citizen journalism as it regards the influence of demographic characteristics of the journalists. The results indicated that broadcast journalists valued citizen journalism more highly than print journalists when it came to the degree to which journalists' media affiliation influenced their judgment of citizen journalism credibility. Additionally, compared to their peers who work for government-owned and community-owned media organisations, journalists who work for institutional media and privately owned media tend to evaluate citizen journalism highly.

However, the second regression analysis showed no connection between journalists' perceptions of citizen journalism credibility and their organization's ownership structure, media sector, or ownership pattern. As a result, it may be concluded that journalists' opinions of the credibility of citizen journalism are unaffected by their media affiliation. On the impact of career length on the perception of citizen

journalism, journalists with a career length of between 5-8 years and 8 years or more tend to assess citizen journalism more favourably than those with a career length of fewer than 5 years.

This revealed a favourable correlation between journalists' career length and their assessments of the credibility of citizen journalism. Regarding the impact of professional ethics, the analysis revealed no statistically significant relationship between journalists' professional ethics and their perceptions of the credibility of citizen journalism, indicating that their professional code of ethics is not a reliable predictor of how credible they believe citizen journalism to be. The study, therefore, concluded that individual-level influences have a predictive influence on journalists' perceptions while demographic factors like age, education, and income as well as personal factors like career length were significant in predicting journalists' perception of citizen journalism credibility<sup>116</sup>.

Scholars have also highlighted the reasons why collaboration between mainstream journalism and citizen journalism may be more advantageous to journalism practice, despite the difficult situations that citizen journalists may face in the realm of professional journalistic practice. According to a study on citizen journalism and COVID-19 management by Sheen, Tung, and Wu, risk communication during COVID-19 outbreaks is more credible when done by citizens. The study's goal was to determine how media audiences' perceptions of the government during the COVID-19 pandemic changed as a result of the information they were given. A total of 1,016 Hong Kong residents responded to an online poll that was conducted among them between February 13 and February 17, 2020. A press release from the government and an endorsement from either an official or unofficial source were distributed at random to the respondents. These papers served as Experiments 1 and 2. In Experiment 1, screenshots of the official press release were displayed in the survey.

The purpose of Experiment 2 was to determine whether the inclusion of an expert's government-related title affected how credible their viewpoint was. This was looked at using a newspaper vignette from Hong Kong. A two-tailed T-test was used to confirm randomization. The findings indicated that the non-official source of information increased the credibility of official government messaging.

According to the findings, tyrants can "borrow credibility" from citizen journalists and even non-democratic leaders might do so to appear more trustworthy to future opponents. Governments may be able to effectively address the issue of a credibility gap during a pandemic by allowing non-official sources of information to circulate<sup>117</sup>.

A researcher also conducted a study to understand how professional journalists view the effects of citizen journalism on mainstream media and their work, as well as the difficulties presented by it and how they as professionals deal with such difficulties. The study titled "Citizen Journalism vs. Mainstream Journalism: A Study on Challenges Posed by Amateurs" looked at whether audience preference is shifting from traditional news media material to citizen journalism. Journalists in the Kashmir region, which is under the Indian administration, participated in the survey. A 25-item questionnaire was distributed to 50 journalists who were chosen using a stratified sampling technique. The journalists were divided into three groups: junior (those with less than five years of experience), mid-career (those with six to fifteen years of experience), and senior journalists (with over fifteen years of experience).

According to the data acquired from the study, citizen journalism does not pose significant challenges to mainstream news. Regardless of their level of experience, the majority of journalists think that because citizen journalism is still in its development stage, there is no immediate threat to mainstream journalism. Mainstream media is considered to have more authenticity and credibility among the public due to its complex and well-established system of operation, in which the emphasis is maintained on accuracy and accountability.

The audience favours professional journalists' news reports above that of citizen journalists. This shows there is no need for competition between citizen journalists and mainstream journalists because citizen journalism will never be able to fully replace professional journalism; rather, it will only be able to enhance it. Again, the threat of citizen journalism to mainstream media is greatly diminished because such content is typical of ordinary quality, rarely has news values, and pays

little to no regard to journalistic ethics. The study argued that citizen journalism should be encouraged in the future given the development of new media tools like camera phones, camcorders, blogs, social networking, and media-sharing websites, etc. because, as a news source, citizen journalism has the potential to be useful in bringing to light stories that are not accessible to professional journalists<sup>118</sup>.

The findings of a study among young journalists in Malaysia had a favourable opinion of citizen journalism. The study titled "Understanding Citizen Journalism from the Perspective of Young Journalists in Malaysia" analysed Malaysia's citizen journalism from the viewpoints of young journalists based on their comprehension of the ideas and responsibilities of citizen journalists. To get the best results for the phenomenon investigated, this study employed qualitative inquiry using the phenomenological approach and transcendental phenomenology. Based on the features of the sample provided (snowball sampling), the primary data collection procedure involved 14 informants, including the administration of citizen journalism platforms such as *CJ.MY*, *The Vocket*, and *The Patriots*, as well as their contacts between March and May 2017.

The results show that the informants associated opportunity with their capacity as citizen journalists. The sources claim that young people's capacity to create and distribute content is intrinsically related to the work of citizen journalists. The informants also believed that while citizen journalism is a beneficial occurrence, it should be used with caution. In addition, young citizen journalists consider their work as a chance to give back to society, influence their peers to be more active, and inspire others to become citizen journalists. The informants connected these results to their improved capacity to obtain, assess, comprehend, review, and critique information from a variety of mediums.

The study concluded that citizen journalism content should be included despite differences in experience and journalistic exposure. The work of citizen journalists should be acknowledged for improving current media reporting and inspiring new journalists, notwithstanding their contributions to enhancing the local media landscape and diversifying material<sup>111</sup>.

### 2.3.2 Fake News, Media, and Society

A study examined media literacy among young individuals who use social media and how it, or a lack of it, moderates their knowledge and approach to fake news in their study "dissecting fake news and half-truths on social media in Nigeria." The objectives of the study were to ascertain young adults' understanding of media literacy, analyse the influence of media literacy in the understanding of fake news and half-truths among young adults, examine whether young adults are aware that social media diffusion has led to the spread of fake news and also ascertain whether young adults know the implications of fake news and half-truths.

The study was underpinned by the assumptions of the Social Constructivism Theory and the Disruptive Innovation (Technology) Theory. Due to the growing significance of qualitative approaches in comprehending social realities, the study utilised the focus group discussion (FGD) technique, a qualitative method, to complement the quantitative data. Three separate focus group discussions (FGD) were held with young adults in Okada, Edo State. Males and females between the ages of 18 and 25 were defined as young adults. Discussants were chosen based on traits they had in common, the most important of which were age group and exposure to both mass and social media.

Regardless of gender, focus group members were chosen by snowball sampling from a pool of young adults through word-of-mouth referrals. In each FGD session, there were nine to twelve discussants. Based on the research questions from the paper that were represented in the FGD schedule items, three facilitators led the talks.

The cluster sampling method was used to divide the participants into different regions. They included those at the farm settlements, court roads, and male and female hostels. Young adults of either gender, male or female, made up the population. 33 discussants in all took part in the debates. A discussion agenda and outline for the FGD were used to help collect the data while the method of analysis was phenomenology or theme identification which relied on groups within the units of analysis rather than on a single participant.

On the influence of media literacy in the understanding of fake news among young adults, it became

clear that participants in the discussion do not always accept what they read, hear, or see on social media; probably the participants' level of media literacy influenced their experiences. This is especially true given that audience education level is related to how they use and find enjoyment in media, particularly news. The discussants are not also concerned about unverified information on social media because their past knowledge of fake news on social media acts as a gatekeeper. The study discovered that participants understood that social media is involved in the dissemination of fake news, implying a disruption of the social order.

This understanding is related to the discussion of social media dispersion and the distribution of false information. The findings also showed that the young people understand the consequences of fake news as some of them made references to instances when they experienced such. It was therefore concluded that media literacy is important in curbing the spread of fake news<sup>110</sup>.

Understanding the influence of digital images on the propagation of fake news was the crux of the matter in the research conducted among residents of the South East, Nigeria. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the extent to which the residents of the South-East have been exposed to digital images that often accompany news in social media, to establish the extent to which residents of South-East are influenced by fake news with images and to find out the factors that often lead to the influence of fake news with digital images among social media users in South-East Nigeria.

The study hinged on the technological determinism theory and the perception theory. Using a survey design, two prominent cities of Owerri in Imo State and Aba in Abia State were purposively selected for the study. The sample size for the study was 384 drawn from a combined population of 1,112,598 across the two cities using Krejcie & Morgan's sample size prediction table. A questionnaire and interview guide was used to collect data from the respondents. The study discovered that South-East people were heavily exposed to the digital visuals that frequently accompany news stories in social media. They regularly read news online, see photos included in the news, share and enjoy news online, and prefer news that includes visuals. This is further supported by the interviewees' comments,

as all but one of them admitted to having come into contact with fraudulent digital photos. Residents of the South-East were significantly impacted by false news that used digital imagery.

The majority of respondents continue to maintain the view that images do not lie, do not assess an image's persuasiveness, do not contrast authentic photos with fakes, and do not examine the origins of images before sharing. Since all the criteria used to evaluate the influence and believability of fake digital images were accepted, it follows that fake news is spreading because social media users are unaware of the tools for image editing that make it possible to spread false images. The contributing variables are perception/instinct, speed, and the desire to be the first to share, as well as a lack of understanding of picture verification methods beyond those that confirm the reliability of the source. The author concluded that South-East residents were largely unaware of some of the damaging effects that fraudulent digital images and the spread of false information had on them<sup>111</sup>.

Another study examined the conceptualisation and typology of fake news and the framework for solutions, perspectives from respondents in that study present some interesting findings. The objectives of the study were to ascertain the perceptions of journalists on what qualifies as fake news, to attempt the construction of the typology of fake news, and also to examine various means of identifying fake news on the internet. The study which was anchored on the libertarian theory adopted the survey design using a questionnaire with open and close-ended questions and an interview guide as instruments for data gathering. The population of the study includes journalists who are based in Abuja and subject matter experts such as presidential spokesmen, media scholars, media trainers, public relations experts, and data analysts. Of the 2,394 registered journalists according to the database of the Nigerian Union of Journalists, a sample size of 331 was derived using the Cochran formula for a large, definite population.

Findings from the study revealed that most (63%) of the journalists perceived biased and sensational reports as a major characteristic of fake news. A slight majority (52%) of the respondents also said unbalanced report falls into the category of fake news. Again, the participants differ in classifying most

of the news on social media as fake news. Online journalists were more likely than journalists from traditional media to say that just because a story is on social media does not mean it is fake news. The study also discovered a strong correlation between the aim of the author and what develops into fake news; moreover, fake news was more frequently identified in terms of its impact on society.

Additionally, the study identified bias, omission of crucial news elements and citations, sensationalism, and one-sidedness as distinct signs of fake news within the various categories of fake news. It also discovered that factors influencing audience perceptions of fake news include media literacy, timing, and the availability of sufficient data. The respondents agreed that stories without a source can be considered fake news because fake news frequently does not address the "Who," "What," "When," "Whom," "Where," and "How" of professional news reports. However, they did not agree that a report is also fake news just because the person or organization in question debunked it. A slim majority (51%) disagrees with the notion that a story can be labelled as fake news simply because it surfaced on social media.

From the findings, the authors articulated and conceptualised fake news from two major perspectives. First, from the professional/technical definition, fake news refers to those items of news regardless of medium and author, which fail to incorporate source and core news values, are filled with author opinions, and tend to edit errors. Such stories are also often reported on non-mainstream media sites, generated by internet bots and reported exclusively by unpopular news sites. Second, from the *consumer effects sense (definition)*, fake news is ill-intentioned, inaccurate, negative, fabricated, and distorted news aimed at misleading or entertaining the audience for profit or propaganda motives. Such news has a tendency to be used as *clickbait*, reported on social media or other misleading websites, and/or used as advertising disguised as news.

The authors were able to also articulate and identify four typologies of fake news. The first type is *fact-related fake news* which is obsessive and one-sided, and has no or poor source indication, with

the absent or skeletal treatment of core news values. The second type is *profit-oriented fake news* with clear satire/humour/parody for entertainment, click baits for internet traffic, and advertising pass-offs which are advertisements which are disguised as news. The third type is the *source/subject attributed fake news* which is highly negative, sensational, mainly on social media, inaccurate, propagandist, distorted, false, ill-intentioned, misleading, and fabricated news. The fourth type is the *medium/technology-related fake news* which is exclusively reported on irregular, cloned sites, and irregular domain names, with unpopular authors who have been blacklisted on some fake news search engines<sup>112</sup>.

The impact of fake news on social media on society was the thrust of the study on why fake news cascading is impacting negatively society and if big social media organisations were taking action to reduce how fake news is being cascaded in societies. Based on the research on fake news, social media, and societal acceptance, this study created a meta-framework. The structures that help define the clusters, in theory, are discussed by each of these perspectives, which are represented as circles in the meta-framework. The constructs that subsequently arise from each perspective serve as the framework for the meta-discussion of the associations between these constructs. In this work, notations to describe the correlations are further developed.

The epidemiological model was used in this study as a good theory to discuss the meta-framework viewpoints. It specifically made use of George McNew's disease triangle conceptual model from the 1960s to comprehend the pathology and epidemiology of plant diseases. The study defines fake news as an "infectious pathogen" since it is an epidemic made up of several types of false information. Where social media is understood as the environment, the hosts are readers, people, and society. The environment determines whether the infection can be controlled.

The study employed a longitudinal survey with online participants to examine the associations and relationships in the proposed meta-framework. In 2019, a cross-sectional online survey with stratified sampling was carried out. Participants were divided into groups according to their demographics,

comfort level with social media platforms, and online interest in news and current affairs. 2,234 active participants received a questionnaire. 546 questionnaires, or 24% of the total distributed, were returned with some or all of the answers completed. The authors emphasized that this response rate is comparable to that of earlier studies. North America made up 29% of the sampled individuals, which came from all continents. The study used the Fuzzy Set Theoretical Approach for the data analysis to test the relationship and associations of the interconnections. The study's findings imply that societies do not agree on how to distinguish true news from fake news. The findings also point to divisions in societal values. Overall, this study offers a fresh viewpoint on how fake news on social media is tearing society apart and displacing true news<sup>113</sup>.

The influence of fake news on the electoral process was the focus of the study on the West Local Government Area of Edo State. The objectives of the study were to determine the rate at which fake news spread on both social media and conventional media during electioneering among the residents, to examine the perception of the residents on the spread of fake news during electioneering, and also to determine and evaluate the perception of the residents on what they think are the implications of fake news on Nigerian democracy.

The study was underpinned by the assumptions of the conspiracy theory and adopted the survey design using a structured questionnaire as an instrument for data gathering. Of the 197,200 residents in the local government, the Taro Yamani formula was used to calculate and arrive at a sample size of 400. Purposive sampling was used to select respondents who were above the age of 18 in Auchi with the basic education required to understand the questions in the research instrument.

With an 87.5% return rate, findings from the research revealed that the rate at which fake news spread during the 2019 election was very high. The respondents believe that fake news was a major instrument that was used by politicians during the 2019 elections. The majority of the respondents agreed that social media was the major platform used to propagate fake news during the elections. The majority of the respondents also submitted that the spread of fake news during the elections remains a dangerous

trend that is capable of fueling crisis which could put the democracy of the nation under threat<sup>113</sup>.

A study sought to find out how print journalists can avoid fake news when using social media for news gathering. The objectives of the study were to examine the extent to which print media journalists in the Lagos metropolis use social media as a source for news gathering; to investigate the social media platforms used by print media journalists in the Lagos metropolis to gather news; to examine the challenges faced by the print media journalists while using the social media for news gathering, and also investigate how print media journalists verify news that they gathered from the social media before they publish them on their platform. The study was anchored on the new media theory.

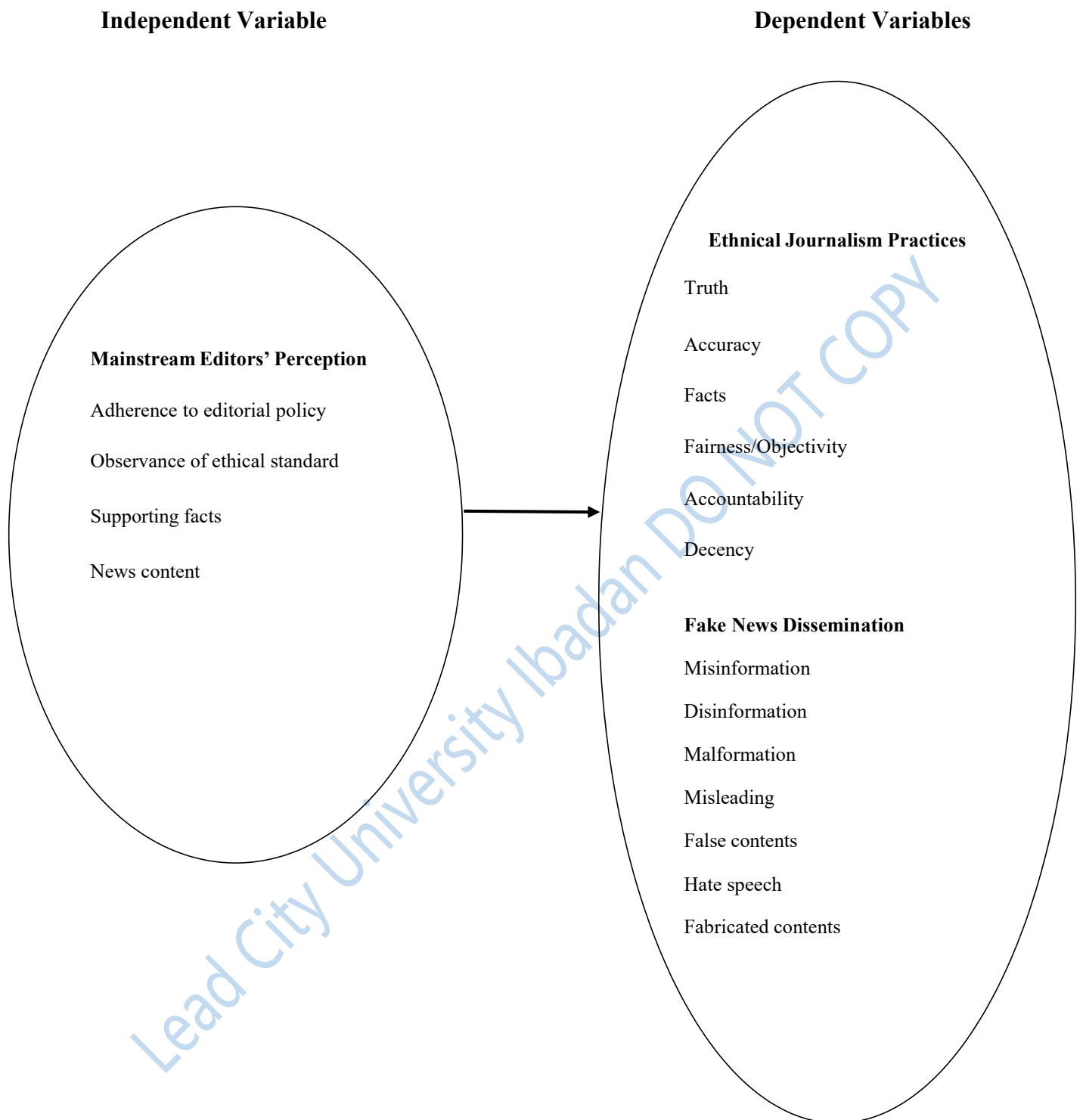
The study used the survey design in which fifty print media journalists, who work in Lagos, were selected using the snowball sampling technique. The questionnaire used as the instrument for data collection was designed in a Google form and the link was sent to the selected journalists. According to the study, the majority of respondents prefer to utilize social media to gather news. The majority of respondents are well-versed in the social media platforms used for news gathering. The most popular social media platforms for news gathering among the research participants are Twitter and blogs, while LinkedIn is the least popular. Additionally, it was shown that obtaining news from social media presented difficulties for the respondents. The credibility of the news source and content, access barriers such as network and data problems, copyright issues, political issues, cyber security issues, sociocultural issues, religious issues, and economical limitations are some of the obstacles encountered while using social media for news gathering.

The majority of respondents continued by saying that while using social media for news gathering has its difficulties and has lowered the bar for journalism; its advantages far exceed those difficulties. The respondents acknowledged that they verify the news or information obtained from social media before disseminating. The verification techniques include asking the author or source for confirmation, getting in touch with them to corroborate information from other sources as well, and checking reputable media outlets. The study also discovered that the respondents relied on the

systems in place for verifying news before it was published in their newspapers. These mechanisms include gatekeeping, online platforms for journalists, checks and balances, and filtering through other journalists and authorities. It is interesting to note that the majority of respondents (82%) said they abide by the rules and ethics established by legal and professional organisations about the need to confirm information before it is share<sup>117</sup>.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## 2.4 Conceptual Model



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Model on Mainstream Editors' Perception of Ethical Journalism Practice and Fake News Dissemination in Nigeria**  
Source: Researcher' Computation, 2024

A model is a representational illustration and a heuristic device that visually portrays the concepts and theory and it shows many parts of a system and their interrelationships to offer viewers a shared understanding of the knowledge. Therefore, a conceptual model is defined as a diagram of a proposed causal connection among a group of concepts. A conceptual model provides a visual representation of concepts through boxes and processes marked with arrows. As a result, a model constructed following common conventions may clearly illustrate the causal, sequential, and logical argument that mental habit generates clear and shared knowledge<sup>118</sup>. In summary, a rigorous conceptual model will allow the researcher to relate the study's elements, collect the right kind of information from an appropriate sample without bias, and permit adequate data analysis. This step in the research will also help to accomplish the other research characteristics<sup>138</sup>.

The conceptual model presented in the diagram above is the researcher's interpretation of the interplay of the variables vis-à-vis some assumptions of the theories underpinning this study. The first circle has the independent variable (mainstream editors' perception) while the second circle has the dependent variables (ethical journalism practises and fake news dissemination). Based on propositions in the extant literature on both the dependent and independent variables, a relationship was established at the point of intersection as depicted in the diagram. By ethical differentiation, the researcher expands the assumptions of the theory of ethics, particularly discerning the point at which the ethical requirement is deontological or teleological. That is when a journalist in the quest for professionalism has to think about whether his actions are the outcome of consequential or non-consequential perspectives of ethics. The quagmire that exists at the intersection point between ethical journalism and fake news is the intervening variable which is citizen journalism.

Ethical journalism, the model shows is a direct reflection of socially responsible journalism which has the attributes of journalism ethics such as truth, accuracy, fairness, objectivity, accountability, decency, balance, and impartiality. On the other hand, the three major presentations of fake news are malinformation, disinformation, and misinformation. These three major forms of presentation are

further propelled by false connection, misleading content, false context, imposter content, manipulated content, fabricated content, leaks, harassment, and hate speech. This model further lays the framework for the approaches to achieving the objectives and possible recommendations that will expand the frontiers of knowledge on this subject matter in this study.

## **2.5 Summary of Gaps in Literature Reviewed**

Based on the extant literature reviewed in this study and in addition to the objectives of this study, the following are expressions of some of the gaps that this study intends to fill. Although existing literature shows that studies in the subject area were underpinned by theories such as the social constructivism theory, disruptive innovation technology theory, and technological determinism theory, little is known about studies that situated their examination within the theory of ethics. Therefore, this study intends to explore the application of the assumptions in the theory of ethics to extract responses that would suffice in addressing the objectives set out in this study.

While existing literature to an extent examined the perception of journalists on the influence of citizen journalism on their practice, in specific terms, studies that probe the influence of fake news as a major variable seem limited. Therefore, in specific terms, this study explores the interplay of fake news in the space of ethical journalism by exploring how components such as false connections, imposter content, leaks, and fabricated content influence their perspectives and ethical journalism conduct. In terms of methodology, the use of survey design is common among the literature reviewed. However, the use of questionnaires appears prevalent. Therefore, this study will adopt an in-depth interview to allow the researcher to navigate and expand the scope of perspectives from the respondents as against the limited view that a questionnaire may subject the respondents to. It is believed that an in-depth interview will help with expounding the assumptions of the theories underpinning this study.

Few of the literature reviewed created a typology for fake news within the concept of societal interpretation and understanding of some journalists. In addition to this attempt, this study proposes a conceptual model that will provide further explanation and guide the understanding of the influence of fake news on ethical journalism.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

### Endnotes

1. T. Britannica, *Editors of Encyclopedia, Journalism. Encyclopedia Britannica*, 2020, Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/journalism/2020>.
2. S. Michelle, *Role of Journalism in Society-Indian Context*. (2019, January 10), Available online: <https://michellemathiasfsp.blogspot.com/2019/01/concept-and-meaning-of-journalism.html/2019>.
3. S. Michelle, *Role of Journalism in Society (Indian Context)*, **Communication Studies and Notes on Mass Communication and Journalism**, 2019.
4. O. Bamidele, Issues on Journalism Practice Regulations in Nigeria, In M. Popoola & G. Oboh, *Political Economy of Media Operations in Nigeria*, **Oyo, Nigeria: Ajayi Crowther University**, 2020. 487-501.
5. T. Aitamurto & A. Varma, The Constructive Role of Journalism: Contentious Metadiscourse on Constructive Journalism & Solutions Journalism, **Journalism Practice**, 12 (6), 2018, 695-713.
6. P. Umaru & J. Abubakar, *Professional Safety and Security Among Nigerian Journalists*, In M. Popoola and G. Ehiarekhan, *Political Economy of Media Operations in Nigeria*, ed. **Oyo, Nigeria: Ajayi Crowther University**, 2020, 471-486.
7. C. Uzochukwu & C. Chinedu-Okeke, *Nigerian Journalism Practice in the Era of Social Media in Management*, In E. Mojaye, *Traditional, Mainstream and New Media Systems of communication* ed., **Nigeria: Babcock University Press**, 2020, 389-414.
8. T. Adaja. *Nigerian Journalism and Professionalism: Issues and Challenges*, **News Media and Mass Communication (IISTE)**, 5, 2012, 15-22.
9. T. Hanitzsch & T. Vos, *Journalism Beyond Democracy: A new Look into Journalistic Roles in Political and Everyday Life*, **Journalism** 19(2), 2018, 146-164.
10. T. Hanitzsch, *Roles of Journalists*, **Journalism**, 2018, 43-62.
11. Media Ethics in Mass Communication: Complete Guide (2020, July 17) **FIU Communication**, 2020, Available Online: <https://carta.fiu.edu/gsc-creative/2020/07/07/media-ethics-mass-communication-complete-guide/>.

12. R. Olatunji; A. Ogweezy-Ndisika & J. Jimoh, Overview of Media, Governance and Development in Nigeria, In R. Olatunji, A. Ogweezy-Ndisika and J. Jimoh, *Media, Governance and Sustainable Development in Nigeria*, ed., **Lagos: LASU Publishers**, 2020, 1-13.
13. P. Juneja, Introduction to Media. *Management Study Guide*, 2022, Available online: <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/introduction-to-media.htm/>.
14. K. Lough & K. McIntyre, *A Systematic Review of Constructive and Solutions Journalism Research*, **Journalism**, 24(5), 2023, 1069-1088.
15. M. Bruggemann; I. Lorcher & S. Walter, *Post-Normal Science Communication: Exploring the Blurring Boundaries of Sciences and Journalism*, **Journal of Science Communication**, 19(3), 2020.
16. K. Their & K. Namkoong, *Identifying Major Components of Solutions-Oriented Journalism: A Review to Guide Future Research*, **Journalism Studies**, 24(12), 2023, 1557-1574.
17. O. Apuke; B. Omar & E. Tunca, *Effect of Fake News Awareness as an Intervention Strategy for Motivating News Verification Behaviour among Social Media Users in Nigeria: A Quasi-Experimental Research*, **Journal of Asian and African Studies**, 58(6), 2023, 888-903.
18. O. Apuke & B. Omar, *The Ethical Challenges and Issues of Online Journalism Practice in Nigeria: What do Professionals and Academics Think?*, **Technology in Society**, 67, 2021.
19. R. Kahn and Michael A. Dennis, *Internet*, **Encyclopedia Britannica**, 2022, Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/Internet/>.
20. I. Pepple & I. Acholonu, *Media Ethics as Key to Sound Professionalism in Nigeria Journalism Practice*, **Journalism and Mass Communication**, 8(2), 2018, 56-67.
21. B. Gbadeyan, *Social Media and Journalism Ethics in Nigeria: A Study of Journalists in Kwara State of Nigeria*, **International Journal of Social Science and Human Research**, 4(3), 2021, 389-396.
22. O. Apuke; B. Omar & E. Tunca, *Literacy Concept as an Intervention Strategy for Improving Fake News Knowledge, Detection Skills, and Curtailing the Tendency to Share Fake News in Nigeria*, **Child & Youth Services**, 44(1), 2023, 88-108.

23. A. Ejiogu; C. Ejiogu & A. Ambituuni, *Corruption Fight Back: Localizing Trnsparency and EITIn the Nigerian "Penkelemes"*, **Governance**, 34(3), 2021, 785-802.
24. Y. Luo & T. Harrison, *How Citizen Journalists Impact the Agendas of Traditional Media and the Government Policymaking Process in China*. **Global Media and China**, 2019, Available online: <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/pdf/10.1177/2059436419835771/>.
25. B. Folarin. *Theories of mass communication: An Introductory Text*. **Ibadan: Sterling-Horden**, 2008.
26. A. Nkomo & B. Themba. *Citizen Journalism in Comparison with Professional Journalism*. **INOSR Arts and Management**, 2018, Available online: <http://www.inosr.net/wp-content/uploads/2019/11/INOSR-AM-41-1-4-2018..pdf/>.
27. I. Nyam & S. Okpara, *9Mobile News SMS Entrepreneurship and Citizen Journalism Potentials in Nigeria*, **Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies**, 2021.
28. R. Agrawal & D. Sharma, *A Survey on Video-Based Fake News Detection Techniques*. In 2021 8th International Conference on Computing for Sustainable Global Development (INDIACom), IEEE, 2021, 663-669.
29. E. Asemah, *Selected Mass Media Themes*. **Jos: University Press**, 2011.
30. J. Nelson & T. Harsh. *The Small, Disloyal Fake News Audience: The Role of Audience Availability in Fake News Consumption*. **New Media & Society**. 20(7), 2018, Available online: <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322820042/>.
31. K. Inobemhe; F. Ugber; I. Ojo & T. Santas, *New Media and The Proliferation of Fake News in Nigeria*, Nasarawa **Journal of Multimedia and Communication Studies**, (2) 2, 154-166. 2020.
32. J. Folarin; K. Adesina and B. Ismail. *Ethical Compliance among Journalists in Nigeria: A Theoretical Appraisal*. **Nigerian Communication & Information Technology Journal**, 1(1), 2019.
33. R. Ekwunife; H. Nwachukwu & I. Ukeje, *Bureaucracy and Citizen Journalism: Issues and Challenges Imperative for Media Practice in Nigeria*, **International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development**, 5(6), 2021.
34. O. Apuke & B. Omar, *Fake News and COVID-19: Modelling the Predictors of Fake News Haring among social media users*, **Telematics and Informatics**, 56, 2021, 101475.

35. A. Butler, *Protecting the Democratic Role of the Press: A Legal Solution to Fake News*, **Wash. UL Rev.**, 96, 2018, 419.
36. D. Choi; S. Chun, H. Oh & J. Han, *Rumor Propagation is Amplified by Echo Chambers in Social Media*, **Scientific Reports**, 10(1), 2020, 1–10.
37. J. Choudrie; S. Patil, K. Kotecha, N. Matta & I. Pappas, *Applying and Understanding an Advanced, Novel Deep Learning Approach: A Covid-19, Text Based, Emotions Analysis Study*, **Information Systems Frontiers**, 2021, 1–35.
38. V. Marda & S. Milan. *Wisdom of the crowd: Multistakeholder perspectives on the fake news debate*. **Netherland: Dactive Ideas Lab**, 2018.
39. D. Olorunyomi, *Facts, Truth and Knowledge: Journalism and the Ethical Community*, Remarks at the 5th Annual Conference of the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN), *Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria*. September 5-6, 2018.
40. S. Deepak & B. Chitturi, *Deep Neural Approach to Fake-News Identification*, **Procedia Computer Science**, 167, 2020, 2236–2243.
41. A. Duffy; E. Tandoc & R. Ling, R, *Too Good to be True, too Good not to Share: The Social Utility of Fake News*. *Information, Communication & Society*, 23(13), 2020, 1965–1979.
42. J. Egelhofer & S. Lecheler, *Fake news as a Two-Dimensional Phenomenon: A Framework and Research Agenda*, *Annals of the International Communication Association*, 43(2), 2020, 97–116.
43. L. Oso. *These Are Interesting Times*, Being welcome address at the 5th Annual Conference of the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN), *Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria*. September 5-6, 2018.
44. M. Syahri, *Journalism Ethics in Local Newspaper Etika Jurnalistik di Koran Lokal, Masyarakat, Kebudayaan Dan Politik*, 33(1), 2020, 1-14.
45. A. Ojebode, *In Search of Muted Voices for the Mirage Name Development*, **Inaugural**, 2019.
46. P. Faustini, & T. Covoos, **Fake News Detection in Multiple Platforms and Languages, Expert Systems with Applications**, 158, 2020, 113503.

47. C. Ireton & J. Posetti, *Journalism, Fake News & Disinformation: Handbook for Journalism Education and Training*, **Unesco Publishing**, 2018.
48. J. Xin; A. Nguyen & A. Stuart, *New Perspectives on Citizen Journalism*, **Global Media and China**, 4(1), 2019, 3-12.
49. A. Apeh & I. Didiugwu, *Implications of Citizen Journalism on the Mainstream Journalism*, **International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences**. 7(12), 2017, 1349-1362.
50. A. Nkomo & B. Themba, *Citizen Journalism in Comparison with Professional Journalism*, **INOSR Arts and Management** 4(1): 1-4, 2018, 1-4.
51. H. Jwa; D. Oh; K. Park; J. Kang & H. Lim, *Texbake: Automatic Fake News Detection Model Based on Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers (bert)*, **Applied Sciences**, 9(19), 2019, 4062.
52. S. Der Linden; J. Roozenbeek, & J. Compton, *Inoculating against Fake News about COVID-19*. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 11, 2020, 2928.
53. A. Maronikolakis; D. Villegas; D. Preotiuc-Pietro; and N. Aletras, N., *Analyzing Political Parody in Social Media*. **arXiv preprint arXiv:2004**, 2020, 13878.
54. A. Moscadelli; G. Albora; M. Biamonte; D. Giorgetti; M. Innocenzio; S. Paoli; C. Lorini; P. Bonanni & G. Bonaccorsi, *Fake News and Covid-19 in Italy: Results of a Quantitative Observational Study*, **International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health**, 17(16), 2020, 5850.
55. O. Apuke & B. Omar, *The Ethical Challenges and Issues of Online Journalism Practice in Nigeria: What do professionals and Academics Think?*, **Technology in Society**, 67, 2021.
56. J. Nasir; O. Khan & I. Varlamis, *Fake News Detection: A Hybrid CNN-RNN Based Deep Learning Approach*, **International Journal of Information Management Data Insights**, 1(1), 2021, p.100007.
57. R. Ekwunife; H. Nwachukwu & I. Ukeje, *Bureaucracy and Citizen Journalism: Issues and Challenges Imperative for Media Practice in Nigeria*, **International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development**, 5(6), 2021.

58. UNESCO. *Journalism, 'Fake News' & Disinformation*. 2018, Available online: [https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/journalism\\_fake\\_news\\_disinformation\\_print\\_friendly\\_0.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/journalism_fake_news_disinformation_print_friendly_0.pdf).
59. H. Rashkin; E. Choi; J. Jang; S. Volkova and Y. Choi, *Truth of Varying Shades: Analyzing Language in Fake News and Political Fact-Checking*. In Proceedings of the 2017 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing (pp. 2931–2937).
60. A. Roy; K. Basak; A. Ekbal & P. Bhattacharyya, A deep Ensemble Framework for Fake News Detection and Classification. arXiv preprint arXiv:1811.04670, 2018.
61. O. Apuke & L. Ayih, *The Acceptance and Practice of Citizen Journalism in the North Eastern Part of Nigeria*, **Journal Pengajian Media Malaysia**, 22(1), 2020, 1-16.
62. G. Shahi; A. Dirkson & T. Majchrzak, *An Exploratory Study of Covid-19 Misinformation on Twitter*, **Online Social Networks and Media**, 22, 2021, 100104.
63. G. Shrivastava; P. Kumar; R. Ojha; P. Srivastava; S. Mohan & G. Srivastava, *Defensive modeling of fake news through online social networks*, **IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems**, 7(5), 2020, 1159–1167.
64. B. Mutsvairo & S. Salgado, *Is Citizen Journalism Dead? An Examination of Recent Developments in the Field*, **Journalism**, 23(2), 2022, 354-371.
65. O. Salami, The Challenges of Digital Media and Citizen Journalism in Nigeria, In D. Gambo & H. Batta, *Digital Media Communication and Civic Engagement in Nigeria*. Ed., 125-138. **Nigeria: African Council for Communication Education**. 2020.
66. A. Igyuve, F. Iloani & A. Offoboche, *Should Internet-Based Media Be Regulated in Nigeria?* In O. Olatunji; D. Odunlami & K. Adesina, *Media Freedom, National Interest and Governance*. Ed. Lai. **ACSPN Book Series 5**, 2020, 31-44.
67. K. Inobemhe; F. Ugber; I. Ojo and T. Santas, *New Media and The Proliferation of Fake News in Nigeria*, Nasarawa **Journal of Multimedia and Communication Studies**, (2) 2, 154-166. 2020.
68. B. Assay, *Social Media and the Challenges of Curtailing the Spread of Fake News in Nigeria*, In I. Chilwa & S. Samoilenko, *Handbook of Research on Deception, Fake News and Misinformation Online*. Eds. **United States of America: IGI Global**. 2019, 226-263.

69. I. Nyam & S. Okpara, *9Mobile News SMS Entrepreneurship and Citizen Journalism Potentials in Nigeria*, **Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies**, 2021.
70. J. Folarin; K. Adesina & B. Ismail, *Ethical Compliance among Journalists in Nigeria: A Theoretical Appraisal*, **Nigerian Communication & Information Technology Journal**, 1(1), 2019, 29.
71. Shu, K., Mahudeswaran, D., Wang, S., Lee, D. and Liu, H., 2020. Fakenewsnet: A Data Repository with News Content, Social Context, and Spatiotemporal Information for Studying Fakenews on Social Media, **Big Data**, 8(3), 171–188.
72. B. Gbadeyan, *Social Media and Journalism Ethics in Nigeria: A Study of Journalists in Kwara State of Nigeria*, **International Journal of Social Science and Human Research** 4(3), 2021, 389-396.
73. F. Jamil & M. Jamil, *Citizen Journalism and Media Laws and Ethics in Post Truth Era: An Analytical Survey*, **Journal of Media & Communication**, 3(1), 2022.
74. K. Shu; S. Wang & H. Liu, April. *Understanding User Profiles on Social Media for Fake News Detection*. In *2018 IEEE Conference on Multimedia Information Processing and Retrieval (MIPR)* (pp. 430–435). IEEE, 2018.
75. C. Sinclair, *Parody: Fake News, Regeneration and Education*, **Post Digital Science and Education**, 2(1), 2020, 61–77.
76. S. Tifferet, *Verifying Online Information: Development and Validation of a Self-Report Scale*, *Technology in Society*, 67, 2021.
77. O. Apuke; B. Omar & E. Tunca, *Literacy Concept as an Intervention Strategy for Improving Fake News Knowledge, Detection Skills, and Curtailing the Tendency to Share Fake News in Nigeria*, **Child & Youth Services**, 44(1), 2023, 88-108.
78. O. Apuke; B. Omar & E. Tunca, *Effect of Fake News Awareness as an Intervention Strategy for Motivating News Verification Behaviour among Social Media Users in Nigeria: A Quasi-Experimental Research*, **Journal of Asian and African Studies**, 58(6), 2023, 888-903.
79. T. Britannica, Editors of Encyclopaedia. "Ethical Egoism." **Encyclopaedia Britannica** (2022, February 10). Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/egoism/2022>.

80. J. Dominick. *The Dynamics of Mass Communication*. New York: McGraw Hill. 2005.
81. O. Apuke & C. Gever, *A Quasi Experiment on how the Field of Librarianship can Help in Combating Fake News*, **The Journal of Academic Librarianship**, 49(1), 2023.
82. C. Song; N. Ning; Y.Zhang & B Wu, *A Multimodal Fake News Detection Model Based on Cross Modal Attention Residual and Multichannel Convolutional Neural Networks*, **Information Processing & Management**, 58(1), 2021, 02437.
83. S. Talwar; A. Dhir; P. Kaur; N. Zafar, & M. Alrasheedy, *Why do People Share Fake News? Associations between the Dark Side of Social Media Use and Fake News Sharing Behavior*, **Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services**, 51, 2019, 72–82.
84. G. Karaoglu. *News Production and Consumption Practices in Online Journalism: A Cross-Platform Review*, **Selcuk Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitusu Dergisi**, 2022, 184-194.
85. A. Thota; P. Tilak, S. Ahluwalia, & N. Lohia, *Fake News Detection: A Deep Learning Approach*. *SMU Data Science Review*, 1(3), 2018, 10.
86. P. Verma; P. Agrawal; I Amorim & R. Prodan, *WELFake: Word Embedding Over Linguistic Features for Fake News Detection*, **IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems**, 2021.
87. A. Apejaye, *Contemporary Critiques of Nigerian Journalism*, **The Routledge Companion to Journalism in the Global South**, 2024, 251-259.
88. H. Wynne & Z. Wint, *Content Based Fake News Detection Using N-gram Models*. In *Proceedings of the 21st International Conference on Information Integration and Web-based Applications & Services*, 2019, 669–673.
89. M. Mahamed; S. Omar & S. Krauss. *Understanding Citizen Journalism from the Perspective of Young Journalists in Malaysia*. **Utopiay Praxis Latinoamericana**. 26(1), 2021, 133-143.
90. M. Akila & J. Ayodele, *Friends or foes? Seeking Common Grounds for Collaboration Among Citizen Journalists and Mainstream Journalists*. **KIU Journal of Humanities**. 5(3), 2020, 215-223.
91. X. Zhou & R. Zafarani, *A Survey of Fake News: Fundamental Theories, Detection Methods, and Opportunities*, **ACM Computing Surveys (CSUR)**, 53(5), 2020, 1–40.

92. A. Rao; M. Rao & D. Rao, Network Media Content Model in the Era of Smart Devices, International Conference on Machine Learning and Big Data Analytics, 2022, 341-353.
93. A. Zubiaga; A. Aker; K. Bontcheva; K. Liakata & R. Procter, Detection and Resolution of Rumours in social media: A survey. ACM Computing Surveys (CSUR), 51(2), 2018, 1–36.
94. D. Tayeebwa; D.Wendo & D. Nakiwala, *Theories and Models of Science Communication*, CABI Books. CABI International, 2022
95. K. Mulholland & G. Irgens, *Examining the Discourse of Effective Science Communicators Using Epistemic Network Analysis*. In: Aratoopour Irgens, *Communications Computer, and Information Science*, 1895. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-47014-1\\_13](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-031-47014-1_13), 2023.
96. I. Nenadic, *To Understand Media Pluralism Is to Understand Changes in News Media and Journalism Advanced by Digital Technologies*. In: *Media, Freedom of Speech, and Democracy in the EU and Beyond*. The S. Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies, 10. 2019, 130.
97. B. Folarin, *Theories of Mass Communication: An Introductory Text*, Ibadan: Stiriling-Horden Publishers, 1998.
98. UNESCO (2018). *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development Global Report 2017/2018*. UNESCO Digital Library. ISBN:978-92-3-100242-7(print/pdf).p.202
99. O. Omoera & T. Uwalaka, *Fake News as Disruptive Media: A digital Age Challenge in Nigeria*, **Studies in Media and Communication**, 11(6), 2023, 208-221.
100. Waisbord, S. "The 5Ws and 1H of Digital Journalism". *Digital Journalism*. 7 (3): 351–358. doi:10.1080/21670811.2018.1545592. ISSN 2167-0811. S2CID 164443239, 2019.
101. L. Peres-Neto, *Journalist-Twitterers as Political Influencers in Brazil: Narratives and Disputes Towards a New Intermediary Model*, **Media & Communication**, 10 (3), 2022.
102. M. Salaudeen. *From Personal to Professional: Exploring the Influences on Journalists' Evaluation of Citizen Journalism Credibility*. **Journalism Practice**. 2021.
103. G. Chih-Hsin Sheen, H. Tung & W. Wen-Chin, *Citizen Journalism Reduces the Credibility Deficit of Authoritarian Government in Risk Communication Amid COVID-19*

*Outbreaks*. **PLoS ONE**.16 (12), 2021, 1-14.

104. B. Aarthi & J. Chelliah, *Fake News Classification from Online Social Network Comments Using BILSTM Deep Learning Model*, **2023 Second International Conference on Augmented Intelligence and Sustainable Systems**, 2023, 910-916.
105. U. Pate; D. Gambo & M. Ibrahim, *The Impact, of Fake News and the Emerging Post-Truth Political Era on Nigerian Polity: A Review of Literature*, *Studies in Media and Communication*,7(1), 2019, 21-29.
106. O. Apuke & B. Omar, *In the Age of Fake News: Appraising the Ethical Challenges and Issues of Online Media Practice in Nigeria*, **Library Philosophy and Practice**, 2020, 1-20.
107. U. Ugo; A. Wagbara & J. Omaka, *Ethical Issues in Internet-Based Journalism Practices in Nigeria*, **World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews**, 19(1), 2023.
108. M. Ukonu; J. Ugwuoke & S. Ugwuanyi, *Conceptualization and Typology of Fake News: Framework for Solutions*. **Journal of Communication and Media Research**, 11(1), 181-193. 2019.
109. F. Olan, Uchitha Jayawickrama, Emmanuel Ogiemwonyi Arakpogun, Jana Suklan and ShaofengLiu. *Fake News on Social Media: The Impact on Society*. **Information Systems Frontiers**. 2022. Available online: <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10796-022-10242-z>.
110. I. Abdulazeez, Livingstone N. Nelson, Abdulazeez H. Kadiri. *Implication of Fake News on the 2019 Nigeria Electioneering*. **SAU Journal of Management and Social Sciences**. 6(1) 245- 252. 2021.
111. C. Mbaka; K. Udeh & G. Onyeberechi, *Social Media Utilization for News Gathering By Print Media Journalists in Lagos Metropolis: Avoiding The Fake News*. **GVU Journal of Communication Studies**. 3, 87-97. 2021.
112. D. Eriksson. *A Framework for the Constitution of Modelling Processes: A Proposition*, **European Journal of Operational Research**, 145, 202–215. 2003.
113. J. Earp and S.T. *Conceptual models for health education and practice*. **Health Education Research**, 6(2), 163-171. 1991.
114. U. Sekaran. *Research Methods for Business. A Skill Building Approach* 4th edition. **Singapore: John Wiley & Sons**. 2003.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methodology**

The main aim of this study is to examine the perceptions of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and how fake news has influenced ethical journalism practice in Nigeria. Therefore, the chapter presents the methodology for achieving the aim of the study.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The rationale for the choice of the design is that the study compares two variables to find the influence of the independent variable (mainstream editors' perception) on the dependent variables (ethical journalism practice and fake news dissemination).

#### **3.2 Population of the Study**

The population comprised two hundred and sixty-seven (267) editors in Mainstream media across Nigeria<sup>1</sup>.

#### **3.3 Sample and Sampling Technique**

The sample size was 116 print, broadcast, and online media editors. A total enumeration sampling technique was adopted for the study. The justification for this technique is that it provides a comprehensive understanding of the entire population and allows a thorough examination of the entire population, providing accurate estimates and averages for various parameters.

#### **3.4 Description of the Research Instrument**

The study adopted a self-designed questionnaire. The questionnaire, tagged "Mainstream Editors' Perception of Ethical Journalism Practices and Fake News Dissemination" (MEPEJPFND) contained four sections

numbered A – D. Section A, which is on the demographic information of the respondents contained four (4) items to determine the gender, age, educational background and media type of the respondents. Section B which sought information on the mainstream editors' perception of journalism practices had 14 items with four-Likert type response options of Very High (VH), High (H), Low (L), and Very Low (VL). Section C which sought information on the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices had 21 items with response options of Strongly agreed (SA), Agreed (A), Disagreed (D), Strongly disagreed (SD). Section D which solicited information on mainstream editors' perception of fake news dissemination had 12 items with response options of Very High (VH), High (H), Low (L), and Very Low (VL).

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

The researcher's supervisor and four other lecturers in the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, Lead City University, Ibadan validated the contents of the instrument. Corrections suggested were effected after which a clean copy of the research instrument was produced by the researcher.

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

The instrument's reliability was evaluated through a pilot study involving (25) Mainstream Editors in Abuja. The questionnaire was subjected to a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha 0.70 coefficient. The instrument is said to be reliable if Cronbach's Alpha reliability coefficient is greater or equal to 0.70 (Reliability  $\geq$  0.70). The results showed a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.801 for the entire questionnaire (see Appendix 1), indicating high reliability for all constructs used to measure both independent and dependent variables in the study. Forty-seven (47) items were included in the reliability test, and all demonstrated joint reliability with a coefficient of 0.801.

The perception of journalism practices among mainstream editors was tested, and Fourteen (14) items were subjected to a reliability test, having a reliability of (0.805). The perception of ethical journalism

practices among mainstream editors was also tested, twenty-one (21) items were subjected to a reliability of (0.765).

The perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination were tested Twelve (12) items were subjected to the reliability of (0.811). From the foregoing, the results indicate that all the items that make up the indicators used to measure the variables in the study were highly reliable.

**Table 3.1: Summary of Items Used in the Instrument and their Reliability Coefficient**

<b>Constructs</b>	<b>Number of Items</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>
Perception of journalism practices among mainstream editors	14	0.805
perception of ethical journalism practices among mainstream editors	21	0.765
Perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination	12	0.811
Overall Reliability (Entire Questionnaire)	47	0.801

### **3.7 Method of Data Collection**

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, which was used to introduce the researcher to the respondents. The researcher generated a Google form which was administered to the respondents through emails and WhatsApp. This is to enable access to the respondents for ease of administration of the research instrument.

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

The data collected was analysed using the descriptive statistics of frequency counts. The data was collated and analysed employing the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 2.0 to answer the research questions while the Pearson Product Moment Correlational was employed to answer the research hypotheses.

## Endnote

1. *Nigerian Guild of Editors, Population of Mainstream Editors, 2024.*

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## Chapter Four

### Results and Discussion of Findings

This chapter presents the result of the analysis of collected data. Descriptive, multiple regression, and chi-square statistics were employed in the analysis of data while appropriate discussion was done on the findings revealed. Therefore, this chapter is presented under the following sub-headings:

#### 4.1 Presentation of Demographic Information of Respondents

**Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents (N=116)**

<b>Demographic Statement</b>		<b>Study Sample</b>	
		Members of the Editors in the Nigerian mainstream media	
<b>Characteristics</b>	<b>Information</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Sex	Male	112	88.5
	Female	4	11.5
Age	30 – 35 years old	1	0.9
	36 – 40 years old	4	3.5
	41 – 45 years old	10	8.8
	46 and above	98	86.7
	years old		
Educational Background	SSCE/OND	15	1.8
	BSC/HND	58	51.3
	MSC	43	38.1
	PhD	10	8.8
Media Type	Television	17	15.0
	Radio	16	14.2
	Newspaper	58	51.3
	Magazine	4	0.9
	New	21	18.6
	Media/Online		

**Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024**

Table 4.1 revealed the demographic information of the respondents of this study which consisted of editors in the Nigerian mainstream media, which have their head offices either in Lagos or Abuja. It was clearly stated that 100 (88.5%) of the total respondents of this study are male while the remaining 13 (11.5%) respondents are female. Hence, the majority of the participants in this study are male.

Furthermore, Table 4.1 revealed the age distribution of the respondents of this study as follows: only 1 (0.9%) respondent belonged to the age bracket 30 – 35 years, 4 (3.5%) of the total respondents belonged to the age bracket 36 – 40 years, 10 (8.8%) of the total respondents were in the age bracket 41 – 45 years and 98 (86.7%) of the total respondents were 46 years and above. Therefore, most of the respondents belonged to the age bracket of 46 and above years old.

More so, Table 4.1 summarises the educational background of the respondents as filled out in the questionnaire. 2 (1.8%) of the total respondents are SSCE/OND certificate holders, 58 (51.3%) of the total respondents have obtained BSC/HND, 43 (38.1%) out of all the respondents of this study have MSC as their highest educational achievement while 10 (8.8%) of the total respondents have obtained PhD in their field of study. Hence, most of the participants of this study have BSC/HND as their highest educational achievement.

Also, Table 4.1 shows the media type in which the respondents primarily engage. 17 (15.0%) of the total respondents are Television media persons, 16 (14.2%) of the total respondents are Media workers in Radio stations, 58 (51.3%) of the total respondents are Newspaper Media Personnel, 1 (0.9%) respondent is a Magazine Media Personnel, while 21 (18.6%) of the total respondents are media personnel working Online/New media. Therefore, many of the respondents of this study work as Newspaper media personnel.

#### 4.2.1 Presentation of Data

**Research Question One:** What is the Level of Ethical Journalism Practices among Journalists in Nigeria?

**Table 4.2: Level of Ethical Journalism Practices in Nigeria**

S/N	Statement	VH (%)	H (%)	L (%)	VL (%)	Mean	SD	AM
1.	The editorial team enjoys editorial independence	14 (12.4)	53 (46.9)	44 (38.9)	2 (1.8)	2.70	0.71	
2.	Reporters and news editors ensure the accuracy of the story	22 (19.5)	65 (57.5)	25 (22.1)	0 (0)	2.97	0.65	
3.	The editorial team guarantees the fairness of stories	20 (17.7)	68 (60.2)	23 (20.4)	0 (0)	2.97	0.62	
4.	Editors respect the privacy of individuals	28 (24.8)	58 (51.3)	26 (23.0)	0 (0)	3.02	0.70	
5.	News reporters present factual reports	13 (11.5)	69 (61.1)	31 (27.4)	0 (0)	2.84	0.61	
6.	Balance of reports by journalists	12 (10.6)	52 (46.0)	49 (43.4)	0 (0)	2.67	0.66	
7.	Overriding the principle of confidentiality	27 (23.9)	57 (50.4)	26 (23.0)	2 (1.8)	2.97	0.74	
8.	News media houses promote the decency of journalists	15 (13.3)	47 (41.6)	47 (41.6)	4 (3.5)	2.65	0.75	
9.	News presentation makes pejorative references	3 (2.7)	50 (44.2)	52 (46.0)	7 (6.2)	2.44	0.65	

10. Journalists rarely solicit nor accept bribe	25 (22.1)	49 (43.4)	30 (26.5)	8 (7.1)	2.81	0.87	
11. Journalists do not promote vulgar displays of wealth in a manner that glorifies the Profession	7 (6.2)	31 (27.4)	58 (51.3)	12 (10.6)	2.31	0.75	<b>2.79</b>
12. Journalists protect children's and minors' rights	24 (21.2)	57 (50.4)	30 (26.5)	2 (1.8)	2.91	0.74	
13. Journalists deploy honest means in the gathering of information	15 (13.3)	65 (57.5)	31 (27.4)	2 (1.8)	2.82	0.67	
14. Journalists promote national unity and public good	20 (17.7)	47 (41.6)	42 (37.2)	4 (3.5)	2.73	0.79	
15. Journalists respect the principle of human rights	26 (23.0)	67 (59.3)	17 (15.0)	2 (1.8)	3.04	0.68	
16. Journalists respect the principle of democracy in their reportage	17 (15.0)	67 (59.3)	28 (24.8)	1 (0.9)	2.89	0.65	
17. Journalists respect the principle of injustice in their reportage	14 (12.4)	51 (45.1)	41 (36.3)	3 (2.7)	2.70	0.73	
18. Journalists respect the principle of equity	18 (15.9)	54 (47.8)	41 (36.3)	0 (0)	2.80	0.70	
19. Journalists understand the principle of peace and international understanding	9 (8.0)	68 (60.2)	34 (30.1)	2 (1.8)	2.74	0.62	
20. Journalists have a proper understanding of ethical codes	11 (9.7)	48 (42.5)	51 (45.1)	3 (2.7)	2.59	0.70	
21. Journalism practice enhances press freedom	16 (14.2)	66 (58.4)	28 (24.8)	2 (1.8)	2.86	0.67	
22. Editorial teams are alive to their Responsibilities	21 (18.6)	59 (52.2)	31 (27.4)	2 (1.8)	2.88	0.72	

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

**Key: VH = Very High, H =High, L =Low, VL =Very Low, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation; AM = Average Mean**

Table 4.2 revealed the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria with an average mean value of 2.79 which is higher than the average on a 4-point scale. Hence, the average

mean asserted that there is a high level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria. Table 4.2 also expressed the items of Level of Ethical Journalism Practices in Nigeria such as: "Editorial team enjoys editorial independence", "Reporters and news editors ensure accuracy of story", "Editorial team guarantees fairness of stories", "Editors respect the privacy of individuals", "News reporters present factual reports", "Balance of reports by journalists", "Overriding principle of confidentiality", "News media houses promote decency of journalists", "News presentation makes pejorative references", "Journalists rarely solicit nor accept bribe", "Journalists do not promote vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies the profession", "Journalists protect children and minors' rights", "Journalists deploy honest means in the gathering of information", "Journalists promote national unity and public good", "Journalists respect the principle of human rights", "Journalists respect the principle of democracy in their reportage", "Journalists respect the principle of injustice in their reportage.

Journalists respect the principle of equity", "Journalists understand the principle of peace and international understanding", "Journalists have a proper understanding of ethical codes", "Journalism practice enhances press freedom", "Editorial teams are alive to their responsibilities", with their respective mean values 2.70, 2.97, 2.97, 3.02, 2.84, 2.67, 2.97, 2.65, 2.44, 2.81, 2.31, 2.91, 2.82, 2.73, 3.04, 2.89, 2.70, 2.80, 2.74, 2.59, 2.86 and 2.88.

Furthermore, table 4.2 revealed some items on the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria scale which are seen to be high. Such items include: "Reporters and news editors ensure accuracy of the story", "Editorial team guarantees the fairness of stories", "Editors respect the privacy of individuals", "Overriding principle of confidentiality", "Journalists protect children and minors' rights" and "Journalists respect the principle of human rights" with mean score values: 2.97, 2.97, 3.02, 2.97, 2.91 and 3.04. It was seen that Nigerian journalists demonstrate the most a high respect for the principle of human rights as means the score was stated to be the highest mean score.

Also, table 4.2 revealed the least influential factor of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria which is " Journalists do not promote the vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies the profession " and this was affirmed by its mean score of 2.31. Not promoting vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies the profession minimally affects the level of ethical journalism practices among Nigerian journalists

**Research Question Two: What is the Level of Fake News Dissemination among Journalists in Nigeria?**

**Table 4.3(a): Level of Fake News Dissemination among Journalists in Nigeria**

S/N	Statement	VH (%)	H (%)	L (%)	VL (%)	Mean	SD	AM
1.	Dissemination cuts across mainstream Practitioners	12 (10.6)	37 (32.7)	54 (47.8)	9 (8.0)	2.46	0.79	
2.	Dissemination cuts across other levels of practitioners	28 (24.8)	62 (54.9)	18 (15.9)	4 (3.5)	3.02	0.75	
3.	Editorial contents don't guarantee Fairness	16 (14.2)	49 (43.4)	39 (34.5)	7 (6.2)	2.67	0.80	
4.	Dissemination does not respect the privacy of individuals	19 (16.8)	48 (42.5)	40 (35.4)	3 (2.7)	2.75	0.77	
5.	News sources present factual reports	7 (6.2)	52 (46.0)	47 (41.6)	5 (4.4)	2.55	0.68	
6.	Balance of reports by practitioners	7 (6.2)	40 (35.4)	57 (50.4)	7 (6.2)	2.42	0.71	
7.	Promotion of the principle of Confidentiality	12 (10.6)	62 (54.9)	32 (28.3)	5 (4.4)	2.73	0.71	
8.	Reporters ensure the accuracy of the Story	7 (6.2)	49 (43.4)	49 (43.4)	7 (6.2)	2.50	0.71	

9	News presentation does not make pejorative references	5 (4.4)	37 (32.7)	64 (56.6)	4 (3.5)	2.39	0.64
10	Practitioners respect the principle of human rights	14 (12.4)	59 (52.2)	33 (29.2)	6 (5.3)	2.72	0.75
11	Practitioners deploy honest means in news gathering	12 (10.6)	53 (46.9)	41 (36.3)	6 (5.3)	2.63	0.75 <b>2.58</b>
12	Intent promotes national unity and public good	12 (10.6)	40 (35.4)	49 (43.4)	9 (8.0)	2.50	0.80
13	Dissemination respects the principle of fairness	9 (8.0)	47 (41.6)	45 (39.8)	10 (8.8)	2.50	0.77
14	Dissemination respects the principle of injustice	4 (3.5)	44 (38.9)	48 (42.5)	9 (8.0)	2.41	0.70
15	Journalists respect the principle of Equity	10 (8.8)	48 (42.5)	49 (43.4)	4 (3.5)	2.58	0.71
16	Practitioners understand the principle of peace and nation-building	13 (11.5)	48 (42.5)	42 (37.2)	7 (6.2)	2.61	0.78
17	Practitioners have a proper understanding of ethical codes	10 (8.8)	39 (34.5)	51 (45.1)	9 (8.0)	2.46	0.77
18	Dissemination enhances press Freedom	11 (9.7)	53 (46.9)	39 (34.5)	5 (4.4)	2.65	0.73
19	Editorial teams are alive to their Responsibilities	13 (11.5)	38 (33.6)	45 (39.8)	10 (8.8)	2.51	0.83

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

**Key: VH = Very High, H =High, L =Low, VL =Very Low, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation; AM = Average Mean**

Table 4.3 revealed the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria with an average mean value of 2.58 which is higher than the average on a 4-point scale. Hence, the average mean asserted that there is a high level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. Table 4.3 also revealed the items of Level of fake news dissemination in Nigeria such as: "Dissemination cuts across mainstream practitioners", "Dissemination cuts across other levels of practitioners", "Editorial contents don't guarantee fairness", "Dissemination does not respect privacy of individuals", "News sources present factual reports", "Balance of reports by practitioners", "Promotion of principle of

confidentiality", "Reporters ensure accuracy of story", "News presentation does not make pejorative references", "Practitioners respect the principle of human rights", "Practitioners deploy honest means in news gathering", "Intent promotes national unity and public good", "Dissemination respects principle of fairness", "Dissemination respects principle of injustice", "Journalists respect the principle of equity", "Practitioners understand the principle of peace and nation building", "Practitioners have proper understanding of ethical codes", "Dissemination enhances press freedom", "Editorial teams are alive to their responsibilities" with their respective mean scores 2.46, 3.02, 2.67, 2.75, 2.55, 2.42, 2.73, 2.50, 2.39, 2.72, 2.63, 2.50, 2.50, 2.41, 2.58, 2.61, 2.46, 2.65, and 2.51. It can therefore be asserted that all items in this category have a high mean score meaning that they all contribute highly to the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

Table 4.3 revealed Dissemination cuts across other levels of practitioners are the most prevalent among all the items of Level of Fake News Dissemination among Journalists in Nigeria and this can be asserted from its high mean score of 3.02. Hence, it can be established that Dissemination of fake news cuts across other levels of practitioners and this contributes majorly to the dissemination of fake news in Nigeria. Furthermore, it was revealed from table 4.3 that the least influential item is "News presentation does not make pejorative references", this was affirmed by the mean score of 2.39. Hence, pejorative references by journalists do affect the level of fake news dissemination but at a minimal level.

**Research Question Three:** What is the Perception of Mainstream Editors on Ethical Journalism Practices among Journalists in Nigeria?

**Table 4.4: Perception of Mainstream Editors on Ethical Journalism Practices among Journalists in Nigeria**

S/N	Statement	VH (%)	H (%)	L (%)	VL (%)	Mean	SD	AM
1.	Prompt reporting of events	34 (30.1)	65 (57.5)	10 (8.8)	0 (0)	3.22	0.60	
2.	Engage in investigative reports	7 (6.2)	31 (27.4)	70 (61.9)	2 (1.8)	2.39	0.64	
3.	Pack report	13 (11.5)	50 (44.2)	37 (32.7)	1 (0.9)	2.74	0.69	
4.	Consideration for ownership factor	51 (45.1)	54 (47.8)	4 (3.5)	1 (0.9)	3.41	0.61	
5.	Editorial policies could be burdensome	24 (21.2)	68 (60.2)	15 (13.3)	1 (0.9)	3.06	0.63	
6.	Deferment to institutional policies	20 (17.7)	59 (52.2)	28 (24.8)	0 (0)	2.93	0.67	
7.	In-house training enhances performance	19 (16.8)	56 (49.6)	29 (25.7)	5 (4.4)	2.82	0.77	
8.	Media educational role	13 (11.5)	65 (57.5)	30 (26.5)	2 (1.8)	2.81	0.66	
9.	Social responsibility role	18 (15.9)	53 (46.9)	35 (31.0)	3 (2.7)	2.79	0.75	
10.	Correlation reporting is a factor	4 (3.5)	57 (50.4)	44 (38.9)	1 (0.9)	2.60	0.58	
11.	Discharging of surveillance reporting	1 (0.9)	44 (38.9)	58 (51.3)	4 (3.5)	2.39	0.58	<b>2.73</b>
12.	Timely presentation of programmes	11 (9.7)	76 (67.3)	19 (16.8)	2 (1.8)	2.89	0.59	
13.	Availability of equipment	2 (1.8)	22 (19.5)	71 (62.8)	14 (12.4)	2.11	0.63	
14.	Follow up on developing stories	5 (4.4)	41 (36.3)	58 (51.3)	6 (5.3)	2.41	0.67	
15.	Presentation of complete information	3 (2.7)	38 (33.6)	64 (56.6)	3 (2.7)	2.38	0.59	

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

**Key: VH = Very High, H =High, L =Low, VL =Very Low, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation; AM = Average Mean**

Table 4.4 revealed the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria with an average mean value of 2.73 which is higher than average on a 4-point scale. Hence, the average mean asserted that there is a high level of perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among Nigerian journalists.

Table 4.4 also revealed the items of Perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria which are: "Prompt reporting of events", "Engage in investigative reports", "Pack report", "Consideration for ownership factor", "Editorial policies could be burdensome", "Deferment to institutional policies", "In-house training enhances performance", "Media educational role", "Social responsibility role", "Correlation reporting is a factor", "Discharging of surveillance reporting", "Timely presentation of programmes", "Availability of equipment", "Follow up on developing stories", and "Presentation of complete information" with their respective mean score 3.22, 2.39, 2.74, 3.41, 3.06, 2.93, 2.82, 2.81, 2.79, 2.60, 2.39, 2.89, 2.11, 2.41, and 2.38. All the items displayed a high level of Perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria.

In addition, table 4.4 revealed that "Consideration for ownership factor" with a mean score of 3.41 displayed the highest level amongst other items in the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. Consideration for ownership factor is taken to be the most vital factor by journalists in Nigeria. Followed by "Prompt reporting of events" with a mean score of 3.22 which is another factor that is most reckoned with among journalists in Nigeria. Promptness in reporting events is key so that news can be disseminated to the public on time.

Also, it was shown from table 4.4 that "Availability of equipment" with a mean score of 2.11 is the least prevalent among the other items of perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism

practices. It is therefore of great importance to get more media equipment available for journalists to be able to carry out their responsibilities adequately and comfortably.

**Research Question Four:** What is the Perception of Mainstream Editors on Fake News Dissemination among Journalists in Nigeria?

**Table 4.5: Perception of Mainstream Editors on Fake News Dissemination among Journalists in Nigeria**

S/N	Statement	VH (%)	H (%)	L (%)	VL (%)	Mean	SD	AM
1.	Promotes misinformation	22 (19.5)	43 (38.1)	33 (29.2)	12 (10.6)	2.68	0.92	
2.	Allows for disinformation	17 (15.0)	49 (43.4)	29 (25.7)	15 (13.3)	2.62	0.91	
3.	Akin to malinformation	18 (15.9)	44 (38.9)	36 (31.9)	10 (8.8)	2.65	0.87	
4.	False connection	17 (15.0)	48 (42.5)	34 (30.1)	10 (8.8)	2.66	0.85	
5.	Misleading content	21 (18.6)	50 (44.2)	25 (22.1)	13 (11.5)	2.72	0.91	
6.	False context	23 (20.4)	41 (36.3)	32 (28.3)	13 (11.5)	2.68	0.94	<b>2.66</b>
7.	Imposter content	17 (15.0)	46 (40.7)	33 (29.2)	12 (10.6)	2.63	0.88	
8.	It manipulates content	20 (17.7)	43 (38.1)	32 (28.3)	13 (11.5)	2.65	0.92	
9.	Usually, fabricated content	18 (15.9)	43 (38.1)	31 (27.4)	17 (15.0)	2.57	0.95	
10.	Leaks	15 (13.3)	50 (44.2)	33 (29.2)	10 (8.8)	2.65	0.84	
11.	A form of harassment	17 (15.0)	52 (46.0)	31 (27.4)	8 (7.1)	2.72	0.82	
12.	Promotes hate speech	26 (23.0)	44 (38.9)	24 (21.2)	15 (13.3)	2.74	0.98	

Source: Researcher's Framework, 2024

**Key: VH = Very High, H =High, L =Low, VL =Very Low, M = Mean, SD = Standard Deviation; AM = AverageMean**

Table 4.5 revealed the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria with an average mean value of 2.66 which is higher than average on a 4-point scale. Hence, the average mean asserted that there is a high perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists.

More so, Table 4.5 revealed the items of Perceptions of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria which include: "Promotes misinformation", "Allows for disinformation", "Akin to mal information", "False connection", "Misleading content", "False context", "Imposter content", "It manipulates content", "Usually, fabricated content", "Leaks", "A form of harassment", and "Promotes hate speech" with their respective mean score 2.68, 2.62, 2.65, 2.66, 2.72, 2.68, 2.63, 2.65, 2.57, 2.65, 2.72, and 2.74. All items in this category displayed a high level of Perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

Furthermore, it was observed from table 4.5 that "Promotes hate speech" with a mean score of 2.74 ranked highest amongst other items of perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. Promotion of hate speech was found to be the most rampant and most challenging issue to good journalism in Nigeria while "Usually, fabricated content" with a mean score of 2.57 was found to be the weakest factor of fake news dissemination.

#### **4.2.2 Hypotheses**

The hypotheses for this study were tested using multiple regression and chi-square analyses. The result was to attest to the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable.

##### **Hypotheses One:**

There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria.

**Table 4.6:** Relationship between perception of mainstream editors and ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.782 <sup>a</sup>	.611	.602	5.28037

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3727.716	2	1863.858	66.847	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	2370.000	85	27.882		
	Total	6097.716	87			

a. Dependent Variable: level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria  
b. Predictors: (Constant), perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices, perception of mainstream editors on fake news

Coefficients <sup>a</sup>					
	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	18.172	6.139		2.960	.004
perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices	1.198	.124	.688	9.629	.000
perception of mainstream editors on fake news	-.193	.065	-.212	-2.966	.004

**R = .782 R Square = 0.611, F = 66.847, P = .000.**

As shown in Table 4.6, the analysis revealed that the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria significantly influences the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria ( $F(2,85) = 66.847, P = 0.00, R^2 = .611$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis (There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria) was rejected. Perception of

mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices predicts the level of ethical journalism practices in Nigeria.

Furthermore, it was observed from table 4.6 that the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices ( $\beta = 1.198, P = 0.00$ ) has a stronger prediction on the level of ethical journalism practices than the perception of mainstream editors of fake news ( $\beta = -.193, P=.004$ ). Conclusively, the Perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices has a stronger influence on the level of ethical journalism practices compared to the influence of the perception of mainstream editors on fake news.

### Hypotheses Two:

There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

**Table 4.7:** Relationship between perception of mainstream editors and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria

Model Summary						
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate		
1	.479 <sup>a</sup>	.229	.212	7.13514		

ANOVA <sup>a</sup>						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1317.934	2	658.967	12.944	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	4429.188	87	50.910		
	Total	5747.122	89			

a. Dependent Variable: level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria

b. Predictors: (Constant), perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices, perception of mainstream editors on fake news

Coefficients					
	Unstandardised Coefficients		Standardised Coefficients	T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	27.695	8.341		3.320	.001
perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices	.655	.171	.379	3.832	.000
perception of mainstream editors on fake news	-.173	.087	-.198	-2.004	.048

**R = .479<sup>a</sup> R Square = 0.229, F = 12.944, P = .000.**

As shown in Table 4.7, the analysis revealed that the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria significantly influenced the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria ( $F(2,87) = 12.944, P = 0.00, R^2 = .229$ ). Therefore, the null hypothesis (There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria) was rejected. Perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination predicts the level of fake news dissemination in Nigeria.

It was further observed from table 4.7 that the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices ( $\beta = .379, P = 0.00$ ) has a stronger prediction on the level of fake news dissemination than the perception of mainstream editors on fake news ( $\beta = -.198, P=.048$ ). In conclusion, the Perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices has a stronger influence on the level of fake news dissemination compared to the influence of the perception of mainstream editors on fake news.

### Hypotheses Three:

There will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors and combined ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

Table 4.8: Relationship between perception of mainstream editors and combined ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria

<b>Correlations</b>			
		Dtotal	Etotal
<b>perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	-.321**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	93	93
<b>perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination</b>	Pearson Correlation	-.321**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	93	107

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to determine the relationship between the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

The results indicated a significant positive relationship between the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination,  $[r(93) = -.321, p = .002]$ . To sum up, as the level of perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices increases, the level of perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination increases. Therefore, the null hypothesis that there will be no significant relationship between the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination in Nigeria is rejected.

### 4.3 Discussion of Findings

This section discusses the major findings of this study about past studies. The discussion followed the research questions on mainstream editors' perception of ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination in Nigeria. Each of the five research questions and three hypotheses was based on examining mainstream editors' perceptions of ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination in Nigeria. The findings of the study are discussed as follows:

The findings of research question one revealed the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria. The average mean asserted that there is a high level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria. As deduced from the result, there is a high level of independence being enjoyed by the editorial team. News routines are repeated practices and forms that make it easier for journalists to accomplish tasks in an uncertain world while working without constraints<sup>1</sup>. It was also revealed that it's important for editors to respect the privacy of individuals. It is the ethical responsibility of journalists and editors to exercise caution and sensitivity when reporting on private matters<sup>2</sup>. Respecting individuals' privacy is essential for maintaining trust, minimizing harm, and upholding ethical standards in journalism.

Editors, as leaders in newsrooms, play a crucial role in ensuring that ethical considerations, including privacy, are upheld in the editorial process. Also, it was revealed from the result the importance of News reporters in presenting factual and balanced reports. Presenting factual and balanced reports is crucial for news reporters as it aligns with ethical standards, journalistic integrity, and the goal of providing the public with accurate and unbiased information<sup>3</sup>. Several journalism organisations emphasise the importance of accuracy, fairness, and balance in news reporting<sup>4</sup>. It is therefore an ethical and professional responsibility of news reporters to provide the public with reliable and unbiased information.

Factual and balanced reporting is essential for building and maintaining trust, fostering an informed public, and upholding the principles of journalism<sup>3</sup>. It was furthermore established that Journalists should deploy honest means in the gathering of information. There should be an overarching

commitment within the journalism profession to honest and ethical practices in the gathering and reporting of information<sup>5</sup>. Journalists are guided by these principles to ensure the accuracy, credibility, and trustworthiness of the news they deliver to the public.

Findings on research question two revealed the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. It was affirmed from the results that there is a high level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. The rising levels of fake news in Nigeria can be attributed to the absence of patriotism, ethnic and religious bigotries, political affiliations, and foreign interests. As a matter of “post-truth” fact, truth has nowadays shifted to becoming relative; facts now have alternatives, and news is weaponised, Nigeria’s Information and Culture, Minister, Lai Mohammed described it as “the greatest threat to democracy and security as it played a role in the civil war in the country and that Nigeria could not afford to fall victim to the same circumstances that led to the war”.

Fake news is dangerous to society; it makes the world anxious and threatens national security<sup>5</sup>. Also, it was deduced that fake news dissemination cuts across other levels of practitioners including social media owners, telecommunication companies, government agencies, media houses, etc. All relevant stakeholders - government agencies, media houses, libraries, telecommunication companies, social media owners and others have the responsibility of tackling the spread of fake news<sup>4</sup>. It was also revealed that reporters must ensure the accuracy of the story before publishing. Ensuring the accuracy of a story before publishing is a fundamental ethical obligation for reporters. This principle is emphasised in the codes of ethics and guidelines of journalists in Nigeria<sup>6</sup>. There must be a consistent emphasis on accuracy as a core value in journalism<sup>7</sup>. Reporters are expected to engage in thorough fact-checking, verify information from reliable sources, and correct any errors promptly to maintain the integrity of the news and the trust of the audience.

Further, findings on research question three revealed the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria. There was a high level of perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among Nigerian journalists according to this study. Although

Journalists in Nigeria may face challenges and pressures, including economic constraints, political interference, and security concerns. These challenges can impact the perceived ability to adhere to ethical practices<sup>8</sup>. The level of training and education among journalists contributes to their understanding of ethical principles. Journalists with a strong foundation in media ethics are more likely to uphold ethical standards in their reporting<sup>9</sup>.

The perception of ethical journalism is not only internal to the journalistic community but also influenced by public perception. Public trust in the media can be shaped by how journalists adhere to ethical practices<sup>10</sup>. It was also revealed the importance of prompt reporting of events by journalists. Journalists who report promptly contribute to building and maintaining the credibility and trust of their audience<sup>11</sup>. When news organizations are known for delivering timely and accurate information, they establish themselves as reliable sources of news. Therefore, prompt reporting is essential for keeping the public informed, maintaining journalistic credibility, and contributing to the broader goals of media organizations. It enables journalists to fulfill their role as informers and watchdogs in society<sup>12</sup>. Also, it was revealed that Media educational role and In-house training enhances performance. Media education, obtained through academic programs in journalism, communications, and media studies, provides a foundational understanding of the principles, ethics, and skills required in the field<sup>11</sup>.

Academic training equips individuals with theoretical knowledge and practical skills<sup>13</sup>. Media's educational role and in-house training are complementary elements in fostering a skilled, informed, and adaptable workforce within the journalism industry<sup>12</sup>. They contribute significantly to the enhanced performance of individual journalists and the overall effectiveness of media organizations. It also revealed the importance of a complete information presentation. The presentation of complete information is a fundamental aspect of responsible journalism<sup>13</sup>. It ensures that the audience receives a comprehensive and accurate understanding of a story or issue. Journalists can contribute to a media environment where the audience can trust that they are receiving complete and accurate information<sup>14</sup>.

Lastly, findings on research question four reveal the perception of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria.

There was a high perception of mainstream editors on fakenews dissemination among journalists. It was also revealed that allowing and promoting misinformation is rampant and should be discouraged among journalists in Nigeria. Furthermore, false context and misleading content are common these days and must be put to an end. False context and misleading content are significant concerns in journalism and media<sup>15</sup>. They refer to the presentation of information in a way that distorts its true meaning, misrepresents facts, or creates a deceptive narrative<sup>10</sup>. This can occur through various means, including selective quoting, manipulation of images, or framing information in a way that alters its interpretation<sup>16</sup>. Addressing false context and misleading content is essential for maintaining the integrity of journalism. Also, it was revealed that manipulation and fabrication of content are on the rise today.

Manipulation and fabrication of content are serious ethical violations in journalism and media<sup>3</sup>. These practices involve intentionally distorting or creating false information with the intent to deceive the audience<sup>17</sup>. Such actions compromise the credibility and integrity of journalism. Combatting manipulation and fabrication requires a collective effort from journalists, media organizations, regulatory bodies, and the public<sup>18</sup>. Upholding ethical standards, ensuring transparency, and holding those who engage in such practices accountable are essential steps toward maintaining the integrity of journalism<sup>19</sup>. Leaks in the media section were also identified as a high-rising issue to deal with immediately. Leaks among journalists typically refer to the unauthorised disclosure of confidential or sensitive information to journalists. This phenomenon is often associated with whistleblowers or individuals within organisations who choose to reveal information they believe is in the public interest<sup>20</sup>.

While leaks can provide valuable insights into matters of public interest, journalists must navigate legal and ethical considerations to ensure responsible reporting<sup>21</sup>. The handling of leaked information

requires careful judgment, adherence to ethical standards, and a commitment to transparency and accountability<sup>8</sup>. Finally, promoting hate speech was also identified as a bothering issue that is rampant today. Promoting hate speech is unethical and can have severe consequences for individuals and society<sup>12</sup>.

Hate speech involves expressions that target a particular group or individual based on attributes such as race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexual orientation, disability, or other characteristics<sup>22</sup>. Addressing hate speech requires a collective effort from journalists, media organizations, policymakers, and society at large<sup>23</sup>. Ethical journalism practices, legal measures, and public awareness initiatives play critical roles in preventing the promotion of hate speech and fostering a more inclusive and respectful public discourse<sup>24</sup>.

Furthermore, it was revealed that hypothesis one was rejected. It was statistically revealed in this study revealed that the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria significantly influences the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria ( $F(2,85) = 66.847, P = 0.00, R^2 = .611$ ). The perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices does have a significant influence on the level of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria.

The significance of editors' perceptions of ethical journalism practices suggests that when editors are proactive in addressing ethical concerns, the impact on the overall level of ethical journalism practices is likely to be more substantial<sup>25</sup>. Editors who are aware of the challenges posed by fake news may implement measures and policies that promote responsible journalism. Collaborative efforts among editors, journalists, and stakeholders are necessary to create a media landscape in Nigeria that upholds ethical journalism practices and combats the spread of misinformation<sup>26</sup>.

Hypothesis Two centered on the perception of mainstream editors on fake news in the prediction of the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. It was revealed that the perception

of mainstream editors on fake news dissemination predicts the level of fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria ( $F(2,87) = 12.944, P = 0.00, R^2 = .229$ ). Addressing the issue of fake news dissemination requires a multi-faceted approach, including ongoing education and training for journalists, cultivating a culture of ethical journalism within news organizations, and promoting broader media literacy among the public<sup>32</sup>. Additionally, supporting press freedom and editorial independence is essential to create an environment where journalists can prioritize accuracy and truthfulness over the dissemination of misinformation<sup>33</sup>.

Hypothesis Three centered on the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination among journalists in Nigeria. It was revealed that there is a significant positive relationship between the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination, [ $r(93) = -.321, p = .002$ ]. The relationship between the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and the dissemination of fake news is a crucial aspect of media dynamics<sup>32</sup>.

The perceptions and actions of editors can significantly influence the behaviour of journalists and, consequently, the quality of news produced<sup>24</sup>. The widespread dissemination of fake news does erode public trust in journalism. When audiences encounter inaccurate or misleading information, it undermines their confidence in the media as a reliable source of news. This erosion of trust can have a cascading effect on the perception of all journalism, including that which is ethical and accurate<sup>17</sup>. Hence, in response to the challenges posed by fake news dissemination, ethical journalism practices become increasingly important.

News organisations and journalists committed to accuracy, fairness, and truthfulness need to reinforce and promote these principles as a countermeasure to the negative effects of misinformation on the media landscape. Additionally, addressing the root causes of fake news, such as improving media literacy and promoting critical thinking skills among the public, can contribute to a healthier information ecosystem.

## Endnotes

1. S. Abiodun, & E. Kayode, E., *Watchdog or Captured Media? A Study of the role of the Media in Nigeria's Emerging Democracy*, 1999-2016, 2018, 387-421.
2. G. Tuchman, *American Journal of Sociology*, 177, 2018, 660-679.
3. P. Fiberesima; D. Abomaye; A. Williams & S. George, *Social Media and Hate Speech: Implications for Sociopolitical Stability in Rivers State*, **Global Journal of Human-Social Science**, 21(2), 2021.
4. L. Oso & T. Akanni, *Watchdog or Captured Media? A Study of the role of the media in Nigeria's Emerging Democracy, 1999-2016*, 2018, 159-204.
5. A. Ogbette; M. Idam; A. Kareem & D. Ogbette, D., *Fake News in Nigeria: Causes, Effects and Management*, **Journal of Information and Knowledge Management**, 9(2) 2019.
6. S. Udenze & O. Oshionebo, *Social Media and the Changing News Ecology: Whatsapp as the Fifth Estate*, **CRUTECH Journal of Communication**, 2(1), 2020, 115-124.
7. U. Ugo; A. Peter-Wagbara & O. Omaka, *Ethical Issues In internet-Based Journalism Practice in Nigeria*, **World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews**, 19(01), 2023, 1072–1081.
8. B. Gbadeyan, *Social Media and Journalism Ethics in Nigeria: A Study of Journalists in Kwara State of Nigeria*, **International Journal of Social Science and Human Research**, 4(3), 2021, 389-396.
9. Africa Check, *Has Buhari's Government Plunged Nigeria into \$80 Billion in Debt? Africa Check*. 2018, <https://africacheck.org/reports/has-buharis-government-plunged-nigeria-into80-billion-in-debt/>
10. S. Brille & G. Crovitz, *News Guard now Available on Microsoft Edge Mobile Apps for iOS and Android*. *NewsGuard2019* from <https://www.newsguardtech.com/press/newsguard-now-available-on-microsoft-edge-mobile-apps-for-ios-and-android/>
11. J. Egan, *We need Writers now more than ever. Our Democracy Depends on it*. TIME Magazine. 2018, from <http://time.com/5475490/writers-truth-democracy-jennifer-egan/>
12. J. Harsin, *Post-truth and Critical Communication Studies*. In J. Nussbaum (Ed.), *Oxford Research Encyclopedias: Communication*, 2018, 33, London: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.757>
13. U. Pate, *Fake news, Hate Speech and Nigeria's Democratic Sustenance*. *PowerPoint slides of a Presentation at a Colloquium to Mark the Press Week of the Nigerian Union of Journalists*, Plateau State Chapter, Jos, 2018, 6-10.

14. H. Wasserman & D. Madrid-Morales, *Study Sheds Light on Scourge of Fake News" in Africa. The Conversation*. 2018, <https://theconversation.com/study-shed-light-on-scourge-of-fake-news-in-africa-106946>
15. C. Tower-Clark, *Can I put an end to fake news? Don't be so sure*. Forbes, 2018 from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/charlestowersclark/2018/10/04/can-ai-put-an-end-to-fake-news-dont-be-so-sure/#4df2edff2f84>
16. U. Pate; D. Gambo & A. Ibrahim, *The Impact of Fake News and the Emerging Post-Truth Political Era on Nigerian Polity: A Review of Literature*, **Studies in Media and Communication**, 7(1), 2019, 21-29.
17. C. Okunna, *Ethics of Mass Communication*. Enugu: Generation Books, 2015.
18. W. Etukudo, *Issues and Problems in Mass Communication*. Calabar: Development Digest Ltd, 2009.
19. S. Tseguy & E. Asemah, *An Investigation of Media Practitioners' Adherence to Professional Ethics in Minna, Nigeria*, **Review of Communication and Media Studies**, 2014: 1, 10-21.
20. T. Adaja, *Nigerian Journalism and Professionalism: Issues and Challenges*, *New Media and Mass Communication*, 2012: 5, 12-21.
21. O. Apuke & L. Ayih, *The Acceptance and Practice of Citizen Journalism in the North Eastern Part of Nigeria*, **Jornal Pengajian Media Malaysia**, 22(1), 2020, 1-16.
22. E. Ojo, Imperative of Sustaining Democratic Values, In *Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria*, by E, O Ojo. Ibadan: John Archers [Publisher] Limited, 2006.
23. N. Kossow, "Fake News and Anti-Corruption, Transparency International Anti-Corruption." *Helpdesk Answer*, 2018.
24. C. Nwabueze, *The Art of Investigative Reporting: A Practical Guide*. Enugu: Daisy Press, 2005.
25. E. Ekeli & J. Enokbahare, Ethics, Professionalism and Media Offences." In *Communication for Social Change and Development*, by D Wilson (Ed.), Pp. 339-359. Uyo: ACCE, 2011.
26. S. Baran & D. Davies. *Mass Communication Theory, Foundations, Ferment and Future (6th Ed.)*. Canada: Wadsworth, 2006.
27. M. Egbujor, *Professionalism and ethical standards in mainstreaming gender perspectives: A challenge to journalism education and practice in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa.* In *Emerging trends in gender, health & political communication in Africa*, by F I Obiora, & S E Udeze (Eds), Pp. 18-45. Enugu: Rhyce Kerex Ltd, 2015.
28. U. Pate, Professionalism and the Reporting of Diversity and Conflict Issues in the Nigerian Media, *Paper Delivered at the First All Nigerian Editors Conference Organised by the*

*Nigerian Guild of Editors held at Obudu Cattle Ranch Resort, Cross River State, July 27-30, 2004.*

29. K. Ahmed; S. Abdulbaqi, & R. Adisa. "Anti-Corruption Campaigns and Nigeria Development: An Appraisal of Media Roles." *Acta Universitatis Danubius Communication*, 2019: 13(2), 99-116.
30. I. Eke, *Brown Envelope Syndrome and the Future of Journalism in Nigeria*, **International Interdisciplinary Journal of Scientific Research**, 2014: 1(1), 148-156.
31. P. Norris & S. Odugbemi, *Assessing the Extent to Which The News Media Act as Watchdogs, Agenda Seekers and Gatekeepers*, In *Public Sentinel, News Media and Governance Reform*, by P Norris (Ed.), Washington D.C: World Bank, 2010, 379-394.
32. L. Nwodu, *Journalism Practice: News Aesthetics, Ethics and Law*. Enugu: Rhyce Kerex, 2006.
33. N. Okoro B. Chinweobo-Onuoha, *Journalists' Perception of Brown Envelope Syndrome and Its Implications for Journalism Practice in Nigeria*, **Covenant Journal of Communication (CJOC)**, 1(2), 2013: 130-144.

## **Chapter Five**

### **Conclusion**

#### **5.1 Summary of Findings**

There is high level of ethical journalism practices among mainstream journalists in Nigeria which implies that observance of ethical journalism among mainstream media practitioners is encouraging and is relatively compliant to best practices in media globally.

There is high level of fake News dissemination among mainstream journalists in Nigeria, which implies that addressing fake news requires a coordinated effort from various sectors to create a media environment that values accuracy, transparency, and responsible information dissemination.

There is high positive perception of Nigerian mainstream editors about ethical journalism practices, which implies that journalists are favorably disposed to the ethics of journalistic practice in Nigeria.

There is a high perception of fake news dissemination among mainstream editors in Nigeria. This implies there is still rampant fake news dissemination.

#### **5.2 Conclusion**

The study concludes that the media and journalists in Nigeria must practice more ethically in all ramifications so that the credibility gap already created can be gradually eliminated. This is even more so in the case of the Nigerian media where gross unethical practices have become more or less the order of the day. The credibility gap had been created in the first instance by the insensitivity, arrogance, and gross unethical behaviour of journalists, a situation that has been berated even from within the profession itself, especially, by the veterans. There is a need for a more ethical and responsible media if the situation must be corrected and the credibility gap between the public and the press be eliminated. This calls for a committed house cleaning and self-examination by journalists so that a growing sense of professional responsibility can be imbibed by the media individually and severally.

### 5.3 Recommendations

Improving the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and addressing fake news dissemination in Nigeria requires a combination of media industry reforms, educational initiatives, and societal awareness campaigns. Arising from the findings from this study, the following are the recommendations:

1. Media stakeholders should strengthen the role of professional journalism associations in Nigeria, promoting ethical standards and providing resources for journalists and editors. Likewise, establish and reinforce industry-wide standards for responsible journalism and Advocate for a supportive regulatory environment that protects press freedom while addressing the challenges of misinformation.
2. Government and media Stakeholders should implement comprehensive media literacy programs in schools and communities to educate the public about the importance of critical thinking and source verification. Also offer training for journalists and editors on media literacy, helping them to better understand and navigate the challenges posed by fake news.
3. Media Stakeholders should advocate for and support editorial independence to allow journalists and editors to make decisions based on journalistic principles rather than external pressures. Raise awareness about the importance of a free and independent press in fostering a healthy democracy.
4. Media Stakeholders should strengthen the role of professional journalism associations in Nigeria, promoting ethical standards and providing resources for journalists and editors. Establish and reinforce industry-wide standards for responsible journalism. Also, engage with government agencies to encourage policies that enhance media integrity and combat the dissemination of fake news.
5. Encourage news organizations to strengthen and enforce clear editorial policies that emphasize accuracy, fairness, and responsible reporting. Integrate guidelines on the identification and handling of misinformation into editorial policies. Likewise, incorporate

ethical decision-making scenarios into journalism education programs to prepare future journalists for real-world challenges.

#### **5.4 Contribution to Knowledge**

The data set gathered in this study has contributed to the body of knowledge in existing literature in the field of ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination, especially in Nigeria. It places special emphasis on the perception of mainstream editors on ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination. While previous studies focus on only ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination, this study stands out by examining the perception of mainstream editors on the variables. Hence, this study has enriched the literature by bridging this particular gap. It would also serve as a reference point for future researchers who might wish to investigate more ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination.

Furthermore, this study has validated and reinforced the relevance of various theories, namely the Theory of Ethics and Social Responsibility Theory. The findings reinforced the assumptions of these theories. The findings showed that there is a high level of ethical journalism practices among mainstream journalists in Nigeria which implies that observance of ethical journalism among mainstream media practitioners is encouraging and is relatively compliant with best practices in media globally thus making editors socially responsible to both media professionals and the public.

The research instrument designed and validated for this study holds immense value for future researchers and students for future studies. From a practical standpoint, the findings of this study have given insight into the essence of ethical journalism practices and fake news dissemination and shed more light on the perception of mainstream media practitioners. It has also shown the relationships between the variables. This would help media stakeholders to know how ethical journalism practices can be used to tackle fake news dissemination. To policy, the study has provided policy makers with useful and first-hand data for policy planning and formulation on ethical journalism practices to tackle

fake news dissemination.

### **5.5 Suggestions for Further Studies**

The following are the suggestions for further research:

1. Research should be conducted on looking at the influence of ethical journalism practices on fake news dissemination in Nigeria.
2. A study can be carried out to establish the effect of fake news dissemination on the acceptance of news content by news consumers.
3. Furthermore, a study can be carried out at the educational level of the public in identifying fake news.
4. Other research instruments such as interview guides and focus group discussions can be used to measure relationships between ethical journalism practices on fake news dissemination in Nigeria.
5. Finally, research could be conducted to determine the factors that contribute to fake news dissemination in Nigeria.

## Bibliography

### Books

- 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Fundamental Rights (Enforcement Procedure) Rules. **Nigeria: Federal Government of Nigeria**, LL30.
- Asemah, E., *Selected Mass Media Themes*. **Jos: University Press**, 2011.
- Bamidele, O., Issues on Journalism Practice Regulations in Nigeria, In Popoola, M. & Oboh, G., *Political Economy of Media Operations in Nigeria*, Oyo, Nigeria: Ajayi Crowther University, 2020. 487-501.
- Dominick, J., *The Dynamics of Mass Communication*, New York: McGraw Hill, 2005.
- Etukudo, W., *Issues and Problems in Mass Communication*. Calabar: Development Digest Ltd, 2009.
- Folarin, B., *Theories of Mass Communication: An Introductory Text*, Ibadan: Stiriling-Horden Publishers, 1998.
- Ireton, C. & Posetti, J., *Journalism, Fake News & Disinformation: Handbook for Journalism Education and Training*, Unesco Publishing, 2018.
- Kossow, N., *Fake News and Anti-Corruption, Transparency International Anti-Corruption, Helpdesk Answer*, 2018.
- Luo, Y. & Harrison, T., *How Citizen Journalists Impact the Agendas of Traditional Media and the Government Policymaking Process in China*. Global Media and China, 2019.
- Marda, V. & Milan, S., *Wisdom of the Crowd: Multistakeholder Perspectives on the Fake News Debate*. Netherland: Dataactive Ideas Lab, 2018.
- Nwabueze, C., *The Art of Investigative Reporting: A Practical Guide*. Enugu: Daisy Press, 2005.
- Okunna, C., *Ethics of Mass Communication*. Enugu: Generation Books, 2015.
- Sekaran, U., *Research Methods for Business. A Skill Building Approach* 4th edition. Singapore: John Wiley & Sons, 2003.
- Zhou, X. & Zafarani, R., *A Survey of Fake News: Fundamental Theories, Detection Methods, and Opportunities*, ACM Computing Surveys (CSUR), 53(5), 2020, 1–40.

### Book Chapter

- Assay, B., *Social Media and the Challenges of Curtailing the Spread of Fake News in Nigeria*, In I. Chiluya & S. Samoilenko, *Handbook of Research on Deception, Fake News and Misinformation Online*. Eds. United States of America: IGI Global. 2019, 226-263.

- Baran, S. & Davies, D., *Mass Communication Theory, Foundations, Ferment and Future (6th Ed.)*. Canada: Wadsworth, 2006.
- Egbujor, M., *Professionalism and Ethical Standards in Mainstreaming Gender Perspectives: A Challenge to Journalism Education and Practice in Nigeria and Sub-Saharan Africa*, In *Emerging Trends in Gender, Health & Political Communication in Africa*, by Obiora, F. & Udeze, S. (Eds), Enugu: Rhyce Kerex Ltd, 2015, 18-45.
- Igyuve, A; Iloani, F. & Offoboche, A., *Should Internet-Based Media Be Regulated in Nigeria?*, In Olatunji, O.; Odunlami, D. & Adesina, K., *Media Freedom, National Interest and Governance*. Ed. Lai. ACSPN Book Series 5, 2020, 31-44.
- Mulholland, K. & Irgens, G. Examining the Discourse of Effective Science Communicators Using Epistemic Network Analysis. In Aratoopour, I., Irgens, G. & Knight, S. eds, *Avadences in Quatitative Ethnography*. ICQE 2023. Communications in Computer and Information Science 1895 Springer, Cham. [https://doi.prg/10.1007/978-3-031-47014-1\\_13](https://doi.prg/10.1007/978-3-031-47014-1_13), 2023
- Nenadic, I., *To Understand Media Pluralism Is to Understand Changes in News Media and Journalism Advanced by Digital Technologies*. In: *Media, Freedom of Speech, and Democracy in the EU and Beyond*. The S. Daniel Abraham Center for International and Regional Studies, 10. 2019, 130.
- Norris, P. & Odugbemi, S., *Assessing the Extent to Which The News Media Act as Watchdogs, Agender Seekers and Gatekeepers*, In *Public Sentinel, News Media and Governance Reform*, by Norris, P (Ed.), Washington D.C: World Bank, 2010, 379-394.
- Nwodu, L., *Journalism Practice: News Aesthetics, Ethics and Law*. Enugu: Rhyce Kerex, 2006.
- Olatunji, R.; Ogweezy-Ndisika, A. & Jimoh, J., *Overview of Media, Governance and Development in Nigeria*, In Olatunji, R.; Ogweezy-Ndisika, A. & Jimoh, J., *Media, Governance and Sustainable Development in Nigeria*, ed., Lagos: LASU Publishers, 2020, 1-13.
- Oso, L., *Second Forward*, In G. Ahmadu, *The Rise and Fall of the New Nigerian Newspaper*, Kaduna: Ahmadu Bello University Press, 2016.
- Salami, O., *The Challenges of Digital Media and Citizen Journalism in Nigeria*, In Gambo, D. & Batta, H., *Digital Media Communication and Civic Engagement in Nigeria*. Ed., 125-138. Nigeria: African Council for Communication Education. 2020.
- Umaru, P. & Abubakar, J., *Professional Safety and Security Among Nigerian Journalists*, In Popoola, M. & Ehiarekhan, G., *Political Economy of Media Operations in Nigeria*, ed. Oyo, Nigeria: Ajayi Crowther University, 2020, 471-486.
- Uzochukwu, C. & Chinedu-Okeke, C., *Nigerian Journalism Practice in the Era of Social Media in Management*, In E. Mojaye, *Traditional, Mainstream and New Media Systems of communication* ed., Nigeria: Babcock University Press, 2020, 389-414.

## Conference Papers

- Aarathi, B. & Chelliah, J., *Fake News Classification from Online Social Network Comments Using BILSTM Deep Learning Model*, 2023 Second International Conference on Augmented Intelligence and Sustainable Systems, 2023, 910-916.
- Agrawal, R. & Sharma, D., *A Survey on Video-Based Fake News Detection Techniques*. In 2021 8th International Conference on Computing for Sustainable Global Development (INDIACom), IEEE, 2021, 663-669.
- Egelhofer, J. & Lecheler, S., *Fake news as a Two-Dimensional Phenomenon: A Framework and Research Agenda*, Annals of the International Communication Association, 43(2), 2020, 97–116.
- Ekeli, E. & Enokbahare, J. *Ethics, Professionalism and Media Offences*, In *Communication for Social Change and Development*, by D Wilson (Ed.), 2011, 339-359. Uyo: ACCE, .
- Ojo, E., *Imperative of Sustaining Democratic Values*, In *Challenges of Sustainable Democracy in Nigeria*, by E. Ojo. Ibadan: John Archers [Publisher] Limited, 2006.
- Olorunyomi, D., *Facts, Truth and Knowledge: Journalism and the Ethical Community*, Remarks at the 5th Annual Conference of the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN), Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria. September 5-6, 2018.
- Oso, L., *These Are Interesting Times*, Being welcome address at the 5th Annual Conference of the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigeria (ACSPN), Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria. September 5-6, 2018.
- Pate, U. *Professionalism and the Reporting of Diversity and Conflict Issues in the Nigerian Media*. Paper Delivered at the First All Nigerian Editors Conference Organised by the Nigerian Guild of Editors held at Obudu Cattle Ranch Resort, Cross River State July, 2004, 27-30.
- Pate, U., *Fake News, Hate Speech and Nigeria's Democratic Sustenance*. PowerPoint slides of a presentation at a colloquium to mark the Press Week of the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Plateau State Chapter, Jos, 2018, 6-10.
- Rao, A.; Rao, M. & Rao, D., *Network Media Content Model in the Era of Smart Devices*, International Conference on Machine Learning and Big Data Analytics, 2022, 341-353.
- Rashkin, H.; Choi, E.; Jang, J.; Volkova, S. & Choi, Y., *Truth of Varying Shades: Analyzing Language in Fake News and Political Fact-Checking*. In Proceedings of the 2017 Conference on Empirical Methods in Natural Language Processing, 2017, 2931–2937.
- Shu, K.; Wang, S. & Liu, H., *Understanding User Profiles on Social Media for Fake News Detection*. In 2018 IEEE Conference on Multimedia Information Processing and Retrieval (MIPR), IEEE, 2018, 430–435.
- Tayebwa, D.; Wendo, D. & Nakiwala, D., *Theories and Models of Science Communication*, CABI Books, CABI International, 2022

Wynne, H. & Wint, Z., *Content Based Fake News Detection Using N-gram Models*. In Proceedings of the 21st International Conference on Information Integration and Web-based Applications & Services, 2019, 669–673.

## **Journal**

Abdulazeez, I.; N. Livingstone; Nelson, N.; Abdulazeez, H. & Kadiri. A., *Implication of Fake News on the 2019 Nigeria Electioneering*, **SAU Journal of Management and Social Sciences**. 6(1), 2021, 245-252.

Adaja, T., *Nigerian Journalism and Professionalism: Issues and Challenges*, **News Media and Mass Communication (IISTE)**, 5, 2012, 15-22.

Aitamurto, T. & Varma, A., *The Constructive Role of Journalism: Contentious Metadiscourse on Constructive Journalism and Solutions Journalism*, **Journalism Practice**, 12 (6), 2018, 695-713.

Ahmed, K.; Abdulbaqi, S. & Adisa, R., *Anti-Corruption Campaigns and Nigeria Development: An Appraisal of Media Roles*, **Acta Universitatis Danubius Communication**, 13(2), 2019, 99-116.

Akila, M. & Ayodele, J., *Friends or foes? Seeking Common Grounds for Collaboration among Citizen Journalists and Mainstream Journalists*. **KIU Journal of Humanities**. 5(3), 2020, 215-223.

Apeh, A. & Didiugwu, I., *Implications of Citizen Journalism on the Mainstream Journalism*, **International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences**, 7(12), 2017, 1349-1362.

Apejaye, A., *Contemporary Critiques of Nigerian Journalism*, **The Routledge Companion to Journalism in the Global South**, 2024, 251-259.

Apuke, O. & Ayih, L., *The Acceptance and Practice of Citizen Journalism in the North Eastern Part of Nigeria*, **Journal Pengajian Media Malaysia**, 22(1), 2020, 1-16.

Apuke, O. & Gever, C., *A Quasi Experiment on how the field of Librarianship can help in Combating Fake News*, **The Journal of Academic Librarianship**, 49(1), 2023.

Apuke, O. & Omar, B., *Fake News and COVID-19: Modelling the Predictors of Fake News Haring among social media users*, **Telematics and Informatics**, 56, 2021, 101475.

Apuke, O. & Omar, B., *In the Age of Fake News: Appraising the Ethical Challenges and Issues of Online Media Practice in Nigeria*, **Library Philosophy and Practice**, 2020, 1-20.

Apuke, O. & Omar, B., *The Ethical Challenges and Issues of Online Journalism Practice in Nigeria: What do professionals and Academics Think?*, **Technology in Society**, 67, 2021.

Apuke, O.; Omar, B., & E. Tunca, *Literacy Concept as an Intervention Strategy for Improving Fake News Knowledge, Detection Skills, and Curtailing the Tendency to Share Fake News in Nigeria*, **Child & Youth Services**, 44(1), 2023, 88-108.

- Apuke, O.; Omar, B., & Tunca, E., *Effect of Fake News Awareness as an Intervention Strategy for Motivating News Verification Behaviour among Social Media Users in Nigeria: A Quasi-Experimental Research*, **Journal of Asian and African Studies**, 58(6), 2023,888- 903.
- Bruggemann, M.; Lorcher, I. & Walter, S., *Post-Normal Science Communication: Exploring the Blurring Boundaries of Sciences and Journalism*, **Journal of Science Communication**, 19(3), 2020.
- Butler, A., *Protecting the Democratic Role of the Press: A Legal Solution to Fake News*, **Wash, UL Rev.**, 96, 2018, 419.
- Chih-Hsin, G.; Tung, H. & Wen-Chin, W., *Citizen Journalism Reduces the Credibility Deficit of Authoritarian Government in Risk Communication Amid COVID-19 Outbreaks*. **PLoS ONE**.16 (12), 2021, 1-14.
- Choi, D.; Chun, S; Oh, H. & Han, J., *Rumor Propagation is Amplified by Echo Chambers in Social Media*, **Scientific Reports**, 10(1), 2020, 1–10.
- Choudrie, J.; Patil, S.; Kotecha, K.; Matta, N. & Pappas, I., *Applying and Understanding An Advanced, Novel Deep Learning Approach: A Covid-19, Text Based, Emotions Analysis Study*, **Information Systems Frontiers**, 2021, 1–35.
- Deepak, S. & Chitturi, B., *Deep Neural Approach to Fake-News Identification*, **Procedia Computer Science**, 167, 2020, 2236–2243.
- Der Linden, S.; Roozenbeek, J. & Compton, J., *Inoculating against Fake News about COVID- 19*, **Frontiers in Psychology**, 11, 2020, 2928.
- Duffy, A.; Tandoc, E. & Ling, R., *Too Good to be True, too Good not to Share: the Social Utility of Fake News*. **Information, Communication & Society**, 23(13), 2020, 1965–1979.
- Earp, J., *Conceptual models for health education and practice*. **Health Education Research**, 6(2), 1991, 163-171.
- Ejiogu, A.; Ejiogu, C. & Ambituuni, A., *Currption Fight Back: Localizing Transparency and EITI in the Nigerian “Penkelemes”*, **Governance**, 34(3), 2021, 785-802.
- Eke, I. *Brown Envelope Syndrome and the Future of Journalism in Nigeria*, **International Interdisciplinary Journal of Scientific Research**, 1(1), 2014, 148-156.
- Ekwunife, R.; Nwachukwu, H. & Ukeje, I., *Bureaucracy and Citizen Journalism: Issues and Challenges Imperative for Media Practice in Nigeria*, **International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development**, 5(6), 2021.
- Eriksson, D., *A Framework for the Constitution of Modelling Processes: A Proposition*. **European Journal of Operational Research**, 145, 2003, 202–215. .
- Faustini, P. & Covoos, T., *Fake News Detection in Multiple Platforms and Languages*, **Expert Systems with Applications**, 158, 2020, 113503.

- Fiberesima, P.; Abomaye, E.; Williams, A. & George, S., *Social Media and Hate Speech: Implications for Sociopolitical Stability in Rivers State*, **Global Journal of Human-Social Science**, 21(2), 2021.
- Folarin, J.; Adesina, K. & Ismail, B. *Ethical Compliance among Journalists in Nigeria: A Theoretical Appraisal*, **Nigerian Communication & Information Technology Journal**, 1(1), 2019, 29.
- Gbadeyan, B., *Social Media and Journalism Ethics in Nigeria: A Study of Journalists in Kwara State of Nigeria*, **International Journal of Social Science and Human Research**, 4(3), 2021, 389-396.
- Hanitzsch, T. & Vos, T., *Journalism beyond Democracy: A new Look into Journalistic Roles in Political and Everyday Life*, **Journalism** 19(2), 2018, 146-164.
- Hanitzsch, T., *Roles of Journalists*, **Journalism**, 2018, 43-62.
- Inobemhe, K.; Ugber, F.; Ojo, I. & Santas, T., *New Media and The Proliferation of Fake News in Nigeria*, **Nasarawa Journal of Multimedia and Communication Studies**, (2) 2, 2020, 154-166.
- Nelson, J., and T. Harsh. *The Small, Disloyal Fake News Audience: The Role of Audience Availability in Fake News Consumption*. **New Media & Society**. 20(7), 2018,
- Xin, J., A. Nguyen & A. Stuart, *New Perspectives on Citizen Journalism*, **Global Media and China**, 4(1), 2019, 3-12.
- Jamil, F., & Jamil, M., *Citizen Journalism and Media Laws and Ethics in Post Truth Era: An Analytical Survey*, **Journal of Media & Communication**, 3(1), 2022.
- Jwa, H.; Oh, D.; Park, K.; Kang, J. & Lim, H., *Texbake: Automatic Fake News Detection Model Based on Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers (bert)*, **Applied Sciences**, 9(19), 2019, 4062.
- Karaoglu, G., *News Production and Consumption Practices in Online Journalism: A Cross-Platform Review*, **Selcuk Universitesi Sosyal Bilimler Enstitusu Dergisi**, 2022, 184-194.
- Lough, K. & McIntyre, K., *A Systematic Review of Constructive and Solutions Journalism Research*, **Journalism**, 24(5), 2023, 1069-1088.
- Mahamed, M.; Omar, S. & Krauss, S., *Understanding Citizen Journalism from the Perspective of Young Journalists in Malaysia*. **Utopiay Praxis Latinoamericana**. 26(1), 2021, 133-143.

- Maronikoulakis, A.; Villegas, D.; Preotiuc-Pietro, V. & Aletras, N., *Analyzing Political Parody in Social Media*. arXiv preprint arXiv:2004, 2020, 13878.
- Mbaka C.; Udeh, K. & Onyeberechi, G., *Social Media Utilization for News Gathering By Print Media Journalists in Lagos Metropolis: Avoiding The Fake News*, **GVU Journal of Communication Studies**. 3, 2021, 87-97.
- Michelle, S., *Role of Journalism in Society (Indian Context)*, **Communication Studies and Notes on Mass Communication and Journalism**, 2019.
- Moscadelli, A.; Alhora, G.; Biamonte, M.; Giorgetti, D.; Innocenzio, V; Paoli, S.; Lorini; C.; Bonanni, P. & Bonaccorsi, G., *Fake News and Covid-19 in Italy: Results of a Quantitative Observational Study*, **International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health**, 17(16), 2020, 5850.
- Mutsvairo, B. & Salgado, S., *Is Citizen Journalism Dead? An Examination of Recent Developments in the Field*, **Journalism**, 23(2), 2022, 354-371.
- Nasir, J.; Khan, O. & Varlamis, I., *Fake News Detection: A Hybrid CNN-RNN Based Deep Learning Approach*, **International Journal of Information Management Data Insights**, 1(1), 2021, p.100007.
- Nkomo, A. & Themba, B., *Citizen Journalism in Comparison with Professional Journalism*, **INOSR Arts and Management** 4(1), 2018, 1-4.
- Nyam, I. & Okpara, S., *9Mobile News SMS Entrepreneurship and Citizen Journalism Potentials in Nigeria*, **Journal of Applied Journalism & Media Studies**, 2021.
- Ogbette, A.; Idam, M.; Kareem, A. & Ogbette, D., *Fake News in Nigeria: Causes, Effects and Management*, **Journal of Information and Knowledge Management**, 9(2), 2019.
- Okoro, N. & Chinweobo-Onuoha, B., *Journalists' Perception of Brown Envelope Syndrome and Its Implications for Journalism Practice in Nigeria*, **Covenant Journal of Communication (CJOC)**, 1(2), 2013: 130-144.
- Omoera, O. & Uwalaka, T., *Fake News as Disruptive Media: A digital Age Challenge in Nigeria*, **Studies in Media and Communication**, 11(6), 2023, 208-221.
- Pate, U.; Gambo, D. & Ibrahim, A., *The Impact of Fake News and the Emerging Post-Truth Political Era on Nigerian Polity: A Review of Literature*, **Studies in Media and Communication**, 7(1), 2019, 21-29.
- Pepple, I. & Acholonu, I., *Media Ethics as Key to Sound Professionalism in Nigeria Journalism Practice*, **Journalism and Mass Communication**, 8(2), 2018, 56-67.
- Peres-Neto, L., *Journalist-Twitterers as Political Influencers in Brazil: Narratives and Disputes Towards a New Intermediary Model*, **Media & Communication**, 10 (3), 2022.
- Roy, A.; Basak, K.; Ekbal, A. & Bhattacharyya, P., *A Deep Ensemble Framework for Fake News Detection and Classification*, arXiv preprint arXiv:1811.04670, 2018.

- Udenze, S., & Oshionebo, O., *Social Media and the Changing News Ecology: Whatsapp as the Fifth Estate*, **CRUTECH Journal of Communication**, 2(1), 2020, 115-124.
- Salaudeen, M., *From Personal to Professional: Exploring the Influences on Journalists' Evaluation of Citizen Journalism Credibility*. **Journalism Practice**. 2021.
- Shahi, G.; Dirkson, A., & Majchrzak, T., *An Exploratory Study of Covid-19 Misinformation on Twitter*, **Online Social Networks and Media**, 22, 2021, 100104.
- Shrivastava, G.; Kumar, P.; Ojha, R.; Srivastava, P.; Mohan, S. & Srivastava, G., *Defensive Modelling of fake news through online social networks*, **IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems**, 7(5), 2020, 1159–1167.
- Shu, K., Mahudeswaran, D., Wang, S., Lee, D. & Liu, H., 2020. *Fake newstnet: A Data Repository with News Content, Social Context, and Spatiotemporal Information for Studying Fake News on Social Media*, **Big Data**, 8(3), 171–188.
- Sinclair, C., *Parody: Fake News, Regeneration and Education*, **Post Digital Science and Education**, 2(1), 2020, 61–77.
- Song, C.; Ning, N.; Zhang, Y. & Wu, B., *A Multimodal Fake News Detection Model Based on Cross Modal Attention Residual and Multichannel Convolutional Neural Networks*, **Information Processing & Management**, 58(1), 2021, 02437.
- Syahri, M., *Journalism Ethics in Local Newspaper Etika Jurnalistik di Koran Lokal, Masyarakat, Kebudayaan Dan Politik*, 33(1), 2020, 1-14.
- Talwar, S.; Dhir, A.; Kaur, P.; Zafar, N. & Alrasheedy, M., *Why do People Share Fake News? Associations between the Dark Side of Social Media Use and Fake News Sharing Behavior*, **Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services**, 51, 2019, 72–82.
- Their, K. & Namkoong, K., *Identifying Major Components of Solutions-Oriented Journalism: A Review to Guide Future Research*, **Journalism Studies**, 24(12), 2023, 1557-1574.
- Thota, A.; Tilak, P., Ahluwalia, S. & Lohia, N., *Fake News Detection: A Deep Learning Approach*, **SMU Data Science Review**, 1(3), 2018, 10.
- Tifferet, S. *Verifying Online Information: Development and Validation of a Self-Report Scale*, **Technology in Society**, 67, 2021.
- Tsegyu, V. & Asemah, E., *An Investigation of Media Practitioners' Adherence to Professional Ethics in Minna, Nigeria*, **Review of Communication and Media Studies**, 2014: 1, 10-21.
- Ugo, U.; Peter-Wagbara, A. & Omaka, O., *Ethical Issues In internet-Based Journalism Practice in Nigeria*, **World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews**, 19(01), 2023, 1072–1081.

Ukonu, M.; Ugwuoke, J. & Ugwuanyi, S., *Conceptualization and Typology of Fake News: Framework for Solutions*. **Journal of Communication and Media Research**, 11(1), 181-193. 2019.

Verma, P.; Agrawal, P.; Amorim, I. & Prodan, R., *WELFake: Word Embedding Over Linguistic Features for Fake News Detection*, **IEEE Transactions on Computational Social Systems**, 2021.

Waisbord, S., *The 5Ws and 1H of Digital Journalism*, **Digital Journalism**, 7 (3), 2019, 351–358.

Zubiaga, A.; Aker, A.; Bontcheva, K.; Liakata, K. & Procter, R., *Detection and Resolution of Rumours in Social Media: A Survey*, **ACM Computing Surveys (CSUR)**, 51(2), 2018, 1–36.

### Sites

Africa Check, *Has Buhari's government plunged Nigeria into \$80 billion in debt?* Africa Check. 2019 from <https://africacheck.org/reports/has-buharis-government-plunged-nigeria-into80-billion-in-debt/>

Brille, S. & Crovitz, G., NewsGuard now available on Microsoft Edge mobile apps for iOS and Android. News Guard. 2019 <https://www.newsguardtech.com/press/newsguard-now-available-on-microsoft-edge-mobile-apps-for-ios-and-android/>

Britannica, T., *Editors of Encyclopaedia*. "Ethical Egoism." Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2022, Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/egoism/>.

Britannica, T., *Editors of Encyclopedia, Journalism*. Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2020, Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/journalism/>.

Egan, J., *We Need Writers now more than Ever. Our Democracy Depends on it*. TIME Magazine, 2018, <http://time.com/5475490/writers-truth-democracy-jennifer-egan/>

Harsin, J., Post-truth and critical communication studies. In J. Nussbaum (Ed.), *Oxford research encyclopedias: Communication* (pp.1-33). London: Oxford University Press. <https://doi.org/10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.757>, 2018.

Juneja, P., *Introduction to Media. Management Study Guide*, 2022, Available online: <https://www.managementstudyguide.com/introduction-to-media.htm/>

Kahn, R. & A. Michael, *Internet*, Encyclopaedia Britannica, 2022, Available online: <https://www.britannica.com/technology/Internet/>

Media Ethics in Mass Communication: Complete Guide, 2020, July 17 FIU Communication, 2020, Available Online: <https://carta.fiu.edu/gsc-creative/2020/07/07/media-ethics-mass-communication-complete-guide/>.

Nigeria Press Council. *Code of Ethics*, 2022, Available online: [http://www.presscouncil.gov.ng/?page\\_id=281/](http://www.presscouncil.gov.ng/?page_id=281/).

Tower-Clark, C., *Can I put an end to fake news? Don't be so sure.* *Forbes*, 2018, Available from <https://www.forbes.com/sites/charlestowersclark/2018/10/04/can-ai-put-an-end-to-fake-news-dont-be-so-sure/#4df2edff2f84>.

UNESCO, *World Trends in Freedom of Expression and Media Development Global Report 2017/2018*. UNESCO Digital Library. ISBN: 978-92-3-100242-7(print/pdf), 202.

UNESCO. *Journalism, 'Fake News' & Disinformation*. 2018, Available online:[https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/journalism\\_fake\\_news\\_disinformation\\_print\\_friendly\\_0.pdf](https://en.unesco.org/sites/default/files/journalism_fake_news_disinformation_print_friendly_0.pdf).

Wasserman, H. & Madrid-Morales, D., *Study Sheds Light on Scourge of Fake News in Africa.* *The Conversation*, 2018, Available Online: <https://theconversation.com/study-sheds-light-on-scourge-of-fake-news-in-africa-106946>

### **Lecture**

Ojebode, A., *In Search of Muted Voices for the Mirage Name Development*, Inaugural, 2019.

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## Appendix I

### Questionnaire

Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology,  
Faculty of Communication & Information Science,  
Lead City University Ibadan, Oyo State

Dear Respondent,

I am a PhD student of the Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology, Lead City University, Ibadan. I am carrying out a study which aims at fulfilling my PhD requirements. You have met certain selection criteria to participate in this study. Your cooperation in completing this questionnaire is central to the success of this research work. The questionnaire has been designed for you to be able to tick your responses. This should enable you to complete it in the shortest possible time. I will appreciate if you return this questionnaire filled completely.

Thank you for your cooperation and anticipated quick response.

Nneka IKEM-ANIBEZE

Please answer each question by ticking (✓) the box.

#### Section A: Demographic Data contents

1. Sex: (a) Female [ ] (b) Male [ ] (c) if other signify; \_\_\_\_\_
2. Age: (a) 30- 35 [ ] (b) 36- 40 [ ] (c) 41-45[ ] (d) 46 and above [ ]
3. Educational background: (a) SSCE/OND [ ] (b) BSC/HND [ ] (c) MSC [ ] (d) PHD [ ]
4. Media Type: (a) Television [ ] (b) Radio [ ] (c) Newspaper [ ] (d) Magazine [ ]

#### Section B: Perception of Journalism Practices among Mainstream Editors in Nigeria

Kindly tick (✓) as appropriate on your perception of journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria

Options: Very High (VH), High (H), Low (L), Very Low (VL)

S/N	Items	VH	H	L	VL
1.	Prompt Reporting of Events				
2.	Investigative Reports				
3.	Pack Report				

4.	Ownership structure				
4.	Editorial policies				
5.	Institutional policies				
6.	In house Training				
7.	Media Educational				
8.	Social Responsibility				
9.	Correlation Reporting				
10.	Surveillance Reporting				
11.	Timely presentation of programmes				
12.	Availability of equipment				
13.	Developing stories				
14.	Complete information				

**Section C: Perception of Ethical Journalism Practices among Mainstream Editors in Nigeria**

Kindly tick as appropriate on your perception of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria; with the following options; strongly agreed (SA), agreed (A), disagreed (D), strongly disagreed (SD)

No	Items	VH	H	L	VL
1.	Editorial Independence				
2.	Accuracy of story				
3.	Fairness of story				
4.	Respect the privacy of individuals				
5.	Factual report				
6.	Balance of report				
7.	principle of confidentiality				
8.	Decency of journalists				
9.	Making pejorative reference				
10.	Soliciting nor accepting bribe				

11.	Vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies such acts				
12.	Children and Minors right				
13.	Honest means in the gathering of information				
14.	National unity and public good				
15.	Respecting principles of human rights				
16.	Respecting principles of democracy				
17.	Respecting principles of justice				
18.	Respecting principles of equity and peace and international understanding				
19.	Respecting principles of international understanding				
20.	Proper acknowledgement of document				
21.	Enhance press freedom and responsibility				

**Section D: Perception of Mainstream Editors on Fake News Dissemination in Nigeria**

Kindly tick as appropriate on your perception of ethical journalism practices among journalists in Nigeria; with the following options; Very High (VH), High (H), Low (L), Very Low (VL)

No	Items	VH	H	L	VL
1.	Misinformation				
2.	Disinformation				
3.	Misinformation				
4.	False connection				
5.	Misleading content				
6.	False context				
7.	Imposter content				
8.	Manipulated Content				
9.	Fabricated content				
10.	Leaks				

11.	Harassment				
12.	Hate speech				

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## Appendix II

### Mainstream Media Organisations in Nigeria

S/N	Media Organisations
1	MEDIA TRUST
2	Nigeria Television Authority
3	GRAPHIC
4	Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria
5	DAAR COMMUNICATION
6	News Agency of Nigeria
7	AFP
8	BROADCASTIN CORPORATION OF OYO STATE
9	THE NEWS
10	TELL MAGAZINE
11	THISDAY
12	THE PUNCH
13	HOPE NEWSPAPER
14	RADIO JIGAWA
15	NEWS STAR
16	CITIZEN
17	VOICE OF NIGERIA
18	CONCERN MAGAZINE
19	PEOPLES DAILY
20	RADIO BAYELSA
21	BUSINESS DAY
22	GIANT STRIDES
23	VOICE NEWSPAPER
24	LEADERSHIP
25	SCOPE NEWSPAPER
26	TRIUMPH
27	CHANNELS TV
28	THE UNION
29	RARIYA MEDIA
30	RSG TIDE
31	OGTV
32	ONDO RADIO
33	YES INTERNATIONAL MAGAZINE
34	INSPIRATION FM
35	ENTERTAINMENT MAGAZINE
36	NEWSWATCH
37	NEW NIGERIAN
37	THE HERALD
38	RADIO RIVERS
39	HALLMARK
40	THE TIDE
41	STV
42	PENPUSHING
43	GLIMMER

44	THE RAINBOW
45	THE CLARION
46	ANAMBRA NPC
47	AKWA IBOM BROADCASTING CORPORATION
48	HAUSA LEADERSHIP
49	JULIUS BERGER
50	BUSINESS JOURNAL
51	NATIONAL POINTER
52	COMET
53	PEACE FOCUS MAGAZINE
54	POWERSTEERING MAGAZINE
55	HARD NEWS
56	THE NATION
57	NIGERIAN OBSERVER
58	NEWSWATCH DAILY
59	NIGERIA PATRIOT
60	PREMIUM EAGLE
61	METROWATCH ONLINE
62	THE PIONEER
62	DISPATCH
63	AFRICAN HERALD
64	SPORTSDAY
65	LIGHT BEARER
66	THE SUN NEWSPAPER
67	DELTA STATE GOVERNMENT
68	RADIO NIGERIA
69	NIGERIAN TRIBUNE
70	THE POINTER
71	NIGER DELTA TV
72	NEW TELEGRAPH
73	OGUN STATE BROADCASTING CORPORATION
74	FREEDOM ONLINE
75	NEWSWEEK NIGERIA
76	NATIONAL MIRROR
77	DN MAGAZINE
78	MONITOR
79	GLOBAL P. NEWS
80	PRTVC
91	BUSINESS EYE
92	TIDE
93	PRIME BIOGRAPHY
94	DAILY TRUST
95	BAYELSA BROADCASTING CORPORATION
96	RADIO KANO
97	ALMIZAN
98	THE SOURCE MAGAZINE
99	IMPACT
100	AKWA IBOM BROADCASTING CORPORATION

101	CENTRAL BANK OF NIGERIA
102	THE GLOBE
103	ORIENTALWATCH
104	HERALD
105	ENUGU STATE BROADCASTING. SERVICE
106	CHAMPION
107	AIT/RAYPOWER
108	GOMBE GOVERNMENT
109	POLITICAL ECONOMIST
110	NORTH COMM+MEDIA
111	TELL MAGAZINE
112	SPORTS VILLAGE SQUARE
113	DAILY TRUST
114	DAILY NEWSWATCH
115	WATCHMAN
116	MILLENNIUM WEEKLY
117	TVC
118	JIGAWA BROADCASTING CORPORATION
119	THE PUNCH
120	NEWS AFRICA
121	GUARDIAN
122	KOGI TV
123	REALNEWS MAGAZINE
124	ANAMBRA NEWSPAPER
125	NEWS GURU ONLINE
126	OVATION MAGAZINE
127	AREWA TV KANO
128	RIMA RADIO
129	NASS
130	LEADERSHIP SUNDAY
131	ZAMFARA RTV
134	TRUIMPH
135	SILVERBIRD
136	CONCERN MAGAZINE
137	GASKIYA TA FI KOBO
138	RIVERS STATE TV
139	VOICE OF NIGERIA
140	IMO NEWSPAPER
141	DIGITAL SENSE AFRICA
142	COOL/WAZOBIA FM
143	EBONYI BRD CORP
144	GUARDIAN ON SUNDAY
145	PREMIER NEWSPAPER
146	INDEPENDENT NEWSPAPER
147	THE NICHE
148	AMBASSADOR
149	QED
150	REALNEWS

151	PEOPLE+ POLITICS MAGAZINE
152	INSIDER MAG,
153	NEWSWAVE
154	TODAYSPTS
155	BRIDGE NEWS
156	KWARA STATE GOVERNMENT
157	BUSINESS WORLD
158	COMPASS
159	TODAY'S CHALLENGE
160	LEADERSHIP NEWSPAPER
161	BAYELSA BROADCASTING CORPORATION
162	STATESMAN
163	NEWDIRECT
164	RADIO KANO
165	THE SOURCE
167	FEDERAL MINISTRY OF INFORMATION
168	GLOBAL PATRIOT
169	FINANCIAL STANDARD
170	PEOPLE & POLITICS MAGAZINE
171	SUNDAY NEWS NIGERIA
172	XPRESS NEWSPAPER
173	NATIONAL DAILY
174	ALAROYE
175	EDO STATE GOVERNMENT
176	WEEKEND CHAMPION
177	BRIDGEHEAD COMMUNICATIONS LTD.
178	DILLALIYA
179	EX-THE HOPE
180	WESTERN POST
181	MIKE UDAH COMMUNICATION
182	TNN
183	KNSG
184	NEWS CENTRAL
185	ORIENT DAILY
186	NEXT EDITION ONLINE
187	BLAZE FM
188	EPIC BRANDPOWER
3188	RIVERS TV
189	RADIO KANO
190	DAILY TIMES
191	NATIONAL REVIEW
192	THE NATION
193	NTS
194	BLUE PRINT
195	THE LAGOS TIMES
196	MEDIA LAW
197	IMO BROADCASTING CORPORATION
198	DAAR COMMUNICATION

199	SCROLL MAGAZINE
200	OSUN DEFENDER
201	BAYELSA TV
202	NDTV
203	BCA, UMUAHIA
204	PEACE FOCUS MAG.
205	KOST NEWS MAG
206	COOL FM
207	VANGUARD
208	CONCERN MAGAZINE
209	LASG – LAGOS ALERT
210	SUNDAY MIRROR
211	HOTPEN
212	NATIONAL BUSINESS
213	NIGERIA PRESS COUNCIL
214	THE GUARDIAN
215	TRAFFIC RADIO (RTD)
216	JIGAWA BROADCASTING CORPORATION
217	WAKA ABOUT AFRICA
218	MME MAGAZINE
219	METRO STAR
220	RIVERS STATE TELEVISION
221	RADIO LAGOS/EKO FM
222	EBONYI BRD. CORP
223	THE VOICE
224	NEW MAIL
224	FREEDOM
225	SATURDAY INDEPENDENT
499	SATURDAY VANGUARD
226	DAILY INDEPENDENT
227	UPSHOT
228	THE PUNCH
229	THE AUTHORITY
230	LEADERSHIP WEEKEND
231	THE VPLEDGE
232	DAILY TRUST
233	THE GUARDIAN
234	ARTV
235	INSIDER BUSINESS
236	NATURE NEWS
237	NEWS DIARY ONLINE
238	SUNDIATA POST
239	NIGERIA DEMOCRATIC
240	NAIJA TIMES
241	ODENIGBO 991
242	NATIONAL PILOT
243	NIGERIAN DEMOCRATIC
244	ECHONEWS

245	RADIO LAGOS - EKO FM
246	MARKETING EDGE
247	TRIUMPH NEWSPAPER
248	PLEDGE
249	Penpushing Media
250	Kings Broadcasting Ltd.
251	Nigerian Patriot-Abakaliki
252	Ebonyi State Government Newspaper Ltd.
253	Freedom Radio Group- Kano
254	Abubakar Rimi Television
255	ARTV, Kano
256	Arise TV
257	Akwa Ibom Newspaper Corporation
258	AKWA IBOM CORPORATION
259	Frontpage Online
260	Daily Telegraph- Lagos
261	Premium Eagle Media
262	Blueprint Newspaper- Abuja
263	Forefront Magazine-Abuja
264	Business Hallmark-Ogun State
265	Macjanel Communications- Lagos
266	News Leader Newspapers
267	Silverbird News24

Source: Nigeria Guild of Editors, 2023

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

### Appendix III

#### Selected Mainstream Media Organisations in Nigeria

S/N	Name of Media Organisation
1	The Sun
2	Guardian
3	Business Day
4	Newswatch
5	Blueprint
6	Pioneer
7	Vanguard
8	News Agency of Nigeria
9	TELL Magazine
10	This Day
11	The Punch
12	Leadership
13	Nigerian Tribune
14	The Nation
15	New Telegraph
16	Daily Trust
17	Chronicle
18	Champion
19	News Diary Online
20	Daily Independent
21	Newsdirect
22	Today's Sports
23	National mirror
24	Alaroye
25	People's Daily
26	Daily times
27	Premium Times
28	Authority
29	Ovation
30	Tide
31	Triumph
32	Hausa Leadership
33	Media Trust
34	News Direct
35	New Nigeria
36	The Pointer
37	Western Post
38	Voice of Nigeria
39	Arise TV
40	NTA
41	Channels
42	TVC
43	Freedom Radio
44	FRCN
45	Daar Communication
46	Cool/Wazobia FM

47	Radio Lagos
48	AIT/Ray Power
49	Sports Village Square
50	Lagos/Eko FM

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## Appendix IV

GET

FILE='C:\Users\toyosi\Downloads\Nneka Folder\Nneka Data.sav'.

DATASET NAME DataSet1 WINDOW=FRONT.

REGRESSION

/DESCRIPTIVES MEAN STDDEV CORR SIG N

/MISSING LISTWISE

/STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)

/NOORIGIN

/DEPENDENT Btotal

/METHOD=ENTER dtotal etotal.

### Regression

#### Notes

Output Created		20-NOV-2023 12:26:46
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\toyosi\Downloads\Nneka Folder\Nneka Data.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	113

Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on cases with no missing values for any variable used.
Syntax		REGRESSION  /DESCRIPTIVES MEAN STDDEV CORR SIG N  /MISSING LISTWISE  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)  /NOORIGIN  /DEPENDENT Btotal  /METHOD=ENTER dtotal etotal.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.00
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.19
	Memory Required	5808 bytes
	Additional Memory Required for Residual Plots	0 bytes

[DataSet1] C:\Users\toyosi\Downloads\Nneka Folder\Nneka Data.sav

### Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Btotal	61.4432	8.37190	88
Dtotal	41.2386	4.80659	88
Etotal	31.6818	9.18087	88

### Correlations

		Btotal	dtotal	etotal
Pearson Correlation	Btotal	1.000	.756	-.433
	dtotal	.756	1.000	-.322
	etotal	-.433	-.322	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Btotal	.	.000	.000
	dtotal	.000	.	.001
	etotal	.000	.001	.
N	Btotal	88	88	88
	dtotal	88	88	88
	etotal	88	88	88

### Variables Entered/Removed<sup>a</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	etotal, dtotal <sup>b</sup>	.	Enter

- a. Dependent Variable: Btotal
- b. All requested variables entered.

**Model Summary**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.782 <sup>a</sup>	.611	.602	5.28037

- a. Predictors: (Constant), etotal, dtotal

**ANOVA<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	3727.716	2	1863.858	66.847	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	2370.000	85	27.882		
	Total	6097.716	87			

- a. Dependent Variable: Btotal
- b. Predictors: (Constant), etotal, dtotal

---

**Coefficients<sup>a</sup>**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	18.172	6.139		2.960	.004
	dtotal	1.198	.124	.688	9.629	.000
	etotal	-.193	.065	-.212	-2.966	.004

---

a. Dependent Variable: Btotal

---

REGRESSION

/DESCRIPTIVES MEAN STDDEV CORR SIG N

/MISSING LISTWISE

/STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA

/CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)

/NOORIGIN

/DEPENDENT Ctotal

/METHOD=ENTER dtotal etotal.

**Regression**

		Notes
Output Created		20-NOV-2023 12:27:55
Comments		
Input	Data	C:\Users\toyosi\Downloads\Nneka Folder\Nneka Data.sav
	Active Dataset	DataSet1
	Filter	<none>
	Weight	<none>
	Split File	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File	113
Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics are based on cases with no missing values for any variable used.

Syntax		REGRESSION  /DESCRIPTIVES MEAN STDDEV CORR SIG N  /MISSING LISTWISE  /STATISTICS COEFF OUTS R ANOVA  /CRITERIA=PIN(.05) POUT(.10)  /NOORIGIN  /DEPENDENT Ctotal  /METHOD=ENTER dtotal etotal.
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.00
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.01
	Memory Required	5808 bytes
	Additional Memory Required for Residual Plots	0 bytes

### Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
Ctotal	49.2556	8.03582	90
dtotal	41.2556	4.65087	90
etotal	31.4889	9.18382	90

### Correlations

	Ctotal	dtotal	etotal
Ctotal	1.000	.440	-.315

Pearson Correlation	dtotal	.440	1.000	-.308
	etotal	-.315	-.308	1.000
Sig. (1-tailed)	Ctotal	.	.000	.001
	dtotal	.000	.	.002
	etotal	.001	.002	.
N	Ctotal	90	90	90
	dtotal	90	90	90
	etotal	90	90	90

#### Variables Entered/Removed<sup>a</sup>

Model	Variables Entered	Variables Removed	Method
1	total, total	.	Enter

a. Dependent Variable: Ctotal

b. All requested variables entered.

#### Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.479 <sup>a</sup>	.229	.212	7.13514

a. Predictors: (Constant), total, total

#### ANOVA<sup>a</sup>

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1317.934	2	658.967	12.944	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	4429.188	87	50.910		
	Total	5747.122	89			

a. Dependent Variable: Ctotal

b. Predictors: (Constant), total, total

### Coefficients<sup>a</sup>

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	27.695	8.341		3.320	.001
	dtotal	.655	.171	.379	3.832	.000
	etotal	-.173	.087	-.198	-2.004	.048

a. Dependent Variable: Cttotal

### CORRELATIONS

/VARIABLES=dtotal etotal

/PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG

/STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES

/MISSING=PAIRWISE.

### Correlations

#### Notes

Output Created	20-NOV-2023 12:31:21
Comments	
Input	Data
	C:\Users\toyosi\Downloads\Nneka Folder\Nneka Data.sav
	Active Dataset
	DataSet1
	Filter
	<none>
	Weight
	<none>
	Split File
	<none>
	N of Rows in Working Data File
	113

Missing Value Handling	Definition of Missing	User-defined missing values are treated as missing.
	Cases Used	Statistics for each pair of variables are based on all the cases with valid data for that pair.
Syntax		CORRELATIONS  /VARIABLES=dtotal etotal  /PRINT=TWOTAIL NOSIG  /STATISTICS DESCRIPTIVES  /MISSING=PAIRWISE .
Resources	Processor Time	00:00:00.02
	Elapsed Time	00:00:00.03

### Descriptive Statistics

	Mean	Std. Deviation	N
dtotal	41.1398	4.73560	93
etotal	31.8692	9.30721	107

### Correlations

		total	total
total	Pearson Correlation	1	-.321**

	Sig. (2-tailed)		.002
	N	93	93
Total	Pearson Correlation	-.321**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	
	N	93	107

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## A. Personal Data

## Biodata

**Name:** Nneka IKEM-ANIBEZE  
**Address:** Plot 917 off 64 Crescent, Gwarimpa Abuja  
**E mail:** [nekabeze@yahoo.com](mailto:nekabeze@yahoo.com)  
**Phone No:** +2348023527117  
**Date of Birth:** 23<sup>rd</sup> February, 1967  
**Place of Birth:** United Kingdom  
**Nationality:** Nigerian  
**Next of Kin:** Mr. Onochie Anibeze  
6 Sir Ben Onyeka St. Greenfield Esate, Off Ago Palace Way  
Lagos  
Tel: 08033034924

## B. Education Background

### 1. Educational Institutions Attended with Date

Primary School Certificate, Ekulu Primary School Enugu	1978
WAEC, Girls High School Awkunanaw Enugu	1983
Diploma, University of Lagos, Akoka Mass Communication	1992
Bachelor of Science, Lagos State University, Ojo Mass Communication	2005
Master of Science, University of Lagos Mass Communication	2012

### **C. Work Experiences with Date**

- i. Special Adviser to the Hon Minister Hannatu Musa Musa on Media and Publicity Fed Ministry of Art, Culture and the Creative Economy Aug 2023- date
- ii. Special Assistant Media and Publicity to the Hon Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Disaster Management, and Social Development – Hajiya Sadiya Umar Farouq

#### **Responsibilities**

- Writing engaging and creative press releases and media advisories for each media conference, courtesy visits, and meetings. Detailing relevant newsworthy information for event publication and publicrelations efforts with news media.
- Overseeing and monitoring professional social media, online sources, and messaging on the Minister through follower engagement, social listening, and trend analysis.Scheduling appearance of the Hon. Minister on TV and Radio Programmes for special interviews.
- Hosting of Media parleys with Sports Editors
- Hosting Media Conferences with Bureau Chiefs andCorrespondents attached to the Ministry

#### **B. Special Assistant Media and Publicity to The Minister of Youth and Sports Development – Barrister Solomon Dalung**

- Developing team communications and information for Ministerialmeetings.
- Serving as primary point of contact for incoming media calls, and inquiries, including requests for meetings and interviews with mediaexecutives and journalists.
- Arranging and providing media coverage for all official activities ofthe Honorable Minister through live video recordings, photography, and live streaming.

#### **3. Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria Deputy Director (Sport & Outside broadcasts)**

### **D. Awards and Fellowships**

Nil

### **E. Membership of Academic Professional Bodies**

Member, Nigerian Union of Journalists [NUJ]

Member, Nigerian Association of Women Journalists [NAWOJ]

Member, Association of International Sports Press [AIPS]

Member, African Sports Journalists Union [ASJU]

Member, Sports Writers Association of Nigeria [SWAN]

Athletics Federation of Nigeria

Curling Federation of Nigeria

**F. Publications**

1. Thesis

Nil

2. Contribution to Books:

I. N. S. IKEM-ANIBEZE & W.B. Busari, *Perspective of Journalists on the Implication of Media Independence in Nigeria* in W.B. Busari & A.A. Amedu, Mass Communication and Media Technology Postgraduates Seminar Proceedings, vol 1, 2023, 59-69.

3. Journal Publications

Nil

**Referees**

**Prof. Lambert Ihebuzor,**

Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology,

Lead City University Ibadan.

+23480334195123

**Dr. Waheed Bayonle Busari**

Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology,

Lead City University Ibadan.

+2348023720078

**Dr. Anthony Apeh Amedu**

Department of Mass Communication & Media Technology,

Lead City University Ibadan.

+234703082119

.....  
Signature

.....  
Date

### **The University Compliance Certification**

This is to certify that this thesis by Nneka IKEM-ANIBEZE with Matric No: LCU/PG/001781 in the Department of Mass Communication and Media Technology, Faculty of Communication and Information Science, Lead City University, Ibadan is in full compliance with the approved University format and style.

---

Signature

---

Date

Lead City University Ibadan DO NOT COPY

## Nneka\_IKEM-ANIBEZE\_PhD LCU Library

### ORIGINALITY REPORT

<b>20%</b> SIMILARITY INDEX	<b>20%</b> INTERNET SOURCES	<b>14%</b> PUBLICATIONS	<b>7%</b> STUDENT PAPERS
--------------------------------	--------------------------------	----------------------------	-----------------------------

### PRIMARY SOURCES

<b>1</b>	<b>redfame.com</b> Internet Source	<b>4%</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>kwaracails.edu.ng</b> Internet Source	<b>4%</b>
<b>3</b>	<b>imesoimeso.org</b> Internet Source	<b>3%</b>
<b>4</b>	<b>Submitted to The Robert Gordon University</b> Student Paper	<b>2%</b>
<b>5</b>	<b>mafiadoc.com</b> Internet Source	<b>2%</b>
<b>6</b>	<b>www.researchgate.net</b> Internet Source	<b>2%</b>
<b>7</b>	<b>www.krepublishers.com</b> Internet Source	<b>2%</b>

Exclude quotes  Off

Exclude matches  < 2%

Exclude bibliography  On