

Influence Of Mushrooming Media On Journalism Ethics In Uganda A Case Study Of Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC)

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Abstract : *This study examines the difficulties facing independent journalism as a new form of media in Uganda. Also, it attempted to identify the elements that contributed to participatory journalism's expansion and rising notoriety. For the purposes of this study, communication was restricted to blogging. Blogs have developed into a platform for the exchange of concepts, information, suggestions, and analysis of various social developments. The survey questionnaire served as the study's compass: What difficulties has news reporting brought the Ugandan media landscape? How does UBC respond to the difficulties presented by Ugandan citizen journalism? (iii) What factors influence citizen journalism practice in Uganda? Descriptive surveys and cross-sectional techniques were used to accomplish these goals. When asked if the dynamic nature of news media has increased the popularity and accessibility of online journalistic integrity, 47 respondents, or 62.7%, rated the declaration as very true. This was decided to follow by 20 participants, or 26.7%, who regarded it as true, seven responses were received, or 9.3%, who regarded it as slightly true, and one person in question, or 1.3%, who regarded it as not true. As the median was 3.51, it is obvious that the dynamic nature of mainstream press has indeed increased the accessibility and popularity of citizen journalism. Also, this study has shown that corporate and citizen reporters frequently collaborate. For the profession of professional journalism, this collaboration offers many advantages.*

Keywords: mushrooming media and journalism ethics

Background of the Study

The manner the media is developing abruptly and quickly is like a mushroom.

On the other hand, the term "photography ethics" merely refers to the guiding principles shared by reporters.

They give forth the goals and duties that researchers, editors, and other professionals in the industry should adhere to in order to carry out their work appropriately.

Globally, media outlets are proliferating in nations like the United States of America, Russia, Japan, Germany, and many others, but the public's attention was drawn to the problem of ethical regulatory oversight of journalistic activities more than a century ago, and it has since become a source of professional annoyance for journalists.

Many ethical standards and other regulations now govern media activity in the majority of nations. Texts and images intended for dissemination must both be accurately and thoroughly examined for legitimacy. The next significant modification is that "editing headline or autograph under a photo should not alter or mislead the meaning of the information." (Journalism standards, Federal Republic of Germany, 1973. Print code). Regionally, both state-owned and private media are rapidly expanding throughout Africa, but these media still need to be informed of the ethics of reporting. That is to say, in Kenya, the sacking of Kwendo Oponga, one of the country's most esteemed political columnists, in June 1998 over allegations that she had accepted bribes from the Kenya African National Union (KANU), the country's ruling party, sparked a lively public discussion on the subject of journalism standards in Anglophone Africa.

The public, fellow colleagues both at home and overseas, as well as government leaders and other significant political actors have all accused West African journalists (both official and private) of unprofessional wrongdoing during the present election system. An experienced journalist succinctly described this new tendency in reporting in Sierra Leone, saying: "Cheap propaganda has grown to be the pre-occupation of most of our reporters rather than reporting problems as they effect the average citizen. Most people are opinionated and, as a result, have rigid opinions that barely take alternative points of view into consideration (Sesay,1998:12678). Reporters in the mainstream media have, in particular African countries like Cameroon, blamed the skeptical commercial press of selecting for insults, slander, and controversies.

Problem Statement

Although both government and corporate media in Uganda are expanding quickly, some of the platforms' operations go against the anticipated ethical norms of their industry. The general public's opinions on certain media practices, meanwhile, vary. In accordance with the Uganda Television and Radio Ratings Report (UTRR), and Viewing public Share of tv channels in Uganda in the fourth quarter of 2019, the leading TV station in Uganda was NTV with a 17 percent share of viewers. This was likely to have an impact on the public's perception, trust, and legitimacy of the mainstream press (and its content). Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC), a state-run station that runs more than four TV and 10 local radio stations, is wobbling and only has 11% of the market.

Research study Objectives

1. To examine the Factors that influence citizen journalism practices as a form of new media at UBC Media.
2. To find out how UBC media respond to citizen journalism practices as one of new media.
3. To assess the challenges faced by UBC journalists in trying to implement the journalism ethics.
4. To analyze the possible mitigations to the challenges experienced by journalists in trying to implement the journalism ethics.

Research Questions

1. What are the factors that influence citizen journalism practices as a form of media at UBC?
2. What are the responses of UBC media to citizen journalism practices?
3. What are the challenges faced by UBC journalists in trying to implement the journalism ethics?
4. What are the possible mitigations to the challenges faced by UBC journalists in trying to implement the journalism ethics?

Methodology

Research Design

A case study research strategy was used for the study, and both qualitative and quantitative data were collected. One advantage of applying the case study method was their capacity to record what Hodkinson and Hodkinson refer to as "lived reality" (2001).

In order to obtain a thorough evaluation of the problem being investigated, qualitative research was used to record descriptions of the study's components in a form that was not numerical (Creswell et al. 2003). Qualitative research was also used to describe the current situation or to investigate relationships, including effect relationships. Also, it would aid in addressing queries about the state of the research topic at the moment.

Study Population

The study population constituted mainly the employees of Uganda Broadcasting Corporation (UBC). This included managerial and operational staff. These are presented in the table below.

Category	Number	Percentage
Managers/supervisory staff	20	11%
Operational/lower level staff	160	89%
Total	180	100%

Source: Management

This population was chosen because it was assumed to have resourceful, ethical, and adequate knowledge of the subject under investigation and the research variables under investigation.

Sample size

The sample would be determined using cluster and convenience sampling. Simple random sampling was employed to avoid (staff) was grouped into males and females and simple random sampling was applied when collecting data from the managers because they are few and directly involved in the planning for the media and hence are expected to be knowledgeable about the influence of mushrooming media on journalism ethics on the quality, efficiency, and ethical work output of the media.

Sample Design

According to Creswell et al. (2003), a research can either use probabilistic and non-probabilistic sampling design depending on the nature of the population of the study.

A purposive sampling was employed in selecting the managerial staff.

The research would also use cluster sampling to group the respondents in different clusters; that is to say managerial and operational staff.

Convenience sampling was used to identify the operational staff so as to save time.

Sample size and selection of Respondents.

Category	Population	Sample size	Percentage	Sampling technique
Managers/supervisory	20	15	12%	Purposive
Operational/lower level staff	160	108	88%	Simple random sampling
Total	180	123	100%	

Sampling techniques and sampling methods

I employed several methods to select the appropriate sample for the study. These include; purposive, cluster, and convenience sampling.

Simple random sampling was employed to avoid bias. In the selected departments, cluster sampling was grouped into males and females and simple random sampling was applied when collecting data from the managers because they are few and directly involved in the planning.

Research instruments

The research utilized a number of research instruments including questionnaires and structured interview guides.

Questionnaires

This research used self-administered questions for the respondents. These were distributed among the respondents. The purpose for using this instrument is that questionnaires are easy to quantify and analyze.

In addition, the questionnaire was used because the study focused on opinions, attitudes, feelings and perceptions of respondents.

Interview guides

An interview guide consisting of structured questions was designed and administered to the respondents. Information solicited by this instrument would help the researcher enhance responses from the self-administered questionnaires and this make it possible for meto cross examine some key issues in the research. The choice of this instrument wade bearing in mind the fact that it is a good method for producing data which deals with the topic in depth.

Interviewing was used as a good method for producing the views and identity what they regard as the crucial factors.

Data quality control

To ensure that the data collected is valid, relevant and retains integrity, I shall perform different studies to ensure correctness, precision, accuracy, and data proofing.

Data Analysis, Interpretation and Presentation

Qualitative data analysis was done using research instruments such as interview guides, questionnaires and research surveys.

A researcher would use a quick impressionist summery in analyzing qualitative data.

This technique of qualitative data-analysis has been attended to evenly, in order to identify the emerging themes alongside sorting, recording, reflection and would be analyzed using mean and standard deviation to analyze the relationship between the two variables and this would presented and interpreted by the use of tables, graphs, and pie charts.

RESULTS

Profile Characteristics of Respondents

The data was collected on five profile characteristics of respondents, which include, age, gender, education level, and experience and news department.

Data on all these variables was collected using closed ended questions and analyzed using frequency counts and percentage distributions, as indicated in table 2.

Table 2: Profile Characteristics of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percent
Age		
20-29 years	46	57.5
30-39	19	23.8
40-49 years	12	15.0
50 years and above	3	3.8
Total	80	100
Gender		
Male	47	58.8
Female	33	41.2
Total	80	100
Level of education		
Certificate	3	3.8
Diploma	19	23.8
Degree	47	58.8
Masters	11	13.8
Total	80	100
Experience		
Less than one year	8	10.0
1-3 years	43	53.8
4-7 years	17	21.2
8-11 years	9	11.2
12 years and above	3	3.8
Total	80	100
Department		
News reporting	48	60.0
News editing	32	40.0

Total	80	100
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According to Table 2, there were 80 overall respondents, and 46 of them, or 57.5%, had between the ages of 20 and 29. The remaining percent of the respondents, or 23.8%, were between the ages of 30-39, 12 respondents, or 15.0%, were between the ages of 40 and 49, and three respondents, or 3.8%, were over the age of 50.

It also shows that, of the 80 respondents representing, 47 respondents (or 58.8%) were men and 33 survey participants (or 41.2%) were women. Thus, the majority was male.

Table 2 further reveals that three (3) responders, or 3.8% of the total, have certificates, 19 respondents, or 23.8% of the total, have diplomas, 47 respondents, or 58.8% of the total, have degrees, and 11 respondents, or 13.8 percent, have master's degrees. Hence, degree holders made up the majority of the responders.

The table also reveals that eight participants, or 10% of the 80 total respondents, had less than a year's worth of experience working in reporting. 43 % of the respondents, or 53.8%, have or across from one to three years. 17 participants, or 21.2%, had experience ranging from 4 to 7 years. Nine (9) respondents, or 11.2%, have 8 to 11 years of experience.

Just three (3) participants, or 3.8%, indicated that they had 12 or more years of experience.

There were only different divisions in the study population, and the table shows the mixture of those agencies. Of the 48 participants, 60% were news reporters, and 32 responses were received, 40% seem to have been news publishers. Hence, the bulk were newscasters.

Challenges Journalists face in trying to adhere to journalism ethics because of mushrooming media

Table 3: Descriptive statistics on challenges of faced by journalists because of mushrooming media

Items		NT	ST	T	VT	Mean	Std
Blogs put much pressure on newspaper editors over what and when to report	Freq	6	11	21	37	3.19	.968
	%	8.0	14.7	28.0	49.3		
Many people have left newspapers and turned to blogs for news & information	Freq	9	5	31	30	3.09	.975
	%	12.0	6.7	41.3	40.0		
Blogs have reduced the credibility of news	Freq	7	13	26	29	3.03	.972
	%	9.3	17.3	34.7	38.7		
Blogs have changed the way how newspapers observe journalistic ethics	Freq	19	13	19	24	2.64	1.181
	%	25.3	17.3	25.3	32.0		
Newspaper revenue has reduced due to increased popularity of blogging	Freq	7	8	22	38	3.21	.977
	%	9.3	10.7	29.3	50.7		
Blogs have led to increased unemployment problem in print media industry	Freq	8	11	18	36	3.12	1.040
	%	10.7	14.7	24.0	48.0		

(Legend: NT=Not True, ST=Somewhat True, T=True and VT=Very true)

Findings in Table 3 indicate that those surveyed ranked the difficulties they believed journalists would present differently.

For instance, whether asked if blogs place significant pressure on newspaper editors on what and when to report, the overwhelming (49.3%) gave it a very true rating, trailed by 28.0% who gave it a true rating.

The median response to this question (3.19) indicated that it is generally true that blogs place significant pressure on members of

the press regarding what and when to report.

The majority of those surveyed, 41.3%, gave the statement "many people have deserted newspapers and resorted to blogs for news and information" the highest rating, with 40.0% giving it the lowest. The median score for this questionnaire item was 3.09, indicating that most individuals answered it correctly on average. The majority of the participants, 38.7%, followed by 34.7% of those who assessed it as true, gave the question of whether blogs have diminished the trustworthiness of news a mean score of 3.03 and rated it as extremely true. This meant that news in the traditional media has less trust on the whole as a result of blogs. As to whether blogs have altered how publications uphold journalistic ethics, participants provided varying answers.

According to the above data, with a mean score of 2.64, the majority of respondents assessed it as very true with 32.0%, trailed by those who rated it as not true with 25.3%. So, it is generally true that blogs have altered how newspapers uphold journalistic ethics.

According to the statement "Newspaper revenue has reduced due to increased popularity of blogging", 50.7% of respondents rated it as very true, being followed by 29.3% from those who rated it as true and therefore giving a mean score of 3.21 which clearly shows that the increasing popularity of blogging has led to reduced print media revenue.

On whether blogs have led to increased unemployment problem in print media industry, table 4.2 indicates that majority of respondents with 48.0% rated it as very true, followed by true (24.0%) which gave a mean score for this question.

UBC media response to challenges of Journalists

Table 4 Descriptive statistics on how UBC media respond to challenges posed by journalists.

Item 1	NT	ST	T	VT	Mean	Std.	
Bloggers are now publishing news, of which traditional media sometimes pick, thoroughly make research and later publish such news	5(6.2%)	14(17.5%)	24(30%)	37(46.2%)	3.16	.934	
Item 2				True	False		
Due to rising influence of blogs, media houses are now incorporating social media editors to manage their tweeter and face book pages				76(95%)	4(5%)		

(NT=Not True, ST=Somewhat True, T=True and VT=Very true)

Results in the above table indicate that respondents rated differently on the assumption that bloggers are now publishing news, of which traditional media sometimes pick, thoroughly make research and later publish such news.

Results in the table show that majority of respondents 37(46.2%) rated the assumption as very true, followed by 24(30%) respondents who said true, then 14(17.5%) who rated it as somewhat true and 5(6.2%) who said not true, with a mean score of 3.16 which suggests that some newspapers pick news from blogs, research about it and later publish such news.

In the Table above, out of 80 respondents, 76 rated it as true that due to rising influence of blogs, media houses are now incorporating social media editors to manage their tweeter and face book pages. This set of respondents make up 95% of the respondents.

Factors that influence citizen journalism practices as a form of new media at UBC

Table 5 Descriptive statistics on factors that influence citizen journalism practice at UBC.

Items		NT	ST	T	VT	Mean	Std
The interactive nature of news media has made online journalism popular and accessible.	Freq	1	7	20	47	3.51	.724
	%	1.3	9.3	26.7	62.7		
The birth of information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has brought the practice of citizen journalism.	Freq	8	11	39	16	2.85	.886
	%	10.7	14.7	52.0	21.3		
Main stream media has no presence in certain places or among certain types of people and so citizen journalism has come to fill this vacuum	Freq	6	11	32	25	3.03	.906
	%	8.0	14.7	42.7	33.3		
The change in business model of most media companies towards profit maximization, leaving out unprofitable types of information.	Freq	6	13	32	24	2.99	.908
	%	8.0	17.3	42.7	32.0		
The expansion, convergence and concentration of the media has resulted into international media companies which serve the international agenda, at the expense of local and regional issues.	Freq	4	18	15	37	3.15	.975
	%	5.3	24.0	20.0	49.3		
The main stream media is under control of either governments or big businesses and that is why it cannot hold big institutions accountable	Freq	1	6	22	44	3.49	.710
	%	1.3	8.0	29.3	58.7		

(NT=Not True, ST=Somewhat True, T=True and VT=Very true)

Results in the table above indicate that respondents rated differently on the assumed factors behind the rising influence of citizen journalism at UBC.

On whether the interactive nature of news media has made online journalism popular and accessible, 47 respondents representing 62.7% rated the statement as very true being followed by 20 respondents representing 26.7% who rated it as true, seven said somewhat true (9.3%) and one respondent said (1.3%) said not true. The mean was therefore 3.51 which clearly suggest that it is true that the interactive nature of news media has made citizen journalism popular and accessible.

On whether “The birth of information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) has brought the practice of citizen journalism, 39(52.0%) rated as true followed by 16 respondents (21.2%). The mean score of this question was 2.85 which suggest that the rise of ICTS has paved way for the growth of citizen journalism at UBC.

Results in the table also shows that Main stream media have no presence in certain places or among certain types of people and so citizen journalism has come to fill this vacuum.

Out of 80, 32 representing 42.7% rated it as true, being followed by 16 (33.3%) who said very true with a mean of 3.03 suggesting that it is true Main stream media have no presence in certain places or among certain types of people, giving way for the rise of citizen journalism.

Statement four in table above “the change in business model of most media companies towards profit maximization, leaving out

unprofitable types of information.” Out of 80 respondents, 32 representing 42.7% rated it as true, followed by 24 (32.0%) who rated it as very true, 13 (17.3) rated it as somewhat true and six (8.0%) said not true. Since the mean score 2.99, on average it is true that change in business model of most media companies towards profit maximization, leaving out unprofitable types of information, has influenced the rise of citizen journalism.

Conclusion

According to data on blogging problems, journal reporters in Uganda are essentially under threat from rising consumer churn, declining newspaper revenue, declining commitment to standards of journalism, unemployment, and timetable pressures on newspaper editors. Moreover, blogs have questioned the validity of news reported in print media.

In light of this, De Keyser and Maekers suggested that independent journalism has altered how publications uphold journalistic standards. This is seen in Ugandan print media (2011).

Despite the aforementioned ethical issues, the facts show that the benefits of citizen journalism have surpassed the drawbacks. Throughout history, the public has had a significant part in journalism, and this role does not seem to be diminishing anytime soon.

Recommendations

The media should embrace digitization and the internet as a matter of conscious policy to allow them to function effectively in today's media sector in order to face the difficulties posed by blogging in Uganda.

Also, this study has shown that professional and citizen journalists frequently collaborate. For the world of professional reporting, this partnership offers many advantages. The news reporting that is being conducted is institutionalized (rather than alternate in the organizational sense), but because these two aspects do have different theoretical grounds, there is a constant need for the bargaining of power and prominence between these two components.

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