
An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

BERNICE TITILOLA GBADEYAN

Department: Communication And Media Management, American University, North Cyprus

ABSTRACT : There is no doubt that citizen journalists engaging in the use of artificial intelligence (AI) have been complimenting the conventional media with information dissemination to the public sphere. However, a lot of loopholes have been observed in their duty discharge that are not professional and unethical to journalism practices. Media are an essential part of any developed or developing country; they are the mouthpiece of both the ruler and the ruled, and at the same time they have a great influence on the society, thereby are expected to uphold morals in high regard. Morals in journalism are seen as ethics that guide the performances of the journalism profession, ethics of the profession aren't to be toiled with. Lack of media ethics is detrimental to the profession and capable of putting the society/country in jeopardy. This study is therefore set out to examine the impact/effect of new media and long-term citizen journalism on conventional media ethics. As it is known ethics in journalism is core to professional duty discharge and needs to be held in high esteem.

KEYWORDS: Citizen Journalism, Conventional Media, New Media, And Ethics.

INTRODUCTION

Media are the fourth estate of the realm or fourth arm of power; they are the non-conventional power. In almost any national constitution, the executive, legislature, and judiciary are the three conventional powers, but the media traditionally plays a larger role in any government, especially in a constitutional democracy, the press has an enormous capacity to shape public opinions and frame political discourse. (Onabajo, Oluwajuyitan, & Wasiu, 2024). The media in any political system, wield so much social influence and that is why they are referred to as "the fourth estate of the realm". The media is a vital part of any nation; they help in the delivery of the current state of the nation to the citizens. They are also seen as the Watchdog, and they contribute immensely. The media works hand in hand with other arms of the government to achieve the growth and development of the country (Ogunyombo, & Ademosu, 2023). The advent of technology has made the world a global village, it has enabled every individual to have access to the internet and enhance the dissemination of information because it's through technology that will have the internet, which has birthed another social platform that has enabled citizen journalist to disseminate information (Pramana & Lumbangaol, 2024). In this view, a new era of innovation has been brought about by the digital age, with artificial intelligence (AI) at the vanguard of game-changing technology (Somorin, & Ademola, 2024). Citizen journalism has enabled content creation on different social media platforms, with the engagement of Artificial intelligence (AI) this has caused an uprising trend in the journalism world, which has become very important and effective for the growth of the media in the world of which Nigeria is not exempted.

The objective of the study

The purpose of this study is

- To access the alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism
- To know the impacts of citizen journalism on conventional media ethics
- To analyze the strengths and weaknesses of this two-sphere of journalism

Research questions

Following the research objectives, the following research questions were formed

- What is the alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism?
- What are the impacts of citizen journalism on conventional media ethics?
- What are the strengths and weaknesses of these two spheres of journalism?
- Is citizen journalism a threat to conventional journalism?

Review of Literature

Journalism as it is known involves the function of surveillance revealing the good and bad in

An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

society; journalism is the adventure through which information is being disseminated to the audience, thereby making everyone who engages in such activities a journalist. Media practitioners can present disjointed, hollow events, and occurrences of chances into newsworthy events. (KENT, 2007). In the same light, Weinberg (2008) sees journalists as those who gather information analyze, and process it, before delivering it to the public, he further explains that this field of journalism includes, photos, journalism, documentaries, and all these acts put together makes journalism genuine and thrilling. Kent (2007) supports this further, by opining that journalism gives public opinion currency and disseminates authentic information about issues.

However, journalism is experiencing a radical revolution with the advent of online journalism (new media) that has an opportunity for everyone to be a journalist, because of the availability of internet, Rodman (2009 p.37) submitted that everyone is a journalist, and journalism is not a foreign or strange kind of profession, anyone seeking new development can write and share with others.

What Is Citizen Journalism

This is a form of journalism in which the citizens gather and disseminate news reports on the internet (online) and do not wait for the conventional media houses. Serena (2010) sees citizen journalists as people who have the intention to disseminate information that is beneficial to society. Citizen journalism has been further described as a situation in which individuals are solely responsible for the collection, processing, and delivery of news reports (Joyce, 2010) Furthermore, this sphere of journalism is a process whereby an individual or group of persons, is actively involved in the gathering, and disseminating news reports, however, it is important to note that this involvement intends to supply independent, credible, accurate, and up-to-date information that is desired in a democracy (Bowman, S. and Willis, C, 2003). The major function of gathering and dissemination of news that is hitherto done by conventional media outlets has been hijacked by citizen journalism and new media, done through the virtual world, citizen journalism is performed on all the social media platforms ranging from Twitter, Instagram, WhatsApp, YouTube, My space to Facebook. To explain broadly, all the information on social media platforms known as User Generated Content (UGC) from pictures to contents from audiences, videos, and news reports, are regarded as citizen journalism content. In the light of this, Fackson (2008) explains that citizen journalism is a highly developing type of journalism where an ordinary citizen is involved in news reporting and broadcasts their opinion about the state of their society. According to Rabia (2017), citizen journalism means a journalistic duty of disseminating information done by non-professionals, in other words, citizens reporting issues confronting them by themselves. According to Wall (2015), citizen journalists are set of people who are not confined to the four walls of any news structural organization, yet disseminate news and information to the public. Citizen journalism has given an individual opportunity to display their opinion on societal issues and those involved in such are therefore called citizen journalist, Duffy and Jahng (2010) however defined a citizen journalist as someone who has not undergone any journalist training but has the opportunity to broadcast issues in the community. Therefore Fackson (2008) has categorized citizen journalism as non-institutional and Institutional, he explained non-institutional as an act of a private individual generating and disseminating information on social media among friends, he further explains institutional as the conventional media outlets that also take to social media to broadcast news information, but unlike non-institutional still adhere to the ethic of journalism even while using new media. An example of these is conventional media like BBC and the ALjezeera website which allows comments and conversation of the audience on the news report

History of Citizen Journalism

In the view of some authors, the first attempt at non-professional journalism was made in 1960, citing examples of the popular music press of the UK and US that are being done by amateurs (Atton and Hamilton, 2008). According to Kern, T, and Nam, S. (2008.) Citizen journalism has been in existence for quite a while, media researchers have tried to link the birth of citizen journalism in their view of the readership crises of the US newspaper industry that emerged in the late 1970s this made some journalists, editors, and media executives develop a connection between the media and the public by developing a way of listening to the citizens. They further said, the report of the first citizen journalism was an advocate for the common citizen, the then media executives set up a public gathering that involved the members of the community to state the problems being faced in the community, they were allowed to contribute to the newsgathering as an interviewee, and as a result, the reporters broadcasted their views on the news reports. Kern and Nam (2008, p13) further stated that at the tail end of the 1990s, many more social activists have become part of citizen journalism. In this contemporary world, citizen journalism has become rampant and easily done due to the the advent of the internet and associated advanced technologies. Individuals with no journalistic training has leveraged the benefit of advanced social computing technologies to broadcast their own news stories and content, these individuals are called citizen journalists (Serena Miller, 2019)

Citizen Journalism in Nigeria

The overwhelming usage of social media by Nigerians has enhanced and developed this area of journalism called “citizen journalism” both the ruler and ruled in Nigeria are engaged in citizen journalism, however for different reasons. In research done by Dare (2011) on the increase of citizen journalism in Nigeria, using Sahara Reporter as a case study, Dare mentioned that social

An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

media usage became pronounced when the then president, Goodluck Jonathan on June 2010 took to create a Facebook page to get in touch with Nigerians, intending to get responses on the election processes and other national matters. According to Apeh and Didiugwu (2017) citing Dare (2011) mentioned that Goodluck Jonathan had more followers on Facebook than influential persons like the German Chancellor, Angela Merkel, and the South African head of state, Jacob Zuma. Therefore, due to the availability of social media for public usage in Nigeria, citizen journalism has gained ground and has a lot of Nigerians involved in citizen journalism. Nigerians found it easy to report news events in their localities, and communities using social networking sites, even before the conventional media outlets. Presently, there are many trendy citizen journalism websites in Nigeria, in research done by Dare (2011), and Anthony et al (2021) mentioned that more than half of the respondents of the study cited Sahara reporter of the citizen journalism website in Nigeria as their go-to for breaking news, even before they view or listen to conventional media. By the nature of citizen journalism, it gives room for interaction and can report news faster than conventional media, this gives room for the audience to express their view and concerns about a news report and also to get information faster, for instance, the June 2012 Dana airline plane crash was reported by citizen journalist on social media before it was aired by conventional media, the timeliness of citizen journalism is becoming a threat to conventional journalism.

Condemnation of Citizen Journalism in Nigeria

In Nigeria, citizen journalism has been criticized by some critics who believe that the sphere of journalism lacks authenticity. According to a study done, by Dare (2014), it was discovered that less than half of the surveyed respondents trusted Sahara reporters a known citizen journalism blogger in Nigeria. The survey revealed that most Nigerians do not trust citizen journalist stories. It's believed that they spread fake stories. Furthermore, Lasica (2003) explains that the majority of conventional radio and television stations have years of proving their credibility with their audiences, whereas, the issue of credibility has always been a concern when it comes to citizen journalism. Many believe that alternative journalism is not reliable; it argues that most of the time citizen journalists present reports that are exaggerated, biased, and present facts that are not trusted, and thus capable of causing civil unrest, and political insecurity. However, this was displayed in Nigeria during the nationwide protests that demanded the removal of fuel subsidies in January 2012, and also in the most recent end bad government protection held in August 2024. It was evidenced that citizen journalists misinformed the activists, making them gang up against the government. In the same vein, citizen journalists have been disparaged for trivializing the issues that concern national interests, including national disaster. This was pointed out, especially by the governmental authorities; they were displeased about the conduct of citizen journalism during the Dana Airline crash of June 2012. It was mentioned "that while was sweating copiously to check for any survivors, citizen journalists trivialize the scenario by taking and uploading awful pictures to their audiences.

Differentiating Citizen Journalism in Relationship with Conventional Journalism

Journalism is defined as assembling, arranging, writing, recording, correcting capturing, and disseminating news information about local, national, and international events or the act of broadcasting any matter of interest to the public (Free Flow of Information Act of 2007, 2007). Although this two-sphere of journalism is both involved in the journalistic function of disseminating there is still a difference between them. In recent times communication scholars have been concerned about the journalistic function of citizen journalists whether they discharge their duties in line with journalistic ethics of news quality. Based on their findings, it is obvious that conventional journalists have a better chance of getting the diverse number and different perspective of news sources, traditional media are always transparent in citing their sources and they depend mostly on authentic sources of information. On the other hand, citizen journalists are not always opportune to get official sources of information; they often get news information from friends and acquaintances, and however citizen journalist that has had journalism training and experience may sometimes cite their sources (Carpenter, 2008). In view of this, Prado (2017) explains that citizen journalist news stories are sometimes void of the official source because they found it hard to contact them, probably because they called official sources don't recognize them as an authentic news reporter, and sometimes the citizen journalists themselves do not access those in power cause of fear of rejection. Furthermore, conventional journalist excels well in being meticulous and accurate when it comes to news reporting and dissemination but they do less for community representatives. Conversely, citizen journalists take delight in sidelining the conventional media pattern of reporting. They believe that they encourage the locals by archiving vital historical happenings, inspiring them on events and actions ignored by the mainstream media (Atton 2003, Dennis & River, 1974) In addition, conventional journalists function as the ruling mouthpieces, forgetting the ruled voices, and bluntly speaking a lot of voices won't be heard if citizen journalists are not tied to journalism (Allan, 2007). Conventional news media journalist hardly reckons with common people for information except if it's a heroic or victimized story. Thus, this style of the report may indirectly imply that common people are of no importance to them. However, on the part of citizen journalists, see the common people as experts for their news sourcing. Atton C, (2008) However, citizen journalists don't operate on the parameters of a newsroom structure they practice journalism in and at any location deemed comfortable, while conventional journalists operate within a formalized standard structure. Citizen journalists are timely in breaking news, compared to conventional media that wait for editorial approval before reporting news.³

Characteristics of Citizen Journalism

An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

Determining who is a citizen journalist has in some ways made it easy to mention their characteristics. According to Ngozi Okpara (2015), citizen journalists can be characterized by the following:

- They are a faceless journalist
- They are not employed by any media organization
- They aren't a professional journalist
- They publish unedited information
- They are fact to broadcast news information since editorial checking is not involved

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Democratic Participant Media Theory

This study is based on Democratic Participant Media Theory; the vitality of the theory is based on society and its emphasis on horizontal rather than vertical communication in media. However, the theory is against the commercialization and monopolization of private and government-owned media outlets; it counters the centralism and bureaucratization of media institutions, according to Mcquail 1987. The theory encourages "communitarianization" and supports citizens' participation in community affairs; the theory was propounded due to the dominance of traditional mass media owned by private or public monopolies. The citizen-based media was more efficient due to the advent of the Internet. The main push of the theory according to Folarin (2005) is embedded in the fact that commercial and professional domination plus the bureaucracy of the media system be subdued, to make media accessible to potential users and consumers

Social Responsibility Theory

Social responsibility theory propounded by Hutchins commission (1947) was also found applicable to the study, the theory emphasizes on duties of the media to the society. Media practitioners are saddled with some responsibilities to society, Journalists must be truthful, accurate, and objective, and they must give balanced views in their news and information reports. The journalism practice should be free but regulated in line with the codes of ethics guiding the profession. Media professionals have a moral obligation to consider the overall needs of society when making journalistic decisions to produce common grounds. Journalists should support state security, and democracy, support the rights and freedoms of individuals, provide a diversity of content as part of the cultural and political pluralism of society, and improve the quality of content as part of supporting the various cultural levels of society. The social responsibility theory captures the style and nature of journalism. Therefore citizen journalist should do their duties with the social responsibility theory of the media in mind so that they can do their job ethically.

METHODOLOGY

A qualitative research design was adopted for this study. The approach used for data collection was a structured interview, whereby an experienced journalist was interviewed, a structured interview was adopted by the researcher because, it's relatively quick, easy, and most importantly time sufficient. An interview is used to explore the views, experiences, and motivation of an individual on specific issues. Qualitative methods such as interviews are believed to provide a deeper understanding of social phenomena than would be obtained from purely quantitative methods. The interview was, therefore, most appropriate where little is already known about the study, or when detailed insights are required from individual participants. Therefore, for this study some experienced and professional journalists were interviewed based on five structured questions that enhanced the researcher to arrive at some conclusion on the impact of new media and citizen journalism on conventional media ethics. The journalist names anonymously kept and will be referred to as respondent1, respondent2, respondent3 respondent4 throughout the study.

Data Collection and Analysis Procedure

The data for the study was collected through a structured interview that consisted of open-ended questions that were implicitly answered by each professional interviewed; in this regard, the questions were designed to reveal the experience of the journalist working with conventional media. This study incorporates and is based on a compilation of selected sections of detailed interviews conducted with media professionals working with conventional media. The responses made by the media professionals during the interview were integrated into the study without any adjustment.

Responses from the Interview

A total number of four (4) practicing and experienced journalists were interviewed for this study, and the responses are transcribed below.

Question 1: Do you know about Citizen Journalism

Respondent 1: Yes

Question 2: Do you think there is an alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism?

Respondent 1: Citizen Journalism refers to the sourcing of news by ordinary people who are not

An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

necessarily trained on ethics and steps towards news production, processing, and dissemination. Even though citizen journalism is not too reliable, some media outfits rely on it for scoop and new tracking. There is an alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism.

Question 3: what are the impacts of Citizen Journalism on conventional journalism in your assessment?

Respondent 1: (i) Citizen journalism operates in a way that leaves the impression that newsgathering is an “all-comers” affair. It lacks professionalism as it does not operate within an ambiance of basic ethics of news dissemination.

(ii) In citizen journalism, the credibility of the news story is most cases questionable because sources are not always verified. Information is premised on rumors, speculations, propaganda, and hearsay. Hence there is a tendency for the audience to see journalists as unreliable and uninformed. This is more so because gatekeepers in social media also see themselves as a journalist; though some refer to themselves rightly as bloggers.

Question 4: Are citizen journalists ethical in comparison to conventional journalists?

Respondent 1: No. Citizen journalism is unregulated. The issues of redress in terms of breach of ethical codes are not guaranteed, however in conventional journalism, for instance, people can seek redress through the press council and other relevant regulatory bodies.

Question 5: what are the strengths and weaknesses of these two spheres of journalism?

Respondent 1: one of the citizen journalisms is that it is readily available and accessible.

(ii) It is not expensive.

Citizen Journalism is disadvantaged in the area of unorganized news gathering, especially news on government policies and programs

Question 6: Do you think citizen journalism is a threat to conventional Journalism?

Respondent 1: No Citizen journalism is subject to proper verification (especially by the learned). However, it is becoming a global challenge in that it generates and disseminates fake news. This is the area that poses a threat to conventional journalism.

Question 1: Do you know about Citizen Journalism

Respondent 2: Yes

Question 2: Do you think there is an alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism?

Respondent 2: Yes and No, although we may see a clear dividing line between the two, however, there are certain areas of agreement, citizens have the opportunity to freely air their views, as such, such views may also be good enough to help the conventional media in setting its own agenda.

Question 3: what are the impacts of Citizen Journalism on conventional journalism in your assessment?

Respondent 2: well, compared to conventional media, citizen's journalism is globally free from ethical control, it gives the people an open atmosphere to air their views without fear, however, in the process of trying to do so, certain individuals may cross their boundaries, thereby creating a chaotic situation, which may create a negative impact on society, not all the time anyway. In essence, they take the place of conventional media. Although at times certain information could be killed due to in-house control in conventional Media, as such the citizen journalists may also succeed in helping some good stories to see the light of the day, which may otherwise, be eliminated in conventional media, due to certain vested interests. So, the impacts could at times be either negative or positive, depending on the nature of the content of the subject matter.

Question 4: Are citizen journalists ethical in comparison to conventional journalists?

Respondent 2: Yes, the concept “ethical” is relative, what we consider to be unethical, may as well be considered ethical by others. However, if we are to go by the global standard of journalism practice, we may say citizen journalism may fall in between ethicality sometimes; it may as well fall within the space of the definition of unethical practices.

Question 5: what are the strengths and weaknesses of these two spheres of journalism?

Respondent 2: citizen journalism is more human-oriented and it is more participatory and more democratic. However, where it passes its limits, it becomes a source of discord in society. On the other hand, conventional media is more professional; it relies on factual information management. However, at times personal interest and in-house control, limit its values, thereby limiting it from playing its primary role of informing and educating the general society.

Question 6: Do you think citizen journalism is a threat to conventional Journalism?

Respondent 2: Citizen Journalism is more a threat, rather if properly utilized, it is a strong modifier in terms of giving the citizens the freedom to directly communicate with the people in power, on a global stage.

Question 1: Do you know about Citizen Journalism

An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

Respondent 3: yes, Citizen Journalism is the act of gathering and dissemination of news reports by the public rather than by those trained.

Question 2: Do you think there is an alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism?

Respondent 3: Yes, there is an alliance between the two genres of journalism. Citizen journalism has come to liberalize and democratize conventional journalism. Citizen journalism most times provides a clue for conventional reporting and vice versa.

Question 3: what are the impacts of Citizen Journalism on conventional journalism in your assessment?

Respondent 3: Citizen Journalism has no regard for conventional media ethics. For instance, it is required that a report must be balanced and fair to all in conventional journalism. However, citizen journalism is not a respecter of these ethics as it more often than not publishes a one- sided report.

Question 4: Are citizen journalists ethical in comparison to conventional journalists?

Respondent 3: Citizen Journalism is not ethically driven at all, because it is practiced by non- professionals. Hence, citizen journalists are not ethically guided. Citizen journalism is a practice with no regulations and the practitioners are therefore not ethical compared to conventional media journalists engaged to comply with ethical standards in their reportage.

Question 5: what are the strengths and weaknesses of these two spheres of journalism?

Respondent 3: One's strength is the weakness of the other. The strength of citizen journalism majorly is that it ensures public participation. It births the concept of media democratization rather than the hitherto one-flow approach to media participation. However, its information cannot be relied on because they are not always verifiable like conventional media. Conventional journalism is based on ethical standards and its information is, therefore, verifiable balanced, and fair to all. However, it gives power to the hands of the few minorities as against public participation.

Question 6: Do you think citizen journalism is a threat to conventional Journalism?

Respondent 3: Citizen Journalism poses a great threat to conventional journalism because of the speed at which it processes its content. This is rapid more than conventional journalism.

Question 1: Do you know about Citizen Journalism

Respondent 4: Yes, I know and understand citizen journalism.

Question 2: Do you think there is an alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism?

Respondent 4: Yes, there is a great alliance between citizen journalism and conventional journalism because both of them serve the same purpose to gather and disseminate news and information. Although one is accredited the other has no formal education in news dissemination.

Question 3: what are the impacts of Citizen Journalism on conventional journalism in your assessment?

Respondent 4: Citizen Journalism has provided an alternative to the audience's conventional media, where citizen journalists break news on their social media platforms even before they appear in the conventional media. Citizen journalists are now more reliable than some conventional media because the audience knows that contents or news given by citizen journalists have not been tampered with, unlike conventional media where the audiences are aware that news goes through the editorial chain which leaves room for contents to be doctored. Citizen journalism has put the conventional media on the toes to made-up deadlines and to cover stories by giving time and space to all parties in the news because if they don't, the citizen journalist would be there to do it. Also, citizen journalism provides healthy competition to conventional media.

Question 4: Are citizen journalists ethical in comparison to conventional journalists?

Respondent 4: Citizen journalists are not ethical because they are not guided by the principles that guide the conventional media, they are not answerable to anyone as such they might not verify content before giving it out which has led to the recent increase of fake news on the social media which at times some conventional media house quote.

Question 5: what are the strengths and weaknesses of these two spheres of journalism?

Respondent 4: The strength of the citizen journalist is that he or she can reach remote areas where conventional media won't want to reach out of fear or lack of finance. As mentioned earlier, citizen journalism is now a competition with conventional media, and they serve as quick alternatives to get news. While conventional media has better outreach and is more trusted than the citizen journalist. Conventional media can easily be identified and asked to explain certain contents that are not too clear to the public.

Question 6: Do you think citizen journalism is a threat to conventional Journalism?

Respondent4: I don't think citizen journalism would ever be a threat to the conventional media because people would always choose conventional media over citizen journalists because the work with the codes and ethics that govern the profession and the media audience trusts them more than they would of citizen journalists. Citizen journalism is only a supporting channel not a substitute for conventional media because only those who can afford a smartphone can consume news

An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

emanating from a citizen journalist but for conventional media, even the poor with just a transistor radio can be an audience. Citizen journalism can only complement conventional journalism (media).

RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The study has revealed that there is a great alliance between the two spheres of journalism; in fact, they both perform the same function of gathering and disseminating news information to the audiences. However, it is revealed that citizen journalism is a form of participatory journalism that permits anyone to be a journalist without formal training in journalism while conventional journalism is vastly professional. The journalists (respondents) believe that citizen journalism does not present any impending threat to conventional journalism, given that it is in its formative years. Citizen journalism news mostly is of average quality and more often than not, lacks news values, and hardly follows journalism ethics. These also lessen the threat citizen journalism poses to conventional media. The audiences have a preference for news reports emanating from professional journalists over citizen journalists. Conventional journalism is known to always deliver news information that is credible and authentic because of its well-established and structured system of operation. However, this is a clear indication that conventional journalism cannot be replaced by citizen journalism, but can only complement it. Citizen journalism thus, adds value to conventional media coverage by reporting issues at the community level that are most times overlooked by the big conventional media outlets. These days' conventional media organizations make use of citizen journalism content and videos in their news reports. The citizen journalism' content is assumed to hold high importance in contemporary times, even if it is not ethical. Citizen journalism is a deal-breaking perception that makes a consumer a producer. It gives citizens the authority to convey information about their situations and pressing needs and also to involve them in social and political change.

CONCLUSION

This study has critically analyzed the assessment of the impact of new media and citizen journalism on conventional media ethics in Nigeria. It is seen from the study that citizen journalism is growing rapidly in the country to rejuvenate some features of conventional journalism practices. Therefore, there is a need to sensitize Nigerian citizen journalists on the proper use of journalism codes; there is a lack of restraint among the citizen journalists, they most times breach the ethics and exaggerate stories due to the absence of gatekeeping. In fact, there are some tendencies of plagiarism as far as citizen journalism is concerned. Citizen journalists also display little or no knowledge of what is newsworthy, as they disseminate mostly everything and anything that comes their way with little or no flitting causing news traffic on social media platforms. However, citizen journalism has the upper hand over conventional journalism when it comes to breaking news. This has in some sense, reduced the audience's dependability and reliability on conventional media; this might sometimes birth some sense of insecurity in the conventional journalist, seeing citizen journalists breaking news stories and dominating the limelight, however, this should rather be seen as an opportunity to improve on the work done by citizen journalists by disseminating accurate and credible information "as being first doesn't mean being right." Citizen journalism doesn't seem like a sphere of journalism that will fade away soon, it's believed that it has come to stay given the development of new media technologies, such as smart phones, laptop computers, and so on. Therefore, citizen journalism is believed to be handy to the audience since most becoming technologically literate. As a result, an appropriate alliance between conventional journalism and citizen journalism is recommended to establish the best way(s) forward, for effectual and efficient journalism practices in the country. This way, proper synchronization of the strengths and weaknesses of these two major trends in journalism shall be raised.

RECOMMENDATION

There should be a mechanism put in place that will ensure proper gatekeeping of the citizen journalism contents in order to ensure credibility, the information presented by citizen journalists should be properly verified before making it to the limelight. Nigerian government should structure a means of teaching the citizen journalists ethical codes of journalism, this will to a large extent reduce the dissemination of fake and unethical news information disseminated by the citizen journalists, which in one way or the other dent the image of the country as a whole. There is a need for accurate, credible, reliable, fair, and balanced news information to be disseminated; therefore, I will suggest that an independent authority should be constituted to check the authenticity of the news information to be transmitted by the citizen journalists.

REFERENCES

- 1) Anthony Ogbonna, U. C. H. E., Nwabudike, F. C., & Okowa-Nwaebi, L. C. (2021). The Rise Of Citizen Journalism In Nigeria And Security Challenges: A Traitor Or Partner In Nationhood? *Journal Of General Studies Esut Vol, 3*(1).
- 2) Allan, S. (2007). Citizen journalism and the rise of "mass self-communication": Reporting the London bombings. *Global Media Journal, 1*(1), 1–20.
- 3) Atton, C. (2003). What is alternative journalism? *Journalism, 4*(3), 267–272.

An Assessment of the Impact of New Media And Citizen Journalism on Conventional Media Ethics in Nigeria

- 4) Apeh, Andrew C. and Didiugwu, Ifeanyi F. (2017). Implication of Citizen Journalism on Mainstream Journalism. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, Vol. 7, No. 12. Atton and Hamilton. (2008). *Alternative Journalism*. SAGE London.
- 5) Bowman, S. and Willis, C. (2003). *We Media: How audiences are shaping the future of news and information*. The Media Center at the American Press Institute.
- 6) Carpenter, S. (2008). How online citizen journalism publications and online Newspapers utilize the objectivity standard and rely on external sources. *Journalism & Mass Communication Quarterly*, 85(3), 531–548.
- 7) Fackson, B. (2008). *Citizen Journalism & Democracy in Africa Exploratory Study*. Highway Africa. p26.
- 8) Free Flow of Information Act of 2007, 110 Congress, 1st Sess., S.1267 Cong. Rec. 7 (2007).
- 9) Joyce, N. (2010). 'Routinization of Charisma-The Institutionalization of Public Journalism Online' in *Public Journalism 2.0-The Promise and Reality of a Citizen-*. Routledge: Engaged Press p 135.
- 10) KENT. (2007). Fairness, information, and Scrutiny: The role of News Media in Democracy. *NORDICON review*, Jubilee issue., Pp.31-39.
- 11) Kern, T and Nam, S. 2008. (n.d.). *Social Movements as Agents of Innovation: Citizen Journalism in South Korean*. German Institute Global and Area Studies.
- 12) Ogunyombo, O. E., & Ademosu, I. (2023) *Citizen Journalism and Work Culture Among Mainstream Journalists in Nigeria: A Structuration Exploration*.
- 13) Onabajo, O., Oluwajuyitan, J., & Wasiu, B. O. (2024). The Interplay of Media Theories, Media Ethics and The Objectivity Question in Media Performance In 2023 Elections in Nigeria. *Analele Universitatii "Constantin Brancusi" din Targu Jiu. Serie Litere si Stiinte Sociale*, (1), 71-83.
- 14) Prado, P. (2017). Mapping citizen journalism and the promise of digital inclusion: A perspective from the Global South. *Global Media and Communication*, 13(2), 87–104.
- 15) Pramana, C. B., & Lumbangaol, M. (2024). Analysis of Changes in Village Community Social Behavior after the Internet and Technological Advances. *Kampret Journal*, 3(2), 48-55.
- 16) Rabia, N. (2017). Citizen Journalism vs. Mainstream Journalism: A Study on Challenges posed by Armatures. *Athens of Mass Media and Mass communication Vol3 , Volume 3, Issue 1-Pages 55-76*.
- 17) Rodman, G. (2009.). *In a changing world—History industry controversy (3rd ed.)*. New York. New York: McGraw Hill.
- 18) Serena, C. (2010). 'News Quality Differences in Online Newspaper and Citizen Journalism Sites. in *Public the Promise and Reality of a Citizen-*. Routledge. p69: Engaged Press"
- 19) Somorin, & Ademola, (2024) *Ethical Imperatives in the Era of AI Journalism: Navigating the Intersection of Technology and Responsibility*. DOI:[10.22624/AIMS/HUMANITIES/V12N2P4](https://doi.org/10.22624/AIMS/HUMANITIES/V12N2P4)
- 20) Wall, M. (2015). Citizen journalism. *Digital Journalism*, 3(6), 797–813.
- 21) Weinberg, S. (2008). *A Journalism of Humanity: A Candid History of the world*
- 22) first Journalism school... University Missionti press P1
- 23) <https://mediamagazine.in/content/democratic-participant-media-theory>
- 24) last accessed 14/05/2020