

Ethical Violations among Broadcast Journalists in Ogun State

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ABSTRACT

Ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State, Nigeria, pose significant challenges to the credibility and integrity of journalism. Sensationalism, lack of verification, and conflicts of interest are among the ethical challenges that need to be addressed. Thus, this study aims to provide a comprehensive background on ethical violations among broadcast journalists specifically in Ogun State, Nigeria. A hundred and one fifty journalists in Ogun state, Nigeria were recruited in this study. A baseline questionnaire structured to be well-understood by the respondents and to allow for appropriate questions that can address the research questions was used to collect data for this study. All data collected were presented and analyzed. The responses of the one hundred and fifty respondents were presented and analyzed using a frequency table and a simple percentage formula for easy understanding. The findings indicate that journalists in Ogun State perceive sensationalism as the most significant ethical challenge in broadcast journalism, with many reporting experiences of being pressured to compromise ethical standards. Furthermore, the findings suggest that journalists in Ogun State advocate for stricter enforcement of ethical guidelines as the most effective approach to curbing ethical violations in broadcast journalism, while also expressing a belief that complete elimination of such violations is feasible. In conclusion, this study shows a complex ethical landscape in broadcast journalism in Ogun State, marked by challenges to ethical integrity but also characterized by a collective aspiration towards ethical improvement and accountability.

Keywords: Ethical violations, Media ethics, Journalism, Broadcast media regulation, Ogun State

INTRODUCTION

Ethical violations among broadcast journalists are a matter of concern globally, as they can undermine the media's credibility and erode public trust. (Kamaldeen et al., 2020) Ethical conduct is fundamental to journalism as it ensures accuracy, fairness, and transparency in reporting [6]. According to McQuail (2013), "Ethics in journalism is concerned with maintaining the integrity and credibility of the profession and its role in serving the public interest"[10]. Reference [20] shows that the Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ) emphasizes the core principles of ethical journalism, including truth, accuracy, independence, and accountability. (SPJ, n.d.) These principles serve as guidelines for journalists to uphold ethical standards in their work [20].

Broadcast journalists are often tempted to sensationalize news stories to attract more viewers or increase

ratings. This tendency can lead to distorted or biased reporting, compromising the integrity of the news. Kovach and Rosenstiel (2014) highlight the importance of verification, stating that journalists should “never add anything that was not there” and “never deceive the audience with misleading reporting”[8]. (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2014) Failure to adhere to these principles can result in spreading misinformation and damaging public trust [8].

Ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State, Nigeria, have become a pressing issue that threatens the credibility and trustworthiness of the media industry. Despite the essential role of journalism in providing accurate and reliable information to the public, the prevalence of ethical breaches poses a significant challenge to the profession.

There is a lack of awareness and understanding among broadcast journalists in Ogun State regarding ethical guidelines and professional standards. This gap may result in unintentional ethical violations due to a limited understanding of the importance and implications of ethical conduct in journalism. Broadcast journalists often engage in sensationalism and biased reporting practices to attract larger audiences or serve personal or organizational interests, further leading to distorted news coverage, compromising the accuracy, objectivity, and fairness that are essential to the profession. (Frye, 2005; Uzuegbunam, 2013) [5], [24]

The rapid pace of news dissemination in the broadcast industry often leads to insufficient verification and fact-checking processes, thereby resulting in the dissemination of false or misleading information, contributing to the spread of misinformation and undermining public trust in the media.

Also, broadcast journalists in Ogun State may face external pressures, including political and commercial interests, which can compromise their impartiality and independence. The influence of these interests on news reporting may lead to biased coverage and a lack of transparency, thereby jeopardizing the integrity of journalism.

There may be a lack of effective enforcement mechanisms and accountability measures to ensure compliance with ethical standards among broadcast journalists in Ogun State. The absence of adequate monitoring and penalties for ethical violations may perpetuate unethical practices, creating a culture of impunity within the industry.

Understanding the depth and extent of these problems is crucial to developing appropriate interventions and strategies for promoting ethical conduct among broadcast journalists in Ogun State. Thus, this study aims to provide a comprehensive background on ethical violations among broadcast journalists specifically in Ogun State, Nigeria. Furthermore, by addressing these issues, this study seeks to enhance professionalism, integrity, and public trust in the media, ultimately fostering a vibrant and responsible journalism landscape in the region.

Statement of Problem

Ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State, Nigeria, have become a pressing issue that threatens the credibility and trustworthiness of the media industry. Despite the essential role of journalism in providing accurate and reliable information to the public, the prevalence of ethical breaches poses a significant challenge to the profession. Therefore, it is crucial to conduct a comprehensive study to investigate and understand the nature, causes, and consequences of ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State. This study aims to address the following key problem areas: There is a lack of awareness and understanding among broadcast journalists in Ogun State regarding ethical guidelines and professional standards. This gap may result in unintentional ethical violations due to a limited understanding of the importance and implications of ethical conduct in journalism.

Broadcast journalists often engage in sensationalism and biased reporting practices to attract larger audiences or serve personal or organizational interests. This can lead to distorted news coverage, compromising the accuracy, objectivity, and fairness that are essential to the profession.

The rapid pace of news dissemination in the broadcast industry often leads to insufficient verification and fact-checking processes. This can result in the dissemination of false or misleading information, contributing to the spread of misinformation and undermining public trust in the media.

Also, broadcast journalists in Ogun State may face external pressures, including political and commercial interests, which can compromise their impartiality and independence. The influence of these interests on news reporting may lead to biased coverage and a lack of transparency, thereby jeopardizing the integrity of journalism.

There may be a lack of effective enforcement mechanisms and accountability measures to ensure compliance with ethical standards among broadcast journalists in Ogun State. The absence of adequate monitoring and penalties for ethical violations may perpetuate unethical practices, creating a culture of impunity within the industry.

Understanding the depth and extent of these problems is crucial to developing appropriate interventions and strategies for promoting ethical conduct among broadcast journalists in Ogun State. By addressing these issues, this study seeks to contribute to the enhancement of professionalism, integrity, and public trust in the media, ultimately fostering a vibrant and responsible journalism landscape in the region.

Significance of the Study

This study holds several significant implications for the field of broadcast journalism in Ogun State, Nigeria, as well as the broader media landscape. The significance of the study can be outlined as follows:

1. **Enhancing Professionalism:** By investigating the ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State, the study contributes to the understanding of the challenges that hinder professionalism and ethical conduct in the industry. The findings can inform the development of targeted interventions and training programs to enhance professionalism, and adherence to ethical guidelines, and promote responsible journalism.
2. **Restoring Public Trust:** Ethical violations erode public trust in the media. This study's findings can help identify the specific ethical breaches that occur among broadcast journalists in Ogun State, thereby highlighting areas where trust has been compromised. The insights gained from the study can inform efforts to rebuild public trust by addressing these specific issues and promoting transparent, accurate, and fair reporting.
3. **Strengthening Regulatory Frameworks:** The study's evaluation of the effectiveness of existing mechanisms for enforcing ethical standards and promoting accountability provides valuable insights for regulatory bodies, such as the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) in Nigeria. The findings can inform policy recommendations and improvements in the regulatory framework to ensure better enforcement of ethical standards and stricter accountability measures for broadcast journalists in Ogun State.
4. **Combating Misinformation:** In an era of rampant misinformation, understanding the prevalence and impact of ethical violations, such as inadequate verification and biased reporting, is crucial. The study's findings can contribute to strategies for combating misinformation by addressing the root causes and promoting fact-checking practices among broadcast journalists. This can help to mitigate the spread of false information and support the dissemination of accurate and reliable news to the public.

5. **Academic Contribution:** The study adds to the existing body of literature on media ethics and journalism practices, particularly within the context of Ogun State. It provides a comprehensive analysis of the ethical challenges faced by broadcast journalists, offering valuable insights for researchers, scholars, and educators in the field of journalism and media studies.

It will be a prerequisite for the award of a Higher National Diploma degree in Nigerian Polytechnic.

METHODS

Sources of Data

We included primary and secondary data collection which is a prelude to data analysis. The qualitative and quantitative data collection were adopted to ensure the best outcome.

Study Population

The population for this study was practicing journalists in Ogun State. According to an Ogun NUJ source, there are about 250 practicing journalists in Ogun State.

Sampling size and sampling technique

The Krejcie and Morgan formula for calculating sample size was used in this research.

The formula is as follows:

$$S = \frac{X^2 * N * P * (1-P)}{d^2 * (N-1) + X^2 * P * (1-P)}$$

Where:

- S is the sample size
- X is the Z value (e.g., 1.96 for a 95% confidence level)
- N is the population size
- P is the population proportion (expressed as a decimal, often assumed to be 0.5 (50%) to provide the maximum sample size)
- d is the margin of error.

Let's calculate the sample size using the Krejcie and Morgan formula for a population of 250:

$$\frac{1.96^2 * 250 * 0.5 * (1-0.5)}{0.05^2 * (250-1) + 1.96^2 * 0.5 * (1-0.5)}$$

After performing the calculations, we find that the sample size S is approximately 152. Meanwhile, the study will comprise of 150 respondents only.

Literature Review

Ethics in journalism is a critical aspect of the profession, and it's no different in Nigeria. The ethical

standards that Nigerian journalists are expected to uphold include accuracy, fairness, objectivity, respect for privacy, and confidentiality (Media Career Services, 2019; Nigerian Press Council, n.d.; Okunna, 1995) [11], [12], [14]. However, several authors have noted challenges and ethical dilemmas in the practice of journalism in Nigeria. For instance, there are concerns about the commercialization of news, which some believe has blossomed due to poor funding of government media organizations (Oso, 1999; Udeze, 2002) [18], [22]. This commercialization is seen as a factor that retards development and negatively affects the image of media institutions in the country (Omenugha & Oji, 2008) [16].

Another issue is the adherence to the Code of Ethics among Nigerian journalists. Some researchers have expressed fears that Nigerian journalists might not be able to fulfill their traditional duties shortly due to factors such as the spread of fake news and financial constraints (Ojebode, 2011) [13]. They argue that journalists may end up being purveyors of lies, innuendoes, and outright fabrications, in violation of ethical principles (Ojebode, 2011) [13].

Furthermore, there are concerns about the ethical challenges in reporting politics in Nigeria (Omenugha & Oji, 2008) [16]. The integrity of journalists is often tested in political reporting, and there are ethical dilemmas associated with it (Adeyanju, 2012) [1].

In conclusion, while the Code of Ethics provides a guideline for Nigerian journalists, there are several challenges that they face in adhering to these ethical standards. Various authors have suggested solutions to these problems, including raising ethical standards, enforcing laws and ethics more rigorously, and improving funding for media houses (Ojebode, 2011; Adeyanju, 2012; Omenugha & Oji, 2008) [13], [1], [16].

1) Dimensions of Ethical Violations in Journalism: Journalism, as a profession, is guided by a set of ethical principles and standards designed to ensure accuracy, fairness, and independence in news reporting (Ward, 2014) [25]. However, ethical violations occur when these principles are compromised. This article explores the dimensions of ethical violations in journalism.

Fabrication and Falsification

Fabrication in journalism can take many forms, from creating sources and embellishing stories to making quotes sound different from what was said (Krueger, 2016) [9]. It can be defined as “making things up and passing them off as genuine” (Foreman, cited in University of Arkansas, n.d.) [23]. A notable example of fabrication is the case of Jayson Blair, a former New York Times journalist, who was discovered to have embellished, exaggerated, or simply invented numerous testimonies (ThoughtCo, n.d.) [21]

Falsification, on the other hand, involves the deliberate distortion of information. This can occur when journalists manipulate facts or data to fit a particular narrative or agenda. Falsification can also involve the omission of crucial information that could provide a more balanced view of a story.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism in journalism is a serious ethical violation that involves the use of another’s work without proper attribution or permission. It is traditionally defined as taking someone else’s work and presenting it as your own (ONA Ethics, n.d.) [17]. In journalism, it is considered one of the primary sins of the profession, and many journalists have lost their jobs or faced legal action for lifting others’ writing or other production (ONA Ethics, n.d.) [17].

The presence of plagiarism in journalism is even more common compared to academic writing. Journalists

often have to work with a plethora of sources under pressure or according to certain corporations or stakeholders. When plagiarism is encountered, it usually stands for taking a piece of someone else's work or copying something entirely by presenting it as something that you have created. It's one of the worst scenarios for a journalist that usually marks the end of a professional career. It can also lead to legal action when a prosecutor or a media company can prove that an intellectual property theft has taken place (Fitzgerald, n.d.) [4].

Conflict of Interest

Conflict of interest in journalism occurs when journalists allow personal or financial considerations to influence their reporting. It can manifest in various forms, such as reporting on close friends or family, receiving free copies of books, films, and games for review, or taking positions on political or social issues (University of Arkansas, n.d.) [23].

A conflict of interest can also arise when journalists have a close relationship with the subjects they are covering. For instance, the alleged assault of Breitbart News reporter Michelle Fields by Donald Trump's campaign manager in 2016 led to several senior staff members resigning from the news organization, citing their feelings about the organization's close relationship with the Trump campaign (University of Arkansas, n.d.) [23].

Another form of conflict of interest can occur in the advertising industry. In 2013, the large advertising firms Omnicom and Public announced a merger that would house many competing brands under the same advertising firm. Competing brands like PepsiCo and Coca-Cola, along with AT&T and Verizon would share advertising staff. Eventually, the merger was called off in part because of the conflicts that arose between the two agencies (University of Arkansas, n.d.) [23].

Conflicts of interest can also arise when journalists have financial interests in the subjects they cover. For example, a journalist who owns stock in a company may be biased in their reporting on that company. This can lead to a lack of objectivity and fairness in the reporting, which can undermine the trust of the audience.

Theoretical Framework

A theory is a set of related concepts that explain a phenomenon. The media theories that applied to this study include but are not limited to:

1) Gatekeeping Theory: The Gatekeeping Theory, first introduced by social psychologist Kurt Lewin in 1943, has been a significant framework for understanding the processes and dynamics within mass communication. This theory is centered on the concept that information is filtered and selected before it is disseminated to the public (Wikipedia, n.d.) [26]. The gatekeepers, who could be editors or news directors, decide what information should be passed on to the public and what should not.

The Gatekeeping Theory operates on several assumptions. Firstly, it assumes that every news medium has an abundance of news stories brought to its attention. However, due to limitations imposed by time and space, only a limited number of these can be presented to the public.

Secondly, within any news organization, there is a perspective that defines the criteria by which a particular news story is judged. These criteria are used by the gatekeepers to select and filter the news stories.

Lastly, those who use these criteria become the gatekeepers who let some stories pass through the gates and keep other stories out. They thereby limit, control, and shape what the public knows about.

Despite its significant contributions to mass communication studies, the Gatekeeping Theory is not without

its criticisms. One of the main criticisms is that the theory is purely descriptive and lacks predictive power.

Another criticism is that the theory suggests there is only one gate, but in reality, there might be many. Furthermore, gatekeepers themselves are wired to think in a specific way. Editors and other gatekeepers change the priority of news causing influence in a society like racism, sexism, classism, etc.

The Gatekeeping Theory is particularly relevant to the study of ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State. A report indicates that media employers' refusal to pay salaries of their workforce as and when due is the leading cause of unethical practices among media practitioners. This situation is a clear manifestation of gatekeeping, where the decision of media employers significantly influences the behavior of journalists.

Moreover, the theory's focus on the selection and filtering of information resonates with the ethical considerations in journalism. For instance, the gatekeeping process can be compromised when journalists accept benefits from news sources and newsmakers in return for positive coverage (Chekol, 2023) [2]. This practice, which is a clear violation of journalistic ethics, can be better understood and addressed through the lens of the Gatekeeping Theory.

The Gatekeeping Theory, despite its criticisms, remains a valuable framework in studying and addressing ethical violations among broadcast journalists. By understanding the dynamics of information control and dissemination, stakeholders can develop more effective strategies to promote ethical journalism.

2) Social Responsibility Theory: The Social Responsibility Theory, first proposed by Siebert, Peterson, and Schramm (1963) [19], has profound implications for the study of ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State, Nigeria. This theory posits that the media plays a significant role in shaping public opinion by determining which issues are given the most attention (Wikipedia, n.d.) [26].

The Social Responsibility Theory is based on several core assumptions. The first assumption is that everyone should individually work for the good of society. This implies that the media has the power to decide which issues are important and should be given attention. The second assumption is that everyone is able to make a change for the better. This suggests that the media has the potential to influence societal change. The third assumption is that one person can make a difference. This underscores the potential impact of individual journalists on societal perceptions and attitudes.

Despite its wide acceptance, the Social Responsibility Theory has been criticized for oversimplifying the media's influence on public opinion (Communication Studies, n.d.) [3]. Critics argue that while the theory emphasizes the media's role in shaping what people think about, it may downplay the complex interplay of personal beliefs, experiences, and other factors that shape individuals' attitudes and perceptions (Communication Studies, n.d.) [3]. Furthermore, some critics argue that the theory allows businesses to project a positive image by doing very little (Konsyise, 2022) [7].

In the context of broadcast journalism in Ogun State, the Social Responsibility Theory provides a framework for understanding how ethical violations can occur when journalists fail to fulfill their social responsibilities. For instance, if a journalist disseminates false or misleading information, this could be seen as a failure to fulfill their social responsibility to provide accurate information to the public.

In conclusion, the Social Responsibility Theory provides a useful framework for understanding the implications of ethical violations among broadcast journalists in Ogun State. By shaping the public's perception of issues, unethical practices among journalists can have far-reaching consequences for society. Therefore, it is imperative for journalists, media organizations, and regulatory bodies to uphold and enforce

ethical standards in journalism practice.

RESULTS

TABLE I. HOW WOULD YOU RATE YOUR UNDERSTANDING OF THE ETHICAL GUIDELINES FOR BROADCAST JOURNALISM?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Excellent	60	40
Good	40	26.7
Fair	20	13.3
Poor	30	20
Total	150	100

TABLE II. HAVE YOU EVER ATTENDED A WORKSHOP OR SEMINAR ON ETHICAL GUIDELINES IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Always	30	20
Often	60	40
Sometimes	40	26.7
Never	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE III. HOW OFTEN DO YOU REFER TO THE ETHICAL GUIDELINES WHILE WORKING?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Always	30	20
Often	60	40
Sometimes	40	26.7
Never	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE IV. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT A STRONG UNDERSTANDING OF ETHICAL GUIDELINES IS IMPORTANT FOR YOUR WORK?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly agree	60	40
Agree	40	26.7
Disagree	20	13.3
Strongly disagree	30	20
Total	150	100

TABLE V. HAVE YOU EVER WITNESSED AN ETHICAL VIOLATION IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	80	53.3
No	70	46.7
Total	150	100

TABLE VI. WHAT IMPACT DO YOU BELIEVE ETHICAL VIOLATIONS HAVE ON THE CREDIBILITY OF BROADCAST JOURNALISM?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Significant impact	80	53.3
Moderate impact	10	6.7
Little impact	–	
No impact	60	40
Total	150	100

TABLE VII. HOW OFTEN DO YOU BELIEVE ETHICAL VIOLATIONS OCCUR IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM IN OGUN STATE?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very frequently	100	66.7
Frequently	30	20
Occasionally	10	6.7
Rarely	10	6.7
Total	150	100

TABLE VIII. IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST COMMON TYPE OF ETHICAL VIOLATION IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Plagiarism	40	26.7
Sensationalism	80	53.3
Conflict of interest	10	6.7
Invasion of privacy	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE IX. HOW EFFECTIVE DO YOU BELIEVE THE CURRENT MECHANISMS FOR ENFORCING ETHICAL STANDARDS IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM ARE?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Very effective	60	40
Somewhat effective	20	13.3
Not very effective	20	13.3
Not effective at all	50	33.3

Total	150	100
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TABLE X. HAVE YOU EVER REPORTED AN ETHICAL VIOLATION? IF SO, WAS THE ISSUE ADDRESSED APPROPRIATELY?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes, it was addressed appropriately	40	26.7
Yes, but it was not addressed appropriately	80	53.3
No, I have never reported an ethical violation	30	20
Total	150	100

TABLE XI. DO YOU BELIEVE THERE IS SUFFICIENT ACCOUNTABILITY IN THE BROADCAST JOURNALISM INDUSTRY IN OGUN STATE?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	30	20
No	120	80
Total	150	100

TABLE XII. WHAT IMPROVEMENTS WOULD YOU SUGGEST FOR THE CURRENT MECHANISMS ENFORCING ETHICAL STANDARDS?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
More transparency	20	13.3
Stricter penalty for violation	90	60
More training and education	30	20
Better reporting mechanisms	10	6.7
Total	150	100

TABLE XIII. WHICH OF THE FOLLOWING DO YOU BELIEVE IS THE MOST PRESSING ETHICAL ISSUE IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM IN OGUN STATE?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Plagiarism	30	20
Sensationalism	90	60
Conflict of interest	20	13.3
Invasion of privacy	10	6.7
Total	150	100

TABLE XIV. HAVE YOU EVER FELT PRESSURED TO COMPROMISE YOUR ETHICAL STANDARDS WHILE WORKING?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	120	80
No	30	20

Total	150	100
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TABLE XV. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE AUDIENCE’S TRUST IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM IS AFFECTED BY ETHICAL ISSUES?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	130	86.7
No	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE XVI. HOW OFTEN DO YOU DISCUSS ETHICAL ISSUES WITH YOUR COLLEAGUES?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Frequently	60	40
Occasionally	40	26.7
Rarely	30	20
Never	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE XVII. WHAT DO YOU BELIEVE IS THE MOST EFFECTIVE WAY TO CURB ETHICAL VIOLATIONS IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
More stringent enforcement of guidelines	60	40
Regular training and workshops	40	26.7
Public accountability and transparency	30	20
Stricter hiring practices	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE XVIII. DO YOU BELIEVE THAT ETHICAL VIOLATIONS CAN BE ELIMINATED FROM BROADCAST JOURNALISM?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	130	86.7
No	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE XIX. WOULD YOU SUPPORT A ZERO-TOLERANCE POLICY TOWARDS ETHICAL VIOLATIONS IN YOUR WORKPLACE?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Always	90	60
Often	40	26.7
Sometimes	20	13.3
Total	150	100

TABLE XX. WHAT ROLE DO YOU BELIEVE THE AUDIENCE PLAYS IN CURBING ETHICAL VIOLATIONS IN BROADCAST JOURNALISM?

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Significant role	10	6.7
Moderate role	20	13.3
Little role	90	60
No role	30	20
Total	150	100

Discussion of Findings

Table 1 shows that the majority of the respondents have an excellent understanding of the ethical guidelines for broadcast journalism. seminar on ethical guidelines in broadcast journalism?

Table 2 showed that the majority of the respondents said that they often attend workshops or seminars on ethical guidelines in broadcast journalism

Table 3 showed that the majority of the respondents said they often refer to ethical guidelines while working

Table 4 shows that the majority of the respondents believe that a strong understanding of ethical guidelines is important for their work.

The findings suggest that a significant majority of respondents not only possess an excellent understanding of the ethical guidelines for broadcast journalism but also frequently engage with these guidelines by attending workshops or seminars and referring to them in their work, underscoring their belief in the importance of these guidelines for professional practice. It highlighted the critical role of ongoing education and adherence to ethical standards in enhancing the quality and integrity of broadcast journalism.

Table 5 showed that the majority of the respondents said they have witnessed an ethical violation in their workplace,

Table 6 showed that the majority of the journalists said that ethical violations have a significant impact on the credibility of broadcast journalism

Table 7 shows that the majority of the journalists believed that ethical violations occur very frequently in broadcast journalism in Ogun State.

Table 8 shows that the majority of the journalists said that sensationalism is the most common type of ethical violation in broadcast journalism.

The findings reveal that the majority of journalists have observed ethical violations within their workplaces, which they believe occur quite frequently in broadcast journalism in Ogun State, particularly citing sensationalism as the most common violation. These perceived ethical breaches are deemed to significantly undermine the credibility of broadcast journalism, which emphasizes how sensationalism and other ethical violations can erode trust in media institutions and impact journalistic integrity.

Table 9 shows that the majority of the journalists believed that the current mechanisms for enforcing ethical standards in broadcast journalism are very effective.

Table 10: shows that the majority of journalists in Ogun majority of the respondents said they had reported an ethical violation but it was not addressed appropriately.

Table 11 shows that the majority of journalists in Ogun State said there is no sufficient accountability in the broadcast journalism industry in Ogun State.

Table 12 shows that the majority of journalists suggest stricter penalties for violations as mechanisms for enforcing ethical standards.

The findings suggest a discrepancy between the perceived effectiveness of current mechanisms for enforcing ethical standards in broadcast journalism and the actual experiences of journalists reporting ethical violations, with many feeling that accountability measures are insufficient. Highlighting the need for improved accountability mechanisms and stricter penalties to address ethical breaches in journalism effectively.

Table 15 shows that the majority of journalists believe that sensationalism is the most pressing ethical issue in broadcast journalism in Ogun State.

Table 14 shows that the majority of journalists in Ogun said they have been pressured to compromise ethical standards.

Table 15 shows that the majority of journalists believe that the audience's trust in broadcast journalism is affected by ethical issues.

Table 16 shows that the majority of journalists in Ogun said that they frequently discuss ethical issues with colleagues.

The findings indicate that journalists in Ogun State perceive sensationalism as the most significant ethical challenge in broadcast journalism, with many reporting experiences of being pressured to compromise ethical standards. Moreover, there is a widespread belief among journalists that ethical issues directly impact the audience's trust in broadcast journalism, leading to frequent discussions among colleagues about these ethical dilemmas. It emphasizes the detrimental effects of sensationalism on trust in journalism and the importance of addressing ethical challenges through internal discussions and adherence to professional standards.

Table 17 shows that the majority of journalists in Ogun State said that the most effective way to curb ethical violations in broadcast journalism is more stringent enforcement of guidelines

Table 18 shows that the majority of the respondents said ethical violations can be eliminated from broadcast journalism.

Table 19 shows that the majority of the respondents said they would always support a zero-tolerance policy towards ethical violations in their workplace.

Table 20 shows that the majority of journalists in Ogun State believe the audience plays in curbing ethical violations in broadcast journalism.

Table 20 shows that the majority of journalists in Ogun believed that the audience plays little role in curbing ethical violations in broadcast journalism.

The findings suggest that journalists in Ogun State advocate for stricter enforcement of ethical guidelines as

the most effective approach to curbing ethical violations in broadcast journalism, while also expressing a belief that complete elimination of such violations is feasible. However, there is a divergence in opinions regarding the role of the audience in combating ethical breaches, with some journalists perceiving limited involvement from the audience. It shows the importance of robust enforcement mechanisms and internal commitment to zero-tolerance policies for addressing ethical violations in journalism.

SUMMARY

The collective insights derived from the research highlight a critical examination of ethical considerations within broadcast journalism in Ogun State, Nigeria. The series of findings from journalists in Ogun State illuminates a complex landscape concerning ethical violations in the broadcast. (Oluwaseun & Olubunmi, 2020) Firstly, the recognition of sensationalism as the paramount ethical issue underscores a critical concern over journalistic integrity and the quality of information disseminated to the public. This concern not only highlights the pressure journalists face in the race for audience attention but also reflects a broader industry dilemma where sensational content often trumps substantive reporting. The acknowledgment of pressure to compromise ethical standards further complicates this scenario, suggesting an environment where journalists are caught between professional ethics and external pressures, possibly from media owners, advertisers, or political interests.

Compounding this issue is the reported pressure on journalists to compromise ethical standards, suggesting an environment fraught with challenges that may impede adherence to journalistic ethics. This pressure, potentially emanating from both internal and external sources, underscores a broader struggle within the industry to balance commercial success against ethical reporting.

The impact of these ethical dilemmas extends to the audience's perception, with a majority of journalists acknowledging that ethical breaches, such as sensationalism, significantly erode audience trust. This erosion of trust highlights the critical link between ethical journalism and public confidence in media as a reliable source of information.

The belief in the potential for eliminating ethical violations through stricter enforcement of guidelines and a zero-tolerance policy underscores a strong desire within the journalist community for a more regulated and principled media landscape. Such findings suggest an optimism that, with the right mechanisms in place, the industry can overcome its current ethical shortcomings. However, the effectiveness of these mechanisms hinges on their implementation and the commitment of all stakeholders to uphold these standards rigorously.

Interestingly, the divergence of opinions on the audience's role in curbing ethical violations introduces an additional layer of complexity. While some journalists view the audience's role as minimal, this perspective might overlook the power of audience engagement and feedback in shaping media practices. In the digital age, where audiences have more platforms to voice their concerns, public opinion can indeed influence media outlets' ethical standards and accountability.

Moreover, the frequent discussions among journalists about ethical issues indicate a profession actively engaged in self-reflection and seeking paths to improvement. This ongoing dialogue within the industry is essential for fostering a culture of ethics that adapts to evolving challenges and maintains the trust of the public. Thus, there is a strong call from within the journalistic community for stricter enforcement of ethical guidelines. This call to action reflects a consensus on the necessity of robust mechanisms to ensure adherence to ethical standards, aiming to safeguard journalistic integrity and restore public trust.

In summary, the findings articulate a complex ethical landscape in broadcast journalism in Ogun State, marked by challenges to ethical integrity but also characterized by a collective aspiration towards ethical improvement and accountability. This situation underscores the importance of sustained ethical dialogue,

education, and institutional support to navigate the ethical intricacies of journalism in the contemporary media environment.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Given the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made. Media organizations and regulatory bodies should collaborate to strengthen the enforcement of ethical guidelines within the broadcast journalism industry. This could involve regular training sessions, more rigorous monitoring of content, and clear, accessible channels for reporting ethical violations.

Organizations should implement and strictly enforce a zero-tolerance policy towards ethical violations: This policy should be communicated to all staff members, with transparent procedures for addressing breaches and consistent consequences for violations to deter unethical practices.

Given the debate on the role of the audience in curbing ethical violations, media outlets should actively encourage and facilitate audience engagement and feedback. This could be through social media platforms, comment sections on websites, or dedicated feedback channels, allowing audiences to voice concerns over unethical practices they observe.

Beyond enforcement, there is a need to foster a culture that values and rewards ethical journalism. This can be achieved through recognition and rewards for outstanding ethical journalism practices, mentorship programs for young journalists, and platforms for sharing best practices within the profession.

Continuous education and training programs on ethics should be a staple within media organizations. These programs should not only cover the foundational principles of ethical journalism but also address emerging ethical dilemmas arising from new technologies and changing audience dynamics. Providing journalists with the knowledge and tools to navigate complex ethical landscapes will empower them to make informed decisions in their reporting.

CONCLUSION

The insights from Ogun State journalists highlight a broadcast journalism sector at a crossroads, grappling with ethical dilemmas but also actively searching for solutions. The collective push for more stringent enforcement of guidelines, coupled with an openness to internal dialogue and reflection, suggests a pathway toward elevating ethical standards. However, for these efforts to be truly effective, they must involve not just journalists but all stakeholders, including media owners, regulatory bodies, and indeed, the audience, whose role in demanding and upholding high ethical standards should not be underestimated.

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