The Socio-cultural Dynamics and 'Survival Struggle' in Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria

Taye Cosmas OBATERU

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Taye Cosmas OBATERU

School of Arts and Media, The University of Salford, United Kingdom.

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Abstract

This study responds to the call for more empirical work to understand the journalism profession in non-Western countries. It critiques the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria to determine how journalists are responding to the numerous professional challenges they face. Journalists in Nigeria appear caught between global phenomena in journalism, such as the impact of new technologies, and those of the environment in which they work, which, some evidence from current literature suggests, is impacting the profession negatively. The literature also shows that factors such as diversity of access to information made possible by technological development, declining audience for news, increasing market pressures impacting news decisions, the declining reputation of the profession, and loss of identity by the journalism profession, though not necessarily peculiar to Nigeria, constitute serious challenges to the news media. With an absence of media conglomerates and a well-defined media system along the lines of those recognised in the developed world, journalism practice in Nigeria presents a case ripe for research. Some evidence in the literature suggests that the standard of journalism practice in Nigeria is deficient in a number of respects. However, little is known about how journalists in Nigeria do their work and the challenges they face, as well as their responses to those challenges. This thesis addresses this particular gap in knowledge.

Using the Field Theory and the Social Theory of Journalism, as framework to interrogate the research problem, the research employs convergent parallel mixed methods allowing the use of quantitative and qualitative methods, side-by-side, to gather data in respect of attaining its objectives. Quantitative data were generated through a questionnaire-based survey, while qualitative data were gathered through a series of semi-structured interviews.

The research finds that, and illustrates how, the operating environment they face, impacts journalists in their work. Challenges, such as poor or irregular salary, ownership influence, market and social forces were found to influence the way in which journalists perform. However, a key finding is that that although journalists encounter similar challenges in the course of their duties, their response to them varies. Based on these findings, and drawing on explanatory insights from Field Theory and the Social Theory of Journalism, the thesis develops its own explanatory framework coined, *The Survival Struggle in Journalism Practice in Nigeria.* This leads to the presentation of a series of recommendations, prominent among which is argument that the institutional and regulatory framework of journalism needs

immediate strengthening in order to secure an appropriate standard of professional journalism practice in Nigeria.

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Chapter One

Introduction to the Thesis

1.1   Chapter Overview

The aim of this thesis is to develop an explanatory framework for understanding current professional journalism practice in Nigeria. Although developments in professional journalism practice in Nigeria have been a focus of academic interest, the response of journalists to professional challenges and how this impacts professional standards have been largely overlooked. Therefore, this research project seeks to evaluate critically and understand better how Nigerian journalists are responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties.

This chapter summarizes the essence of this research. It introduces the thesis, presents the motivation of the study, the research problem and the research questions that guide the work. It also summarizes the major aspects of the research which are discussed in subsequent chapters and provides a chapter by chapter overview of the entire study.

1.2   Background

This study focuses on the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria and how journalists are responding to the challenges they face as professionals. The literature on journalists and the news media in Nigeria portrays a negative image (Abidde, 2008; Idowu, 2014). It suggests that the standard of the journalism profession in Nigeria has dropped considerably, and this, the study interrogates. The literature suggests that journalists in Nigeria face various challenges including poor or irregular wages, job insecurity, overbearing influence of media proprietors, poor working environment and threat to personal safety. Journalists seem not to

be holding on to their professional calling any longer (Golwa, 2011; Daramola, 2013). They tend to have abandoned the ideals of the Fourth Estate theory of standing for truth and serving as the conscience of society (Golwa, 2011; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbine, 2003; Ochogwu, 2011; Pate, 2011). Journalists in Nigeria are also accused of taking financial or other inducements to write or suppress stories, bias, partisanship, promoting ethno-religious interests, and the fabrication of stories in their coverage, in particular, of political activities and social conflicts (Adeyemi, 2013; Daramola, 2006; Suraj, 2013; UNDP, 2010). For example, Idowu (2014), head of a non-government organization, *Media Rights Agenda*, which has been involved in the training of journalists and promotion of a free and responsible media in Nigeria for over 15 years, described the coverage of the abduction in 2014, of over 200 school girls in Chibok Borno State, Nigeria, by Boko Haram insurgents as a reflection of the state of the news media in the country. According to him,

> From the owners to the reporters, everyone is sworn to a journalism of convenience. This mindset explains why no medium invests enough resources to report stories beyond the relative comfort of urban centres, much less one in a conflict zone […] (Para.4).

Similarly, Abidde (2012) opines that journalists in Nigeria have become more of passive watchers of events. He stated:

> Unlike in the 1960s through the 1980s, news coverage is getting weaker and weaker. And many times, critical examination of people and events are missing. In addition, you don't see strong investigative journalism anymore. What passes for news, many a times, looks like government dictated public service announcement. And many editorials are nothing but apologies and infantile opposing viewpoints [....]" (para. 5).

This is a clear departure from the vibrancy found in the Nigerian media during the agitation for democracy between 1984 and 1999 when journalists refused to cave in to intimidation and maltreatment from the military government (Daramola, 2006; UNDP, 2010). They did not relent despite threats to their personal safety. In this regard, Adesoji (2006, p.38) noted:

> In fact, more than any other period, the press became more vociferous and even took to guerrilla journalism, a practice of publishing and circulating newspapers and magazines underground, in order to prosecute a cause that it believed in.

Ironically, the return of democracy in 1999, when more vibrancy was expected by the news media in Nigeria, marked an alleged slide into degeneracy, as journalists were accused of shying away from their responsibilities as watchdogs and the conscience of the society (Adeyemi, 2013; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbine, 2003). Several reasons were gleaned from the literature as the cause of the situation. A weak resource base, poor remuneration for media professionals, inadequate security cover in the course of duty, inadequate facilities, and poor and/or irregular pay resulting in high staff turnover, are identified as some of the factors undermining the performance of journalists in Nigeria (Golwa, 2011; Schiffrin & Behrmann, 2011 and Pate, 2011a).

Although similar challenges face journalists in other developing countries to varying degrees, the literature on the Nigerian situation suggests that news professionals seem to have also lost the will or drive to stand up to the challenges as they did during the struggle for the country's independence and the return to democracy from military rule (Adesoji, 2006; Daramola, 2006). At both periods in the country's history, journalists were undaunted by the challenges of their profession but stood firm in the face of threats, imprisonment, killings and proscriptions. They now appear to have given up on upholding their professional ethos and adopted the mantra, 'if you cannot beat them, join them' (Adesoji, 2006; Omoera, 2010).

While a lot exists in the literature on how journalists in Nigeria perform their work and the factors that shape news reportage, little or nothing has been done to understand what is behind the seeming tendency by journalists to yield to pressures confronting them as professionals (Abidde, 2012). This study therefore interrogates why, as the literature suggests, many journalists and news media in Nigeria now seem less motivated to uphold their professional code of conduct as was the case during the struggles for independence and democracy.

1.3   Statement of the problem

The literature (see Abidde, 2012; Adesoji, 2006; Daramola, 2006; Omoera, 2010) points to a situation where journalists are overwhelmed by key developments in technology and other factors that undermine their professional duties, such as lack of editorial independence, the drive for commercialization by news media organizations, insecurity and unfriendly welfare conditions. As a consequence, many journalists appear to have virtually abandoned any pretence to upholding the ideals of their profession They seem, according to the literature, to have joined the fray of corruption and other ineptitudes which they are supposed to fight as the 'watchdogs of the society' (Abidde, 2008, Daramola, 2006, Jibo & Okoosi-Simbine, 2003; Idowu, 2014). Similarly, as earlier pointed out, although academic work exists on how journalists have been doing their work and the factors that impede their professional duties, there is a gap in knowledge in the literature in understanding the response of journalists to these challenges. There is need to determine and explain what might be making many journalists lose passion for their professional responsibilities and instead rather opt to 'flow with the tide' or even seeking alternatives to the profession. (Abidde, 2012). For instance, Golwa (2011 p. 98) posited that journalists go to "any length to enjoy sponsorship from any willing purse." This gap in knowledge underpins the research project.

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1.4   Research questions

- What are the contemporary developments impacting professional journalism practice in Nigeria?

- How are journalists in Nigeria responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties and what are the implications of this?

1.5   Objectives of the study

1. To critique how contemporary developments in journalism are affecting professional practice in Nigeria.

2. To establish challenges faced by Nigerian journalists and to determine how they are responding to them in executing their professional duties.

3. To develop a conceptual framework for understanding the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria.

4. To provide a series of policy recommendations aimed at securing effective professional standards of journalism practice in Nigeria.

1.6   Theoretical framework

This study is anchored in two theories. First, Field Theory illustrates how the 'journalistic field' impacts journalism and journalists (Bourdieu, 1998). Second, the Social Theory of Journalism, a normative theory, analyses the work of journalists according to the nature and needs of society that are met by journalism, the obligations of journalism to society, and the norms and standards that should apply to journalism practice and how journalists as individuals view their role in society (McQuail, 2013, p.20). According to Bourdieu (1998, p. 73) "it is the *structure* of the journalistic field that determines the intensity and orientation of its mechanisms, as well as their effects on other fields." The Social Theory of Journalism,

according to McQuail (2013, p.9) explains "the extent to which journalism is constrained to reflect the reality of the culture of its society […]." The theories which guided the formulation of the research questions and objectives of this research are discussed in detail in a literature review (Chapter Two, p. 34).

1.7   Methodology

The research employs the mixed methods approach which combines qualitative and quantitative techniques. The assumption of mixed methodology is that using quantitative and qualitative in complementary fashion provides the basis for a more detailed understanding of a research problem than would accrue from the deployment of either of them alone.

1.8   Research worldview

In line with the mixed methods design for this study, the Pragmatic Worldview serves as the philosophical underpinning for the research. Creswell (2014:10) describes pragmatism as the "philosophical underpinning" for mixed methods studies. Pragmatism is concerned with what works in solving problems. It focuses on research problems and employs various approaches to gain understanding of them (Morgan, 2007; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). As Creswell (2014, p.11) points out, "for the mixed methods researcher, pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews and different assumptions as well as different forms of data collection and analysis." The pragmatic worldview is considered particularly suitable for this study because it sets an appropriate context to develop a framework for explaining the issues confronting journalism practice in Nigeria, and additionally allows the positing of practical recommendations aimed at securing appropriate and effective professional journalism standards in the country.

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1.9   Research strategy

The Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods is the strategy adopted for this study. It is one of the current primary models used by social scientists (Creswell, 2014). It is a mixed methods design which allows the researcher to combine quantitative and qualitative data for a comprehensive analysis of the research problem. The quantitative and qualitative data are collected independently and are later brought together in the analysis and interpretation phase of the research. Any contradiction or inconsistent finding generated in this process is explained or investigated further if necessary (Gray, 2014). The quantitative and qualitative data were collected simultaneously, presented and analysed separately before triangulation. These can be seen in Chapters Five, Six and Seven.

As earlier stated, there is need to examine critically the claim that journalism standards have fallen in Nigeria and to understand how journalists are responding to the challenges of professional practice in view of evidence from the literature that they have abandoned the ideals of the profession (Abidde, 2012; Adeyemi, 2013; Golwa, 2011; Neuman, 2009).

1.10   Motivation for the study

Moving from the 'field' to the 'classroom' afforded the researcher the benefit of both theoretical and practical experience in journalism. After over 25 years of working as a journalist, the researcher ventured into teaching, part time, in a university, which exposed him more to work which attempted to characterize and explain conceptually the journalism profession. Engagement with the literature over time, revealed, from the researcher's perspective, a misunderstanding of how the standard of professional journalism is negotiated and influenced by various factors, especially in developing countries like Nigeria. The researcher recognized this significant gap in knowledge as a motivation to interrogate and understand journalism issues from the 'position' of journalists themselves. Why for instance,

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do journalists react to professional challenges in the ways cited in the literature? (Hachten, 2012; Benson, 2013) and how does the journalism field (Bourdieu, 2005) and wider society (McQuail, 2013) influence such responses?

The 'exposure' to theory and practice provoked this researcher to consider applying the journalistic principle of 'hearing' from the other side, to journalism studies through a research that critiques issues from the 'position' of professional journalists. As noted, studies often pay attention to the challenges faced by journalists and the effects of these, but there is a gap in knowledge on how the perspectives and responses of journalists to them influence journalistic duties and output. This study was further motivated by the perception that "academic researchers have too often been guilty of approaching journalism from above and failing to see either its complexities or the pressures ordinary journalists have to deal with daily" (Phillips, 2015, p.1). It is intended that this study will elicit further research into how the response of journalists to influences within their professional 'field' constructs the nature of journalism in societies other than Nigeria.

1.11   Contribution to knowledge

This research has the goal of analysing the data gathered on the contemporary role and position of journalists in Nigeria to provide an explanatory framework on journalism practice in Nigeria. Following critical analysis of the literature at the beginning of the research, and based on constructs which suggested that journalists in Nigeria were not upholding journalism ethics but, rather, openly engage in unethical conduct, the researcher came up with an initial explanatory framework which was coined "the Surrender Syndrome in Nigerian Journalism" . This 'prototypical' explanatory framework assisted in designing the research's fieldwork. From what emerged from the two data sets subsequently gathered, the researcher saw the need to modify the explanatory framework into "The Survival Struggle in Journalism

Practice in Nigeria". The framework explains how journalists in Nigeria are balancing the need to survive and to operate ethically in respect of the postulations of Field Theory and Social Theory of Journalism which underpin the study, and how this situation impacts professional standards. The framework, which is presented as the major conceptual contribution to knowledge of this research, is expected to provoke debate from other researchers interested in the subject area. The issues raised by the evidence of research and its explanatory model need to be further explored and developed in future work.

This is important because a lot is known about how journalism is practised in the developed parts of the world. A lot of studies also exist on journalism in Africa generally. Journalism is also facing a number of widely recognised problems globally (Donsbach, 2012; McQuail, 2013). However, there is a dearth of work on the peculiar social, cultural and economic dynamics that influence journalism practice in individual African countries like Nigeria, a deficiency addressed through this research project.

In summary, the three complementary areas of contribution to knowledge of this research are:

- New empirical evidence on the state of journalism practice in Nigeria from the perspective of the journalist.

- The explanatory model of Nigerian journalism practice provided.

- The practical recommendations of the research for practice of more effective journalism in Nigeria.

1.12   Thesis Overview

This thesis has nine chapters devoted to different aspects of the research. In addition to the current Introduction chapter, it is structured as follows:

Chapter Two: **Interrogating the Theory and Practice of Professional Journalism in the 21ˢᵗ Century**

This chapter explores and critiques issues of journalism organization and practice. It provides a theoretical compass for this study evaluating the positions of various theories. It elaborates in particular on Field Theory and the Social Theory of Journalism, which are the two theories providing a conceptual platform for the study. It compares the two theories to other theories and argues that they are best suited for this research because they capture and illuminate issues germane to the research questions and objectives. In its work, the chapter examines thematically different aspects of journalism such as the concept of 'good' journalism, journalism and the changing media landscape, as well as developments in journalism practice in Africa.

Chapter Three: **Understanding Journalism Development in Nigeria**

This chapter presents a broad picture of Nigeria and how journalism evolved from pre-colonial period to the present. It gives a brief history of Nigeria, her geographical, political and economic development as background before focussing on how the print and broadcast media developed at various points of the country's history. Also, the chapter presents how journalism relates to political, social issues and conflicts, as well as, the existing regulatory framework for journalism in Nigeria.

Chapter Four: **Researching journalists' Response to Professional Challenges: A Methodology**

The chapter presents the design for this research. It explicates and justifies the methodology adopted and how mixed methods research sits within the project. It highlights the research process, its sampling methods and data gathering instruments. It discusses how pragmatism, the worldview guiding the study, differs from other research paradigms. It contends that

pragmatism benefits the study by supporting the combination of different research approaches. It also advances the advantages of combining quantitative and qualitative methods for the research, explaining how triangulating the data sets in this project minimized the disadvantages inherent in using either of them alone.

Chapter Five: **Quantitative Data Presentation and Analysis**

This chapter provides the quantitative data findings generated from the survey aspect of the research. They are presented in tables containing responses of participants to each of the questions on the survey instrument. These are analysed in relation to the other survey variables, and the implications of this is explored. The findings presented in this chapter constitute a major segment of the empirical grounding for this research project.

Chapter Six: **Qualitative Data Presentation and Analysis**

In this chapter, the data derived from qualitative inquiry are presented. The responses of participants to the semi-structured interview questions deployed to elicit data are thematically presented and analysed. The chapter illustrates the frequently used words and phrases from all the responses received with a word tree derived from NVIVO software. Word Clouds for each of the themes which emerged from data are also presented. Quotations from the interviewees are also used to illustrate the thematic arguments arising from data.

Chapter Seven: **Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data**

This chapter compares and contrasts the two data sets to answer the research questions of the study. It presents the findings derived from the data sets showing how they relate to one another in providing answers to the research questions. It argues that responses to the different variables interrogated by quantitative and qualitative methods correlate largely and are complementary in specified respects.

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Chapter Eight: **Implications of Findings: A Framework for Understanding Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria.**

The implications of the findings of this study as evidenced from the data gathered are examined in this chapter. It reviews the findings in relation to previous studies on professional journalism practice in Nigeria and broadens the analysis with reference to different national settings pointing out how it takes the evidence of previous work forward. The chapter presents an explanatory model, 'The Survival Struggle in Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria', which illustrates how the contestation between professional challenges and ethics explains the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria. The framework could be further developed by other researchers in Nigeria to broaden an understanding of professional journalism practice in Nigeria. Scholars from other countries, especially those with similar characteristics to Nigeria could also test the relevance of the explanatory framework for adaptation to their environment through further research.

Chapter Nine: **Conclusions: Securing Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria.**

The chapter reflects on the research process and, in the process, presents the three areas of complementary contribution to knowledge made in the project. These are: provision of new empirical evidence on the state of journalism practice in Nigeria from the perspective of the journalist, provision of an explanatory model of Nigerian journalism, and the provision of practical recommendations for addressing those findings of the research which relate to a need to put in place measures to secure effective professionalism practice in Nigeria.

1.13   Conclusion

This introductory chapter has presented an overview of the research, the background, the research problem and the objectives of the study. It highlighted the theoretical framework, the methodology, the contribution of the research to the body of knowledge and a general

summary of the research process. The next chapter provides the theoretical foundation for this research.

Interrogating the Theory and Practice of Professional Journalism in the 21st Century

2.1   Chapter Overview

This chapter reviews current issues and themes in the literature related to this study. It examines academic analyses of journalism practice globally to situate the study. It also explores various theories related to the research which led to the choice of the two theories - Field Theory and the Social Theory of Journalism – to underpin this research project.

2.2   Importance of the Literature

Review of the literature is critical to any research work to familiarize the researcher with current developments and the previous work done in the field of study (Boote & Beilie, 2005; May, 2011). This enables the researcher to understand existing relevant knowledge in the field to guide his or her research. Gray (2014, p. 98) listed the importance of literature review to include:

- providing an up-to-date understanding of the subject;
- identifying significant issues and themes (including gaps) in current knowledge that necessitate further research;
- assisting future researchers to understand the purpose of the research should they want to take it further.

It is with the above in mind that themes and developments in journalism related to this research are critiqued in the sections below.

2.3   Journalism as a Social Institution

Journalism and society are inseparable because journalism serves society (Christians, et al. 2009). Journalism is involved in public events and prominent actors in society use journalism to serve their ends (McQuail, 2013). The news media serve as instruments of promoting socio-cultural values through what they disseminate (Owens-Ibie, 2016). These explain the general attraction to and expectation of journalism to service society; a kind of self-chosen social purpose (McQuail, 2013). Hanitzsch, et al. (2012, p. 492) in a study of journalistic cultures in eighteen countries report that journalists have role perceptions and that there is a strong consensus among journalists on the universal principles guiding journalism. They submit:

> […] there is evidence pointing to the global primacy of journalistic role perceptions that are characterised by detachment and non-involvement […] Reliability and factual information, as well as impartiality appear to be equally important to journalists around the globe.

The news media are also described as powerful and sharing symbolic power with religious, educational and cultural institutions in society (Christians, et al. 2009). Esan (2016, p.8) postulates:

> Media are powerful more so since they abound and circulate particular knowledges and viewpoints. Whether in cities or remote villages, even when we do not actively seek them out, we are accosted by varied forms of messages. Media are ubiquitous and now can be more readily accessed via a variety of platforms. Current democratization of media means people other than professional media operatives are actively involved in content creation and dissemination.

The values of society colour the product of journalism because the personal values of journalists are difficult to completely exclude from the way they do their work (Hanitzsch,

2012). Hachten (2012) reports that the methods and standards of American journalism have influenced how people receive news and their views of the globe. Hanitzsch (2012, p. 474) also submits that journalistic cultures are based on culturally negotiated values and conventions "mostly behind the backs of the individual journalist." He identifies five major levels of influence undermining professional autonomy: the individual, media routines, organisational, media structures and systemic levels. According to him, a journalist's personal and professional background, orientation, role and occupational characteristics combine to influence how he/she approaches journalistic duties. In addition, the daily work routines and how a journalist responds in terms of commitment and detachment, also impacts news gathering and content presentation.

Esan (2016) accepts that the news media are vital to the existence of nations, communities and individuals, hence the need to integrate the news media into the development agenda of any society. Kayode (2011) also views journalism as a social institution which owes society some moral contribution. He asserts that the news media are "social agents of dissemination of information by which people shape and mold their realities of life" (p. 141).

The acclaimed 'power' of the news media is, however, being undermined by credibility issues arising from the manner in which journalists are doing their jobs (Hachten, 2012). A 'crisis of credibility' has hit the news media making many people to become sceptical of what are disseminated as news (Kortz, 1998). Hachten (2012, p. xii) observes that today's journalists appear less concerned about the erosion of the fundamental values of journalism:

> [...] there is a growing concern among news people and many in the public that media organisations today are more concerned about making money than they are in providing the news of the day as completely and as accurately as possible.

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Kruger (2016, p. 22) concurs, noting that, "too often, the high-sounding claims of journalism as a public service have been undermined by actual behaviour." Kayode (2011) calls for a house cleaning among journalists to close the credibility gap caused by perceptions of corruption and ineptitude among journalists. Nwabueze (2010, p. 498) acknowledges that unethical practices such as the 'brown envelope syndrome' which he describes as "the practice of accepting gratifications for performing journalistic tasks", is widespread among journalists in Nigeria. He reports that Nigerian journalists face ethical dilemmas while striving to perform their journalistic duties.

Other scholars opine that journalists should, despite the challenges they face, strive to uphold the core values of journalism as a way of addressing their declining credibility with the audience (Hachten, 2012; Kayode, 2011; Kurtz, 1998). Hachten (2012, p. xv) insists that good journalism matters and that while objectivity and fairness might be difficult, if not impossible goals to achieve, "it is essential that journalists try." Similarly, Kayode (2011) posits that imbibing good ethics assists journalists to uphold excellent practices hinged on fairness, equity, justice and integrity. Kennedy (2016, p. 138) notes the difficulty journalism ethics scholars are having in developing appropriate methods "to deal effectively with the messy and diverse realities of globalised media practices" arising from tensions thrown up by widening access to digital technologies.

2.4   The Concept of 'Good' Journalism

The debate on what is 'good' news coverage is likely to remain for a long time since most assessments are based on subjective parameters set by those making the assessments (McQuail, 2013). Moreover, given the lack of agreement on what shapes news in the literature, every critique of news coverage of any incident or issue is likely to be dictated by the philosophical lens being used by the researcher (Archetti, 2010; Campbell, Martin &

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Fabos, 2006). For example scholars who believe that news is a product of social interaction are likely to assess news coverage from a particular standpoint while those who view news from the news flow (indexing) perspective will use different units of analysis. However, journalism as a profession has norms and ethics which guide practitioners in the way they perform their duties (Christians, et al, 2009).

Despite arguments that journalism practice differs in time and space (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) some scholars believe that universally shared norms which journalists subscribe to still exist (McQuail, 2013; Voltmer, 2013). According to McQuail (2013) news generally conforms to a style that is easily recognised by not only being timely and current, but also by its relevance to what would interest the audience and by trying to uphold the journalism ideal of being a source of reliable and accurate information to the people. According to him,

> A widely expected feature of news that goes with this is the stance of
> neutrality and objectivity, an attempt to avoid open value judgements and
> personal opinion in reporting. An extension of this is the general assumption
> that objective reporting will be independent of the interests of sources or other
> vested interests (McQuail, 2013, P. 15).

Voltmer (2013) supports this position noting that there are some shared norms of 'good' journalism and that contrary to the position that particular media systems exist in specific places, multiple models of journalism actually exist within particular cultures and countries. Her position is corroborated by Hadland (2012) who asserts that multiple media systems exist in South Africa. (See page 60, section 3.5 on the media system in Nigeria).

Kovach and Rosenstiel (2001, pp. 12-13) presented a nine-point guide which journalism is expected to uphold in fulfilling the duty of providing people with the information they need to be free and abreast of current issues of interest to them. These principles include, obligation to the truth, a first loyalty to citizens, an essential discipline for verification,

monitoring power and giving voice to the voiceless, keeping the news comprehensive and proportional, freedom to exercise personal conscience, among others. The assessment of the level of observance of these principles among journalists in various places, however, differ. For example, Voltmer (2013, p.199) contends, these norms "are constantly under challenge both from within the profession and from external sources." Archetti (2010) and Moeller (2005) also support the notion that news values are not universal, differ from place to place and are to a large extent influenced by socio-cultural and other dynamics peculiar to the environment. The two authors agree that different factors influence how journalists slant their stories or what they consider as important criteria for evaluating news. To Christians, et al. (2009) the seeming widespread dissatisfaction with journalism in different places should be expected considering the conflicting requirements and value positions they encounter. They contend that in actual fact, it is a society that grooms the kind of journalism it gets. According to the authors (Christians, et al, 2009 p. 156):

> In a democratic society with a free press, the news media in performing their monitorial role are vulnerable to numerous failures. In this respect, to a large extent, the quality of journalism is determined by society's general quality, especially regarding citizenship, the vitality of civil society, and the health of the democratic process […]

McQuail (2013) argues that the role of journalism in a given society varies and can be contradictory based on the ideological tendencies within the society. How a journalist sees her/his primary task and what s/he regards as good journalism tells on how s/he does her/his work. This might explain why despite 'dumbing down' and 'opinion-driven journalism' (Thomas & Hindman, 2015) which are used to describe the drop in core journalism values of objectivity and detachment for commercial interests, some news media still take deliberate steps to be seen as upholding the principles of objectivity and balance in their reportage. For

instance, the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the UK's main public service broadcaster, developed an editorial guide on terrorism coverage in which it requires reporters to avoid language that carries value judgements, ensures consistency and accuracy, as well as impartiality. Reporters are to avoid tags like "terrorist" which can be a barrier to understanding or which can put a question mark on the neutrality or objectivity of the organization (BBC, n.d.). It remains to be seen if such efforts would stem the spate of criticism of the news media.

There is wide acceptance in the literature on the notion that news shapes society (Hallin, 2005; Klotz, 2005). What is lacking is a consensus on what shapes news, even though the view that news is largely shaped by media professionals is prevalent (Archetti, 2010). The factors influencing the decision of journalists on what constitutes news and how it is presented remains contentious because the constraints affecting what gets published and which sources are cited often "come from far beyond the newsroom" (Archetti, 2010: p.3). McQuail (2013, p. 32) agrees, noting that in the absence of a blueprint on the idea of 'public interest' which the news media are expected to protect, "journalists have to make their choices according to circumstances and personal vision."

Many of the existing paradigms on what constitutes news have also been disputed. For example, globalization pundits propound a tendency towards homogeneity of news but have been countered by the localization paradigm which argues that news is influenced by linguistic, cultural and ethnic diversities (Berkowitz, 1997; Clausen, 2003). Also, some political communication scholars contend that political actors play a major role in shaping news just as international communication views news as a product of unbalanced flow between economically weak and strong countries (Shoemaker & Cohen, 2006). On their part, news sociology researchers posit that news is shaped by interactions among journalists and different players in society (Archetti, 2010; Berkowitz, 1997; Clausen, 2003; Cohen, 1963;

Hallin, 2005 and Klotz, 2005). There are others who contend that the media are too involved in the affairs of society not to be influenced by it (Christians, et al, 2009).

Giving another perspective, Hampton, (2012) notes that the commercial orientation of the news media and their relationship to the state have put a question mark on their independence and ability to uphold these ideals. He argues that commercialization has resulted in a situation where news is defined according to what would increase circulation levels and attract adverts. His argument is supported by Kaplan (2012, p. 30)) who posits that media's dependence on "broader constellations of political power and culture" was affecting its objectivity.

Calls for a review of old paradigms for news evaluation have hinged on the reality that news values are not universal as had been argued but differ from place to place and are to a large extent influenced by socio-cultural and other dynamics peculiar to the environment (Archetti, 2010; Moeller, 2005). They add that different factors influence how journalists slant their stories or what they consider as important criteria for evaluating news. This suggests that the cultural backgrounds of journalists play a role in the way they define and present news. Archetti (2010) takes the argument further by advancing the position of a national journalistic culture in different countries. According to her, these are,

> […] the set of moral ideals as well as the reporting and editing practices that characterize journalists in a country and lead to different perspectives of their own role within the country's society, affect the way they gather news, handle sources and write their stories.   (p.17).

She added, however, that the national journalistic culture is shaped by society as it evolves from the ethical norms created over time through the practices of news media professionals. Christians, et al. (2009) believe that the so-called freedom of the news media is actually circumscribed by constraints and inducements stemming from financial, social or political pressures which determine their output. Elliot (2004) distinguishes between a nationalistic

and patriotic press contending that while the nationalistic press merely reports government's messages, a patriotic one asserts its independence but keeps the primary interests of the citizens in mind. He explains that one re-echoes what government says but the other works in the interest of the nation but argues that journalism must go beyond being a megaphone for the powerful. To resolve the contestations on the role of the news media and how they do their work, Blumler and Cushion (2013) advocate collaboration between journalism scholars and academics to address the normative challenges faced by scholars and practitioners.

2.5 Journalism and the Challenges of the Changing Media Landscape

The face of journalism is changing globally and would continue to change because of a combination of factors (Christians, et al, 2009). One of them is the attainment of liberal democracy which became a global project at the close of the 20th Century and has influenced journalism practice in many countries (Oso, 2012).

> The mass media in many countries have been liberalised, privatized and commercialized with the hope of deepening their democratic role as the main institution of the public sphere. It is now generally assumed that the mass media are essential in the process of building a democratic polity (Oso, 2012, p. 271).

It is also widely agreed among researchers that journalism is undergoing a fundamental transformation with the constant emergence of new technology (Blumber & Cushion, 2013). Principal among this is the issue of commercialization which many scholars believe is having a negative influence on journalism ethics. Voltmer (2013, pp. 129-130) noted, for instance, that "media organizations incorporate a variety of often contradictory norms, operational modes and regulatory policies that exist in parallel and are sometimes almost impossible to reconcile [... .]"

Researchers agree that the arrival of the Internet and other technologies in the late 20th century has had one of the greatest impacts on the relationship between the media and society (Fenton, 2012; McQuail, 2013). It has democratized the public sphere and affords people opportunities to be producers and users of information without the intermediary role of journalism (Fenton, 2012). McQuail (2013, p.18) describes the situation as the "desacrililisation" of established organs and functions of the news media as they now have to compete for audience attention. He stresses that the power to control the gates of communication which hitherto belonged to the news media is gone. There is now a plurality of news providers which removes monopoly and allows anyone with access to a computer and the right software to produce and disseminate information (Fenton, 2012). As Fenton (2012, pp. 559-560) notes, journalism "is diversifying in an unprecedented manner. This diversity reaches out to the range of publics in terms of economic structures, gender, class, ethnicity, age, geography […]" McQuail (2013) also argues that new technologies have increased the potential to promote diversity and equality while removing the chances of government control, the danger of monopoly and the influence of market forces which dominated the 'old order'.

Wihbeh (2014, p. 2) also acknowledges the impact of the internet on the "mediascape" noting, "our digitally networked world fuels the dream of the democratization of thoughts and flows of information." He argues that the social media, for instance, have the capacity to whittle down the assumed influence of the news media.

> More than any prior technology, social media have the possibility of driving this democratisation of information even further, undercutting the agenda-setting of large media outlets and their relative control of news and information flows (Wihbey, 2014, p. 3).

Although technology and especially the internet has various advantages it has also resulted in the dilution of professionalism and engendered the performance of journalistic duties by non-professionals (Dare, 2011; Hafez, 2011; Quinn, 2002). This negates the responsibility role of journalism to society as the reliability and credibility which journalism extolled is threatened, leading to a lack of trust from the public (Quinn, 2002). Hafez (2011) also notes that audience loyalty to any journalistic source has become fleeting as a result of falling readership and the availability of many other sources of information. These views are supported by McQuail (2013) who asserts that advanced communication and digitization have resulted in an exponential increase in the production and transmission of information through different channels in a manner that transcends human process capacity alone. Voltmer (2013, p. 65) also asserts the dynamism of new technologies but noted that the internet had proved to be a "double-edged sword" that on one hand serves as "a technology of liberation" and on the other, as an instrument of control and surveillance. Quinn (2012) argues that despite the challenges, journalists are also benefitting from the internet and new technologies which have enhanced their work. According to the author, a reporter is now able to access data and other pieces of information without getting out of the newsroom.

However, there are those who feel that the impact of the internet has been exaggerated. For example, Archetti (2013) views most postulations on media and communication technologies as it relates to terrorism propagation and the 'contagion hypothesis' - which suggests that media content on the internet helps to spread terrorism or its message - as exaggerated. She posits that people can watch terrorist propaganda videos or consult extremist materials without becoming radicalized. According to her, "a substantial part of literature on terrorism and the media does not know much about the media and their effects. The way media are approached by most of research on terrorism is struck in the early 20th century." (p.3).

Donsbach (2012) identifies the effect of the changing media landscape on the news media to include declining audience for news, increasing market pressures impacting news decisions, declining reputation of the profession and the loss of identity by the journalistic occupation. Donsbach (2012) and Cottle (2012) both acknowledge the role of new technology in redefining the global news ecology. According to Donsbach (2012, p.43) "new technologies have offered a vast array of communication tools for everybody […]. Communicating with the public no longer requires the involvement of the traditional mass media". On his part, Cottle (2012, p.45) argues that the communicative space offered by new technology allows "overlapping and interpenetrating communication flows" and user-generated content which have changed the world news landscape. However, Hampton, (2012) notes that the commercial orientation of the news media and their relationship to the state have put a question mark on their independence and ability to uphold these ideals. For example, Oso (1991) submits that commercialization had resulted in a situation where news is defined according to what would increase circulation levels and attract adverts. His position is supported by Kaplan (2012, p. 30) who notes that media's dependence on "broader constellations of political power and culture" was affecting their objectivity.

The literature also supports the argument that the independence which the news media requires to achieve the normative ideals of journalism (Christians, et al., 2009; McQuail, 2013) has been compromised. For example, Hampton (2012) stated that the commercial orientation of the mass media and press relationship to state calls into question the historically envisioned relationship between the news media and the people. In an assessment of "the Fourth Estate" ideal which Edmund Burke propounded several years ago, Hampton wonders whether the news media still enjoys the independent perspective required of them as the fourth estate to serve as a platform for the emergence of the truth and the common good. According to him, the incorporation of media within diversified corporations that have

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interest outside the media and media's "tendency to identify too closely with the perspective of the state" (p.5) have eroded the independence of the news media.

Some argue that professionalism suffers where commercialization takes precedence over the principles of objectivity, fairness, balance and the principle of public good (promoting the wellbeing of the society) which the news media once stood for (Alan, 2012; Benson, 2004; Schudson, 2003). Supporting the position on the effect of commercialization on news output, Donsbach (2012, p.41) notes that the "commercial tradition" was gaining more ground in many countries as according to him, "journalists' decisions on media content are more and more driven by the necessity to reach the widest audience." The effect of commercialization also plays out in Nigeria where faced with dwindling income occasioned by drop in sales and advertisements, the news media engage in a kind of struggle to keep afloat, which requires them to pander to the agendas of advertisers or sponsors (Golwa, 2011).

2.6   Journalism in Africa

Journalists are recorded to have made immense contribution to the emergence and stability of democracy in African countries (Ogola, 2015). They also continue to support the development agenda of many countries on the continent through what is known as 'development journalism'. Obijiofor and Hanusch (2011, p. 25) define development journalism as using journalism "to serve as agents of social change and development in the societies in which they operate". Hanusch and Uppal (2015, p. 573) define it as "supporting national development and advocating for social change", in addition to their primary duties.

Ogola (2015) observes that African journalism has witnessed a lot of transformation since the 1990s because the liberalization of African economies and the political pluralism adopted in many countries paved the way for the expansion and blossoming of the broadcast and print

media. He cites Kenya where 301 radio stations and 83 television stations had sprung up by 2012 as against just three television stations and a few print media in the 1990s.

Myer (2014) also reports that by the end of the 1990s about 20 countries in Africa had legalised competitive broadcasting thereby paving way for an explosion of radio and television stations. She notes that the freedom granted through the legislations received further boost from mobile phones and the internet which also gained ground in penetration in different parts of Africa. She acknowledges the role of foreign donors who assisted the establishment of a vibrant and free news media in Africa not only by using "the stick to withhold aid but also the carrot of financial support to encourage liberal policies that would favour a free media" (Myers, 2014, p. 11).

Ogola (2015, p. 94) notes, however, that not much has changed despite the liberalization and proliferation of the news media:

> […] African journalism continues to face a number of significant challenges. While the new political order may have undermined the power of state, particularly its direct control over the media, many governments across the continent have over the years, devised new ways of frustrating their fledgling media (Ogola, 2015 p. 94).

Hadland (2012. P. 107) also observes that in developing democracies, there is a general tendency to expect journalists to uphold what people in government call the national interest. This puts pressure on journalists to "[…] embrace the government's developmental agenda and soften criticism of an authentically elected state with a democratic mandate to govern."

A major challenge facing journalism in Africa is the continued negative Western media perception and portrayal of Africa which has not changed from what obtained in the 20th century (Ugwonma, 2012). The current dependence of the news media in Africa on the

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Western media for international news, including those on Africa, has not helped matters (Okoro & Obeni, 2007). According to Ugwonma (2012, p. 556):

> The image of Africa has been deeply affected by the negative portrayal by the Western media. They insist that they cannot ignore issues such as corruption, conflict and dictatorship globally. Therefore, it is time for Africans to take responsibility for the way the continent is portrayed. In rebranding Africa, the media are the singular major organ that will guarantee Africa's rebirth. Based on this, African journalists must rise to the challenge to report Africa, especially from African perspective. The tendency of Africa becoming willing tools for amplifying Western media agenda must be jettisoned.

Jacobs (2015, p. 75) also challenges journalists in Africa to concentrate on issues affecting the continent and her people:

> Without being prescriptive, if a continental consciousness has to develop, it should be akin to a non-existentialist pan-Africanism that is suited to this time, that challenges and broadens received wisdom about the African continent and its people in Western media and counters ahistorical and decontextualized images of the continent and its people.

Shaw (2016) throws a similar challenge, urging journalists to develop and focus more on important issues affecting the people such as economic equality, development and freedom. This echoes the call on journalists in Africa to take responsibility for correcting the negative portrayal of Africa in the Western media (Ogunyemi, 2014). As Ogunyemi (2014) argues, the selection of news on Africa by the Western news media is based on what is considered important to their audiences and which are rooted in Western values. He posits that African diasporic press could correct the negative framing of Africa in the Western media by redefining and presenting the African narrative. Jacobs (2015, p. 75) agrees:

> […] the imperative of journalists in Africa should not be to produce patronizing 'positive' news stories or to indulge in PR-style neoliberal

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boosterism, but to do the sustained daily work of presenting and engaging critically with the cultural and political life of Africa and Africans, wherever they are, and, crucially with Africa's diaspora, now only a click away.

The literature also supports the positive impact of the internet and new media on journalism practice in Africa. While many scholars agree that the Internet has significantly altered the way journalism is practised in Africa, as in other parts of the world, they are divided on its impact (Dare, 2011; Obijiofor, 2011; Ogola, 2015). Whereas Ogola (2015, pp. 100-101) argues that "the adoption as well as the appropriation of new media and other ICTs is opening new frontiers for the practice of journalism in Africa and is redefining the relationship between journalists, the state and audiences", Obijiofor (2011) has a different perspective. According to him, the opportunities afforded by the Internet has promoted complacency among journalists in Nigeria as demonstrated by increasing reliance on anonymous sources in their reportage. He also cites widespread plagiarism among journalists.

Shaw (2009, p. 506) advances the importance of developing an original theory on journalism in Africa that is based on African experiences. He calls for "rethinking normative journalism theory and practice to reflect local conditions from one society to another." He faults the dominant thinking among media scholars especially in the West, which assumes that the Western liberal mode of journalism fits every part of the world. He admits that precepts such as objectivity and impartiality can be found in the African journalism model which, he argues, predates colonialism in Africa. He says such precepts merge with journalism of association, affiliation and belonging that also existed in Africa from pre-colonial and post-colonial periods. It is encouraging that some African journalists are already heeding the various calls by establishing news media, blogs and so on, to report Africa from an African perspective (Ugwonno, 2012).

2.7   An Exploration of Related Theories and Choice of Theoretical Framework

This section explores various theories related to this study in a bid to determine the most appropriate for achieving the aim of this research project which is, to interrogate the challenges faced by journalists, their response and how these impact professional journalism practice in Nigeria. Theoretical framework refers to the theory used for a particular study (Davies & Mosdel, 2006). A theory, is "a reasoned explanation of why particular actions lead to certain outcomes (Christians, Glasser, McQuail, Nordenstreng & White, 2009, p. ix). It provides a lens through which to examine a research problem. It helps to identify the key variables influencing a phenomenon of interest and connects the research to existing literature and knowledge (Bryman, 2007). A theoretical framework among other things, builds new knowledge, validates or challenges existing theoretical assumptions, helps to identify important new developments in a study area and prescribes a frame of reference for defining the boundaries of a research (Davies & Mosdel, 2006).

Most of the theories discussed in this section fall into the category of normative theory. Normative theories explain the relationship between journalism and the society. It argues that the type of journalism in a given society is a direct reflection of that society – the press (news media) assuming or reflecting the character of the environment in which it functions (Siebert, Peterson and Schramm, 1956). Christians, et al. (2009) argue that despite arguments that normative theories had become obsolete, they remain relevant to serve as cognitive maps for media professionals. According to them, "media roles as held by media institutions or individual communicators are typically composites of different and sometimes contradictory traditions" (p. 17). Normative theory is important to this study because it postulates the expected duties of journalism to the society (Hachten, 2012; McQuail, 2013) which can be used to evaluate the performance of journalism in a given society, in this case, Nigeria.

Marocco (2005) stresses the importance of understanding the link between journalistic activity and the society within which it takes place. Key societal functions of journalism include the promotion of consensus and understanding among people in a social group, sustaining the necessary conditions that make society function and serving as a tool of social control. Blumler and Cushion (2014, p. 262) also note the normative relevance of journalism describing it as "the key communication conduit through which politicians, interest groups and other influencers of public opinion enhance their prospects of influence."

The theories discussed below contributed to the researcher's understanding of various theoretical arguments and helped to settle on the two theories which underpin the study.

2.7.1   *News Sociology*

The News Sociology model dwells on news and the factors that shape it. It sees news as a social product among journalists, the news organisations they work for and the society (Archetti, 2010; McQuail, 2013; Voltmer, 2013). On his part, Berkowitz (1997) views news as a mirror of society which reflects on an existing reality out there, and the real 'reality' is that certain factors shape the way news is constructed and presented. He posits that if news is a product of interaction among different arms of the news making process, it should be viewed as a product of such interaction and thus socially constructed. Berkowitz's view is supported by Archetti (2010, p. 208) who asserts that "all reality, including news, is constructed through human agency".

News sociologists argue that news could be assessed from the individual preferences and attitude that influence the decision of the individual professional in exercising his/her gate-keeping role (Shoemaker, 1991). It could also be analyzed from the manner in which the policies of the news organization can influence journalists in carrying out their duties. News sociologists submit that journalistic and professional ethics are developed within the media

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organization (Berkowitz, 1992; Tuchman, 1978, Banz, 1997). At the societal level, the news media are seen as complex social institutions which disseminate messages based on self-chosen objectives, norms and practices and are therefore not neutral (McQuail, 1985).

Although this model is similar to Social Theory of Journalism in analysing the role of the society, the news organization and the individual journalist, it is limited to news output - how these factors shape the news. While news is the primary output or product of news organizations, journalism is certainly not limited to just news production. Field Theory in analysing the journalism 'field' and the Social Theory of Journalism in focussing on the role of different segments of society in shaping journalism combine to provide a broader perspective than News Sociology on how professional challenges and the response of journalists to them dictate the nature of journalism in a society.

2.7.2 *Four Theories of the Press*

Similarly, the Four Theories of the Press – the Authoritarian Media Theory, The Libertarian Media Theory, The Soviet-Communist Media Theory and the Social Responsibility Media Theory - enunciated by Siebert, et al (1956) which also dwell on how the social environment influences the 'press' served as a useful stimulus for reflection on the role of the media in society, for this study. Despite arguments that the theories are obsolete (Hadman, 2012) they remain a good historical reference point for understanding the link among different press systems, political systems and philosophies of the time. This study agrees with Nerone (2012, p.448) that *Four Theories* filled a then existing intellectual gap between the study of communication and the professional practice of journalism and provided a "commonsense history of the rise of 'libertarianism' in the face of 'authoritarian' systems […]". Christians, et al (2009) also accept that the work became a classic because it provided a theoretical guide for analyzing how the press interacts with society in terms of professional ethics, political

values and intellectual history, but admitted also, that it had its shortcomings. A major observation of critics of the theory is that it is analytically inadequate and an oversimplified framing of history (see Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Hatchem & Scotton, 2007). Beyond, this observation, none of the theories was considered adequate as a theoretical lens for this research which focusses on issues beyond the scope of the theories.

2.7.3   *Theory of the Fourth Estate*

The Theory of the Fourth Estate is anchored on the idea of the necessity of a free press as a precondition even under different traditions and forms of democracy. It argues that the 'press' and politics are related in different ways in different societies (Christians, et al. 2009; Hallin and Mancini, 2004). It was used to explain the role of the press in democratic governance and acknowledges the press as another source of power next to the three arms of government recognized by the constitution (Folarin, 2006; Schultz, 1998). However, unlike the executive, the legislature and the judiciary which have their responsibilities formalized, the fourth estate has no formal status in any constitution (Shultz, 1998). The theory sees the press as the voice of the people which provides a communication channel between government and citizens in addition to holding government accountable to the people and serving as a platform for the expression of public opinion. It is able to do this only if it is independent and courageous (Archetti, 2010). While like Field Theory and Social Theory of Journalism it confers some responsibilities on the press in relation to society, it is often criticized for over rating the power of the press and the difficulty in fulfilling the self-assigned responsibilities of the press because of links with political and economic power (McQuail, 2013; Archetti, 2010). It is no doubt a useful theory for understanding the role of the press in society, but does not suit the quest of this research to interrogate the complexities of journalism practice in a globalized world. As Cottle (2009, p.354) notes, "researchers need to rise to the significant challenge of studying journalism and continuing processes of globalization in all their multifaceted

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complexity and interpenetration." Therefore, the Theory of the Fourth Estate was not seen as better than the two theories chosen, for achieving the ends of this study.

2.7.4 *Development Media Theory*

This theory stemmed from the argument that the other normative theories are difficult to apply in developing countries in view of the latter's specific circumstances (Folarin, 2006). It proposed that the news media in these countries should be primarily concerned with promoting development in their societies. It identified the absence or insufficient communication infrastructure, limited supply of requisite professional skills, limited availability of media-literate audience, dependence on the developed world for technology and the lack of cultural production resources as factors that make it impossible for the other normative theories to work in developing countries (Folarin, 2006; McQuail, 2005).

The major tenets of the theory as listed by McQuail (2005) are that:

- Media must accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy;

- Freedom of the media should be open to the economic priorities and development needs of society; media should give priority in their content to the national culture and languages;

- Media should give priority in news and information to link with other developing countries which are close geographically, culturally or politically;

- Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks and that in pursuit of development ends, the state could intervene in, or restrict media operation and that the devices of censorship, subsidy and direct control can be justified.

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Much as the Development Media Theory claims to propose a model for the developing world in line with the normative argument that the press always takes the form and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates, it has not received wide acceptance in these countries (Folarin, 2006). According to Folarin, it is viewed with resentment by many journalists in developing countries who see it as counter to the press freedom ideal and other journalistic values cherished by media professionals. He argued that this might have to do with the fact that many journalists in emerging democracies in Africa and elsewhere were trained in Western European or North American countries where they imbibed the journalistic cultures of these democratically advanced countries. On return to their countries, they are guided by these ideals which they try to uphold on their job, in addition to imparting them to their subordinates (Folarin, 2006; McQuail, 2003).

As Folarin (2006) observed, the theory which sought to correct the 'anomaly' of trying to 'export' the normative theories of Western countries to the developing world needs to be fine-tuned to enable it command more acceptance in developing democracies. It needs to incorporate the core journalism values which professionals in democracies want to uphold. This is important given the accusation that African leaders tend to hide under the theory to advocate an uncritical press (Obijiofor, 2015). Although the theory provided insights in the consideration of a theory for this research, the fact that the study is focussing on contemporary issues impacting journalism which have global and local aspects, makes the theory inadequate for its scope.

2.8   Field Theory

Field Theory explains the way occupational fields create their own pressures on journalism (Bourdieu, 1998; Phillips, 2015). It illustrates the way in which occupational 'fields' impact journalism and how journalism "reproduces itself and is changed by the pressures from

within and outside" (Phillips. 2015. P. 2). Bourdieu's theory analyses the complex relationship between economic and cultural power, and between structures and agency. It argues that journalists operate within a 'field' where their news organisations are competing with their peers for the attention of the audience and their superiors for career development (Bourdieu, 2005; Phillips, 2015). Thus, structures and mechanisms on the journalistic field which include market demands dictated by audience and advertisers' interests, influence journalism output which in turn, influences the actions and thoughts of individuals (Bourdieu, 1998). Illustrating this, Hachten (2012, p. xix) notes that "increasingly, the media, and sadly some of its best-known practitioners have become ensnared in the various orbiting worlds of advertising, publicity, public relations, promotion and that pervasive commercial activity, marketing."

Field Theory further postulates that journalists are constrained by the 'field' in which they work (Bourdieu, 1998; Phillips, 2015). The 'field' comprises the rules of behaviour and standards established by the occupational groups to which members are expected to adhere and commercial interests of the organisations for which they work (Bourdieu, 2005). The journalism 'field' which influences journalists, is also influenced by politics and the state through regulations and law which combine to condition it (the field) for the kind of influence it exerts on journalism (Benson, 2006).

Bourdieu's theory shares some similarities with the New Institutionalism Model by Walter Powell and Paul D'Maggio (1991) cited in Phillips (2015). Both the Field Theory and the New Institutionalism argue that decisions taken by individuals in the course of their work are shaped by "the environment and the history of the institution" (Phillips, 2015, p. 65) Bourdieu (2005, p. 42) asserts that journalists are "neither individually responsible for maintaining press freedom, nor are they immune to the power structures that they represent". He describes journalism as a weakly autonomous field where journalists are influenced by the

need to increase audience and other commercial imperatives. According to Bourdieu (1998, p. 71),

> […] the journalistic field is the site of a specific, and specifically cultural, model that is imposed on journalism through a system of overlapping constraints and the controls that each of these brings to bear on the others.

Supporting Field Theory's position, Phillips (2015, p. 1) observes that the journalism profession continues to be "assailed by an almost continuous barrage of technical and economic shocks" which academic researchers tend not to appreciate in their critique of the profession. She notes:

> Journalists do not just wander in a forest of information and simply pick the juicy titbits off the trees. They are under pressure to pick particular fruit and present them in specific ways, so that they emphasize one aspect of what is considered important, rather than many others (Phillips, 2015, p. 3).

Field theory likens the manner journalists and news organisations operate to a field in which competitors strive to outdo one another. They strive to stand out against their competitors. Bourdieu (1998, p. 8) explains:

> […] as a result of the particular form that competition takes there (on the field), and through routines and habits of thought it imposes, the journalistic field represents the world in terms of philosophy that sees history as an absurd series of disasters which can be neither understood nor influenced.

Bourdieu further contends that although the journalistic field has similar structures to other fields of cultural production such as the political, economic or judicial fields, the market

weighs more heavily on the journalistic field than the others. Field Theory, according to Bourdieu (1998, p. 68) examines,

> […] the hold that the *mechanisms* of a journalistic field increasingly subject to market demands (through readers and advertisers) have *first on journalists* (and on journalist intellectuals) and then, in part through them, on the various fields of cultural production – the journalistic field, and the scientific field.

He also postulates that individual journalists are subject to the power structures within and outside their organisations over which they have little control because "[…] even if the actors have an effect as individuals, it is the *structure* of the journalistic field that determines the intensity and orientation of its mechanisms, as well as the effects on other fields" (p. 73). This underscores the point that journalists are at the mercy of forces within and outside their organisations in carrying out their duties.

However, Field Theory has been critiqued as a rather narrow view of the cultural dynamics of society. Benson and Neveu (2005) for example, note that the theory should have taken a broader look at the issue. They contend that Bourdieu's theory stands between the political economy or cultural approaches "that commit the short circuit fallacy and link news production to the interests of broad social classes or the national society […]" (Benson & Neveu, 2012, p. 12). Benson (2013) also queries the general application of Field Theory without recognising the differences existing among news media in terms of ownership structure and funding. He queries especially, Field Theory's emphasis on the role of the market (e.g. advertisers and the audience) noting that public funded organisations supported by licence fee as in Northern Europe are shielded from the pressures that commercial media face.

Bourdieu (1998, p. 2) acknowledges criticisms of his theory but argued that some of them reduce the theory to "a series of utterly hackneyed positions punctuated by a smattering of polemical outbursts". He claims that the scope of the theory was justified and suited his objective of showing "how the journalistic field produces and imposes on the public, a very particular vision of the political field, a vision that is grounded on the very structure of the journalistic field and in journalists specific interests produced in and by that field" (p. 2).

Phillips, (2015) accepts the relevance of Field Theory, observing that many cultural studies approaches to journalism tend to focus more on audiences without regard to the ethical dilemmas journalists face. She posits that journalists are often confronting pressures in making decisions on either exposing, promoting, distorting or concealing information in ways that have serious impacts.

Other studies (e.g. Bourdieu, 2005; Marr, 2005) support the position that hierarchical editorial structures also constrain journalists in their editorial duties. As Phillips (2015, p. 127) notes, they have to take instructions from editors "who in their turn are acting under instruction from proprietors, who are almost always either a part of the ruling elite, using their news organisations for influence or interested only in making money for them". Thus, according to Bourdieu's theory, the 'field' in which journalists operate include sources of news (people or places from whom or where journalists get news) outside the newsroom and the internal dynamics of the news organisations which influence the processing of news.

Field Theory is therefore useful for achieving the objective of interrogating how the challenges of the 'field', as defined by it, impact professional journalism practice in Nigeria. The postulations of the theory complement those of the Social Theory of Journalism discussed in the next section, to provide a theoretical framework for this research project.

2.9   The Social Theory of Journalism

The Social Theory of Journalism, is a framework developed by Dennis McQuail (2013) which seeks to explain how various factors influence journalism practice. The theory analyzes the goals, rights, duties and responsibility of journalists to the society.

Like other normative theories, the Social Theory of Journalism is hinged on the 'guiding principles' and "ideas of what journalism ought to or not do" (McQuail, 2013, p.10). It contends that journalism conforms to a certain ideal type of purpose and practice which merely differs according to time and place. It posits that "the status accorded to journalism in the wider society depends on the values it subscribes to and how well it lives up to them" (McQuail, 2013, p.10).

The theory further notes that key issues such as freedom of reporting, quality, goals and the challenges posed by changing media systems remain the same globally. Unlike some other normative theories of the press (E.g. Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956) which focus mainly on the interaction between journalists and various segments of society and their impact on the journalism profession, Social Theory of Journalism went further by exploring the factors influencing journalism from the perspectives of the society within which it operates, the news organization and **the journalist**. This focus on journalists whose response to the challenges of practice is being studied, makes it one of the theories most germane to this study in different respects. Journalists in Nigeria have a constitutionally assigned role. Chapter 2 Section 22 of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria states:

> The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people.

Since the study is examining how the response of journalists to operational challenges is impacting professional standards in Nigeria which is bound to influence their ability or otherwise, to fulfil the stated constitutional responsibility, the contentions of the theory raises fundamental issues relating to journalism practice in Nigeria. For instance, at the individual level, how do journalists view their role and what is their attitude towards it? From the perspective of the public's responsibility to journalism, how is society ensuring that journalists have the right environment to deliver on their expected role in society?

According to McQuail, although journalism can be examined from different theoretical perspectives – social, economic, literary or political, the Social Theory of Journalism is more concerned about and directly relevant to the public role of journalism and a mixture of descriptive and normative prescription. He gives the major concerns of the theory as:

- The nature of the needs of society that are met by journalism: This refers to whether or not journalism is actually serving the expected or assumed role in society. Is the society getting any benefit from journalism? As Deuze (2007) notes, measuring how well the news media is serving societies amidst diverse interests and lack of unanimity of ideals remains a difficult task. This concern of the theory nevertheless provides a basis of what is expected of journalism and tallies with the objective of this study to interrogate the factors that influence journalism practice in Nigeria.

- The issue of whether or not journalism has some obligations to society that it cannot ignore despite claims to freedom: It raises the question as to whether the journalism profession can claim to be truly free if it panders to self-imposed or externally imposed obligations to society. Another dimension is whether journalism should ignore the benefits of such obligation just to demonstrate its freedom. As stated above, apart from the self-assigned role of

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the news media in society, the Nigerian constitution assigned a role to them which they should see as an obligation that cannot be ignored. This is particularly important since Nigeria is still grappling with development challenges.

- The nature and strength of any such obligations: This encompasses the 'expected' functions of journalism in a given society and how their fulfilment or otherwise affects the society. Carpenter, Boehmer and Fico (2016) list journalistic roles within society to include, interpreting and disseminating information, mobilizing the public and acting as an adversary in solving the problems facing society.

- The means available to society to activate obligations or hold media to account for them: These include the regulatory framework guiding the operations of news media organisations and journalists, bordering on libel, respect for privacy, national security and so on, which could be invoked where journalists offend the laws. It is well known that while liberal media systems which promote freedom of the press allow journalists to operate relatively free of control and self-regulate, laws exist in most countries to check the excesses of journalists or news media organisations (Blumler & Cushion, 2014; Hallin & Mancini, 2004; Voltmer, 2013).

- The norms and standards that should apply to the practice of journalism, as it affects society: This relates to the level of professionalism that should be expected from journalists in their mostly self-chosen services to society. Although journalists, especially of the liberal or free society generally resist any idea of prescribed obligations, they nonetheless strive to operate to certain ethical standards related to such things as truthfulness, doing no harm, and

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generally serving the public interest, whether or not there are rules or laws requiring them to do so (McQuail, 2005; Voltmer, 2013). They see upholding those standards as a duty to the society.

- Issues of control and accountability especially as they relate to freedom of expression and publication: This clearly borrows from the Social Responsibility Theory which prescribes the exercise of freedom with responsibility to society from journalism (Folarin, 2006; McQuail, 2005).

McQuail's theory also replicates the major views of some other normative theories, but presents more perspectives. It, for instance, compares to the Social Theory of Public Communication which he earlier co-authored (see Christians, et al, 2009). The major difference is that while McQuail's theory focusses on journalism, the other theory dwells on "how communication values relate to the development of democratic systems of government" (Christian, et al., 2009, p. 19).

The analytical value of the Social Theory of Journalism is also a plus as it focusses on what could be called 'pointers' to, or 'indicators' of the kind of journalism existing in a given society. It does not specify limits or yardsticks for measuring its prescriptions but what can be observed or assessed to draw conclusions. This can be deduced from McQuail's (2013 pp.9-10) reference to the theory as "a mixture of description and normative prescription". He suggests that the model be juxtaposed with the reality in various countries to determine the nature of journalism operating within a particular society. McQuail's reference to his model as a 'prescription' raises the question whether it should be seen as a theory. However, as Christians, et al. (2009, p. ix) observe, a theory is "a reasoned explanation of why particular actions lead to certain outcomes", which McQuail's work satisfies.

More so, McQuail adds that the normative element of the theory relates to what should be the ideal purposes of journalism and the potential obligation to the wider society. 'Potential' is interpreted by this study as possible obligations that might be dictated by the peculiarities of a given society or nation. According to McQuail (2013, p.10):

> Our aim is not to propose rules to be followed but to identify the guiding principles of journalism that are most widely recognized both internally and from the outside. The 'theory' we are seeking to describe either in empirical or prescriptive aspects, or both, is not fixed or universally valid, but open to alternative interpretations and formulations.

He asserts that the value of the theory should be seen "in its potential to explain and assess the reality of journalistic work" (p.10). He contends that the theory which he describes as an essential aid to criticism, self-awareness and attempts at reform can serve the stated essence. He argues further, that the efforts at reform and improvement are tied to the exercise of a visible and respected body of theory to aid diagnosis and prescription. However, Anotacije (2014, p. 111) describes the propositions of the theory on what can be done to overcome the challenges of journalism practice as "too universal". He also notes that the theory relates only to democratic societies to the exclusion of non-democratic ones. True as these observations might be, they do not obliterate the relevance of the theory to this study as its postulations assist in the understanding of how the response of journalists to professional challenges influence journalism practice in Nigeria.

It is acknowledged that some other theories or models have aspects that could also apply to the research problem being studied (see Hallin and Mancini, 2004, 2012). For example, the media system operating in Nigeria has been adjudged by this study (see p.60, Chapter Three) as a mixture of different models including the three – The Liberal Model, The Polarized Pluralist Model and the Democratic Corporatist Model - identified by Hallin and Mancini

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(2004). However, McQuail's theory is considered most suitable to complement Field Theory for achieving the goals of this study. As has been argued, its postulations, especially as it relates to the factors influencing the conduct and performance of journalism at various levels and on the 'field', guided the formulation of the research questions and objectives for this study. The two theories are deemed relevant because they suit the study's main objective of seeking an understanding of the response of journalists in Nigeria, a developing democracy, to the current challenges of professional practice in the country. By not proposing rules or giving fixed empirical or prescriptive propositions, the theories enabled this study to freely analyze the data sets and draw conclusions that would enhance an understanding of journalism practice in Nigeria. This would serve as a useful contribution to the continuing search for an acceptable framework for analyzing journalism practice in developing countries like Nigeria. This is particularly so in view of the current dearth of perspectives on normative media theories from developing countries in the literature (Christians, et al, 2009).

Christians, et al (2009, p. 13) observed:

> Despite the distinctive and rich cultural and philosophical traditions, Asia, Africa and Latin America have not nurtured major innovations in normative media theories. Relevant contributions by scholars from the developing countries typically reflect *Four Theories* or its revisions which could be another proof of the dependencies involved.

2.9.1   *Journalism and Its Link to Society*

Journalism and society are inseparable because journalism serves society (Christians, et al, 2009). As stated earlier, McQuail (2013) identifies three levels of the development of theory for journalism from the interaction of journalists with their social environment. These are at the level of the society, the news organization where a journalist works and the individual

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journalist. He contends that they help to explain how the nature of journalism in a society is 'shaped' by these factors. He asserts that these levels of analysis and theoretical perspectives are important in view of the increasingly significant and complex role of journalism and the potential consequences of this. He sees the categorization as valid in explaining and justifying the actions of journalists when they become controversial and the fact that "the claim to journalistic freedom as a fundamental principle cannot be sustained without theoretical justification as well as pragmatic arguments" (McQuail 2013, P.5). McQuail (2013, pp. 5-7) also argues the following:

2.9.2   *The Societal Level*

Driven by the desire to satisfy the interest of their audiences, and through their interaction with social, cultural and political elites, journalists get involved in major important public events in society. Apart from information dissemination, education and entertainment roles, journalism plays a key role in upholding the fundamental tenets of democracy such as freedom of speech, equality of citizens and the rule of law. Like the rest of the society, it is therefore expected to be bound by these same principles in exercising its duties. Hence, even where a liberal media system is operational as in parts of Europe and Northern America, journalists abide by the rules and laws guiding society which imposes some form of self-regulation and accountability to society in performing their duties. They avoid doing things that run counter to the principles they advocate within society even where no such obligation is dictated by law or regulation. Thus, the society indirectly exerts pressure on journalism just as it (journalism) exerts pressure on society for accountability.

With democracy arguably the most acceptable form of government in many parts of the world, this trend is also spreading and journalists in democracies strive to exhibit similar

tendencies of promoting democratic values within the limits of their peculiar circumstances. Journalists in developing democracies like Nigeria are no exception.

2.9.3 *The News Organisation*

McQuail (2013) goes further to identify ways in which the conduct and performance of journalism is mediated at the level of the news organization. He cites the legal and regulatory framework in place, the structure of ownership and control, the links between media and politics, the market forces, practices and pressures and the general influence of organizational requirement and work routines that characterize journalism output. He opines that the larger structures of the market and the social system influence journalism output. The structure and behaviour of the news media cannot therefore be properly understood without reference to the political, legal, economic and other circumstances in which they operate.

This perspective is also relevant to this study in trying to understand how journalists are responding to professional challenges in Nigeria. Research has in fact shown that the business, political leaning and other interests of news media in Nigeria shape their output (see Abidde, 2012; Omoera, 2010; Pate, 2011b). Hence we have news media that support and promote political parties, businesses and other interests. Therefore, the position that the news media organization plays a crucial role in the shape and colour of journalism in a given society is considered valid and apposite to this study.

2.9.4 *The Individual Journalist*

Equally relevant to the conduct and performance of journalism is the perspective of the individual journalist, according to McQuail. His postulation relates to how journalists perceive their role in society as practitioners and what they consider to be good journalism or standard of practice. These are influenced by interaction with individuals in society, particularly the objects on which they report and sources from which they get information.

The influence of society as earlier discussed, the nature of the work environment and ethical factors related to how journalists perceive their roles "has direct implications for the key issues, including the degree of freedom they might claim in their work […]" (p.7).

McQuail submits further that in addition to their direct dealings with other individuals who serve as sources or about whom they report, journalists also have some connection to audience members. They develop an attachment to the wider society based on obligations and constraints they personally experience as journalists. Thus, how journalists perceive their role based on their interaction with various segments of society, the level of their observance of professional norms and codes, personal background, values and opinions, as well as their experience in their work environment combine to impact journalism's conduct and performance in a society. As earlier mentioned, this perspective of the theory is of interest to this study because in trying to understand how the response of journalists to the challenges they face in the course of duty is influencing their performance, the perception and attitude of journalists as individuals, is critical to this quest. Therefore, critically analysing how Nigerian journalists define and perceive their roles amidst the challenges of professional practice as this study seeks to do, will contribute to the understanding of their response to those challenges and how it impacts the standard of practice.

2.10   The Choice of Theoretical Framework

The study of various theories discussed above, led to the choice of Social Theory of Journalism, a normative theory and Field Theory to serve as the theoretical lens for this research. As presented above, Field Theory propounded by Pierre Bourdieu (1995) explains how the journalism field influences journalistic activities in a given society (Phillips, 2015). Social Theory of Journalism, developed by Dennis McQuail (2013) focusses on what ought to be journalism's responsibility to the society and how society influences journalism.

Although both theories dwell on the relationship of journalism with society and how this relationship produces the nature of journalism in a given society, they differ in focus. While Field Theory focusses on how the occupational field of journalism influences the profession and how it (journalism) in turn influences other sectors (Phillips, 2015), Social Theory of Journalism examines the nature and needs of the society which are obligatory for journalism to meet. The postulations of the two theories were considered germane to interrogate the research questions. They complement each other by assisting this research project to critique the factors influencing journalism practice in Nigeria, how journalists are responding to them and the implication for professional standards. While Social Theory of Journalism provides a macro view by focussing on the ideals of journalism such as the nature and needs of society met by journalism, the obligations of journalism to society and how society can hold the new media to account for them, Field Theory gives a micro perspective by trying to show the interplay of forces that influence the journalism 'field' to produce the nature of journalism in a given society.

2.11   Conclusion

This chapter reviewed literature on theory and practice of journalism. It focussed on various aspects of journalism practice globally, dwelling on historical and current developments influencing the profession at various levels. Contemporary and contrasting perspectives on journalism studies were discussed to illuminate the study. The chapter explored various theories leading to the choice of Field Theory and Social Theory of Journalism to anchor the study. It discussed the strengths of the various theories examined and argued that the two theories were considered best suited to achieve the research objectives as they complement each other in interrogating the research questions. With the theoretical focus of this study already established, the next chapter discusses how journalism evolved in Nigeria.

Chapter Three

Understanding Journalism Development in Nigeria

3.1   Chapter Overview

Having given the summary of the research project in Chapter One and established the

theoretical framework in Chapter Two, this chapter proceeds to explore the trajectory of

journalism in Nigeria. It starts with a brief history of Nigeria, her geographical, political and

economic development as background for understanding how the news media evolved. As

Hallin and Mancini (2012, p. 8) observes,

> […] one cannot understand the news media without understanding the nature
> and state, the system of political parties, the pattern of relations between
> economic and political interests, and the development of civil society, among
> other elements of social structure.

The chapter explores the development of Nigerian print media and broadcast media and

discusses the challenges of journalism practice in Nigeria highlighted to date in the literature,

including the ethical challenges facing journalists, the role of regulatory bodies for

journalism, journalism and Nigerian politics as well as journalism and conflicts in Nigeria. It

also provides a glimpse of the state of journalism in Nigeria which is being critiqued by this

study.

3.2   Brief History of Nigeria

The Federal Republic of Nigeria is the most populous country in Africa and the seventh most

populous in the world (historyworld.net). Covering a land area of 923,768 square kilometres

or 356,667 square miles, it has, by 2015 estimates, a population of over 188 million people

(historyworld.net). It has about 500 ethnic groups with different languages and cultures but

the dominant ethnic groups are Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba (Falola & Heaton, 2008). It has 36 states with Abuja as the federal capital and operates a presidential constitutional republic modelled after the United States of America. The central government is headed by an executive president who is elected for a maximum of two four-year terms. It operates a bicameral legislature – The Senate and House of Representatives. The Senate has 109 members, three from each of the 36 states and one from the Federal Capital, Abuja. Seats for the House of Representatives are allocated based on the population of each state (historyworld.net).

Nigeria was a British Colony and became independent on October 1, 1960. Prior to colonialism in the 19th Century, modern day Nigeria had several kingdoms and tribal states which were brought under British rule (Falola & Heaton, 2008). The British adopted 'indirect rule', a system of administration by proxy through the existing local structures. Traditional chiefs and community heads were empowered and used to run the day-to-day administration of their localities while British officials supervised them (historyworld.net).

At independence in 1960, Tafawa Balewa emerged as the Prime Minister under a Parliamentary System of government. However, political upheavals rooted in ethnic and religious differences led to the overthrow of the Balewa Administration via a military coup in 1966. Military coup refers to the forceful overthrow of an elected government and takeover of power in a country by the military. The political crisis that followed the coup led to a civil war from 1967 to 1970 (Falola & Heaton, 2008). Series of interventions through military coups followed resulting in prolonged military rule. A total of eleven coup de'tats was recorded within 39 years of Nigeria's independence (Akinnola, 2000). Coup de'tat describes the forceful takeover of political power in a country by the military. Idowu (2000, p. 22) notes that journalists in Nigeria functioned under military rule for about 31 years during which they suffered "grave persecution, detention without trial and even imprisonment in

various ways and at various times […]". Although democratic governance has remained stable in the country since 1999 when the military handed over to an elected government, ethnic, religious tensions and distrust persist, leading to frequent violent conflicts and agitations for secession by some ethnic groups such as the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND), the Indigenous People of Biafra (IPOB) and the Movement for the Actualization of the Sovereign State of Biafra (MASSOB) (cometnigeria.com).

Pate (2011a, p. 49) notes that Nigeria being a multicultural, pluralistic and heterogeneous country, despite making remarkable progress in politics, economics, social co-existence and other sectors, the country has fallen short of expectation in education, health and other national development goals:

> […] we are still confronted with some irritating but unacceptable facts about our social reality that continue to dent the integrity of Nigeria. For instance, we have failed to meet any of the many targets we have set for ourselves […] (Pate, 2011a, p. 50).

3.3   Journalism and Development

Momoh (2000) argues that the situation in Nigeria would have been different had the news media played their expected role of promoting responsible governance since independence in 1960. As had been discussed in Chapter Two, journalism has normative and public service roles within society, among which is the promotion of democracy and the good of the society in addition to holding leaders accountable to the people (see Christians, et al., 2009; McQuail, 2013; Ogunyemi, 2014). According to Momoh (2000) the news media in Nigeria at independence, failed to rise above the dichotomies within the social and political system in the country. They promoted rather than oppose the political leadership which worked for

itself rather than for the people "to perfect the art of self-enrichment and self-aggrandisement to become masters and to enslave their people" (Momoh, 2000, p. 31). He adds:

> […] the media of mass communication – populated by Nigerians who have been part and parcel of the travails that have derailed us […] got sucked in by the indiscretions of those who have led us (Momoh, 2000, p. 35)

This negative perception of journalism is not limited to Nigeria. Hatchen (2012) in a study of the news media in the United States reports that the image of journalism has been tarnished badly because of growing public perception that the news media promote the interests of the political elite and other influential people rather than serve as independent representatives of the public. He asserts:

> […] the news business must find ways to improve the stature of journalists, whose public image has become so badly tarnished. To do this, the news media must improve their performance and do their own reporting. Political journalists must work to be again viewed as dispassionate news gatherers rather than highly visible and opinionated performers.

The above positions on journalism and the news media underscore the importance of more research into various aspects of journalism practice in different countries for comparative studies, given that the news media reflect the political atmosphere in which they operate (Ogunsiji, 1989). This research project responds to this need by focusing on journalism practice in Nigeria**.**

3.4   History of Journalism in Nigeria

The print and broadcast media in Nigeria had different trajectories to form what is today's journalism practice in Nigeria. While the print, made up of newspapers and magazines debuted in pre-colonial Nigeria and was largely private-owned, the broadcast, made up of

radio and television came much later and was a government monopoly until the sector was liberalised in 1992 (Adefaye, 2000). The development of the print and broadcast media are therefore presented separately below.

3.4.1   *The Print Media*

The development of print journalism in Nigeria can be divided into four periods – the Missionary Journalism Era, the Era of Alien-Dominated Press, the Era of Indigenous Press and the Era of Modern Nigerian Newspapers (Ogunsiji, 1989).

The Missionary Journalism Era

Although printing presses were installed, first in Calabar in 1846 by the Presbyterian Mission and second, in Abeokuta in 1854 by a missionary journalist, Rev. Henry Townsend, newspaper publishing did not start until 1859 (Omu, 1978). The two printing presses were established primarily to produce religious books, pamphlets and leaflets to promote the spread of Christianity, but inspired subsequent use for journalistic purpose (Ogunsiji, 1989). It was Rev. Townsend who in 1859, established a Yoruba vernacular newspaper – *Iwe Irohin fun Awon Ara Egba Ati Yoruba* (meaning, a newspaper for the Egba and the Yoruba people). It was published fortnightly and became bilingual in 1860 when an English version was added (Omu, 1978).

The newspaper disseminated mainly, news about church activities such as the arrival or departure of missionaries, establishment of new churches as well as, the death of religious or traditional rulers. It was also reputed to have promoted an anti-slave trade crusade through editorials and news stories (Ogunsiji, 1989). The paper became extinct in 1867 following an uprising in Yoruba land which forced many Europeans to leave. The pioneering role of the newspaper makes it significant in the journalism history of Nigeria (Ogunsiji, 1989).

Many other missionary newspapers were established between 1917 and 1947 and they are believed to have influenced the first generation of educated Africans into exploring the newspaper business in Nigeria (Omu, 1978).

> Their (missionaries') example gave inspiration to African people who inherited the idea of newspaper and came to employ it as the chief weapon by which they were to exercise their power of participation in the government of their land (Omu, 1978, p. 8)

The missionary newspapers not only introduced journalism to Nigeria, they also served as a springboard for its subsequent growth.

The Era of Alien-Dominated Press

This was a period when non-Nigerians mostly from other African countries, especially Liberia and Sierra Leone, established newspapers in Nigeria (Omu, 1978). The first of such newspapers was the *Anglo African* which was established in 1863. The weekly, which was sold for three pence, had the primary aim of taking advantage of the growing quest for knowledge and Western education among Nigerians by providing them with affordable but useful information. It sold between 30 and 50 copies per week but ran into financial difficulty and ceased to exist in 1865 (Omu, 1978).

Other alien-owned newspapers such as, the *Lagos Times, Gold Coast Colony Advertiser, Lagos Observer, Nigerian Chronicle* and *Nigerian Times* also existed during the period. Omu (1978) records that many of them had short lifespans because the colonial administration starved them of advertisement as a punishment for their 'militant journalism' (a reference to antagonism towards the administration's policies) occasioned by the rising spirit of nationalism in Nigeria then. For instance, the *Lagos Times* which was reported to have

pioneered 'militant journalism and nationalism' existed for just three years. Ogunsiji, 1989. P. 9) explains:

> […] Because of its militancy, it did not enjoy government patronage by way of advertisements and only few individuals were in a position to insert advertisements in the paper. With few or no advertisements, the paper could not remain in existence.

The period was significant for laying the foundation for militant journalism and nationalism which subsequent publications developed in the struggle for self-determination and independence.

The Era of Indigenous Press

This era marked the entry of Nigerians into newspaper ownership. The first newspaper was the *Nigerian Chronicle* which was established in 1914 (Omu, 1978). However, the paper was unpopular because it was pro-government at a time there was growing disenchantment toward the colonial administration among Nigerians. Despite being unpopular, it survived until 1936, apparently because of advertisement patronage from the colonial government. Other newspapers namely, the *African Messenger, Nigerian Daily Times, West African Pilot, Lagos Daily News, Nigerian Daily Telegraph, Comet, Nigerian Daily Mail,* were also established by Nigerians within the period (Omu, 1978).

One of the most successful newspapers of this era was the *Nigerian Daily Times* which benefitted from its pro-government stance and was rewarded with advertisements and other forms of patronage. It was made a subsidiary of the *London Daily Mirror* and benefitted from technical support which made it pioneer some dynamism and new orientation in the Nigerian newspaper industry. Page planning, treatment of news and staff welfare improved as the

newspaper, because of its financial buoyancy, could afford to recruit the best available hands in the industry (Ogunsiji, 1989).

However, the paper was unpopular among many Nigerians and as Ogunsiji (1989, p. 11) explains, "[…] it lost the respect of the general public and was of no consequence in the agitation for the liberation of Nigeria".

Another prominent newspaper of this era, the *West African Pilot,* was reported to have been one of the most popular nationalist newspapers that was instrumental to political changes in the country (Ogunsiji, 1989). The vibrancy of the newspapers of this era in promoting nationalism did not translate into financial gain and with a weak financial base, many had short lifespans. Ogunsiji, (1989, p.12) summarises the situation:

> In general terms, one of the characteristics of the early Nigerian newspapers was that most of them were economically weak. Lack of capital formation limited their production and distribution potentials. Their earning capacity was limited, and consequently, their growth as business enterprises was adversely affected and fatally crippled in some situations. The money they got from advertising and sales hardly cover the overhead costs for running the papers.

Ironically, a similar situation currently exists in the newspaper industry in Nigeria as a drop in advertising and sale income has put many of them in difficult financial positions (Danaan, 2016).

The Era of Modern Nigerian Newspapers

The newspaper industry in Nigeria witnessed a rapid growth in the post-independent period because regional and later, state governments established newspapers to publicise their activities. Many government newspapers were established between 1960 and 1966 but the civil war between 1967 and 1970 slowed down the rate as attention shifted to prosecuting the

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war (Ogunsiji, 1989). The existing newspapers were mobilized by the Federal Government to campaign for the country's unity. However, the growth in the number of newspapers continued after the civil war.

By 1974, virtually all the then 19 state governments had established newspapers individually or jointly. Among the newspapers jointly owned was the *Sketch* which was jointly owned by the governments of Ogun, Ondo and Oyo States. More private newspapers and magazines also emerged in the 1980s and this created increased competition among journalists and their organisations as they struggled to outdo one another, resulting in unethical practices (Ogunsiji, 1989). Some became partisan in support of politicians or political parties which led to a clampdown on journalists and news media by government or law enforcement agents. Ogunsiji (1989, p. 14) observes:

> The performance of the press in the post-independence era leaves much to be desired. On one hand, there were many instances of antagonism from the government. On the other hand, there was abundant evidence to prove that some journalists did throw the ethics of their profession to the wind and became ardent sycophants for their political masters […]

He adds:

> […] it is on record that Nigerian journalists let politicians use them as tools for political gains. The newspaper industry was politicized as the country itself, particularly during the Second Republic (1979-1983) […] Journalists were not only boot-licking but also snatching each other's jobs […] It was more or less the darkest hour in the history of the Nigerian press (p. 15).

Despite his observations, Ogunsiji (1989, p. 16) argues that journalists were influenced by the circumstances and the environment in which they operated:

> All said and done, one would like to give some credit to the Nigerian journalists who were undoubtedly working under duress and many social,

political and economic constraints. Working as a journalist in Nigeria is like walking on a tight rope, one wrong step and you are down […]

However, the period witnessed a great improvement in the physical quality of the newspapers. Politicians were prepared to spend to acquire sophisticated typesetting and printing equipment for them resulting in improved typography and layout, better written news stories and picture quality (Ogunsiji, 1989).

With a relatively stable democracy which has lasted almost 18 years (as at 2017) and improved technology the newspaper industry in Nigeria has transformed, with many of them now having online versions of their publications. There has also been a proliferation of online publications as the media landscape becomes more democratised (Adelabu, 2008). Despite the positive developments, allegations of unethical conduct against journalists and the news media have persisted (e.g. Abidde, 2012; Idowu, 2014).

3.4.2   The Broadcast Media

As shown in the preceding section, the development of journalism in Nigeria in the early years centred on the print media comprising newspapers and magazines. It was not until much later that television and radio came and were a government monopoly for many years until 1992 (Adefaye, 2000).

> […] radio and television were seen as media for propagating government policies and considered too sensitive to be left in private hand […] Most of the broadcast stations were more or less extensions of the ministries of information with officers sometimes reporting directly to the political appointees in these government departments (Adefaye, 2000, p. 126).

Radio and television broadcasting started in Nigeria at different times. Radio started in 1932 with the introduction in Lagos, of the Radio Distribution System (RDS) by the British

Colonial Government. (Akashoro, Okidu & Ajaga, 2013). It was a relay system for the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) through wire systems connected to loudspeakers. The Radio Distribution System was later changed to Radio Diffusion System in December 1935 to reflect Britain's desire to propagate her efforts and those of her allies during the Second World War. The Radio Diffusion System which was available through subscription was extended to different parts of the country between 1935 and 1950 (Udeajah, 2005).

The Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) was established in 1950 and opened stations in Lagos, Ibadan, Kaduna, Kano and Enugu. The National Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) came into being through the NBC Act of 1956 and took over the functions of the NBS. Changes continued in the radio sector as the NBC was rechristened the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) in 1978 while a foreign service, the Voice of Nigeria was established in 1990 (Akashororo, Okidu & Ajaga, 2013).

Unlike radio broadcasting which was introduced to Nigeria by the British Colonial Government, the first television in Nigeria known as Western Nigeria Television (WNTV) was established by the Western Regional Government on October 11, 1959. The Eastern Regional Government followed with her own television station on October 1, 1960, the day Nigeria secured political independence from Britain while the Northern Regional Government opened her television station in April 1962. Following the restructuring of the country into states, different state governments established their own television stations leading to a proliferation of television stations across the country. However, private ownership was not allowed (Udeajah, 2005).

The military administration under Olusegun Obasanjo promulgated Decree No. 24 of 1977 through which it took over television stations in the country to give it effective control of the stations and brought them under the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) (Udeajah, 2005).

During the Second Republic (1979-1983) some state governments established new televisions stations, thus breaking Federal Government's monopoly of the sector. The broadcast stations though government-owned were established primarily to promote the political aspirations of those in power at the federal and state levels (Akashoro, Okidu & Ajaga, 2013). Like their print counterparts, the news media were seen as biased in favour of the government and political party in power at the federal or state level. Assessing the performance of the broadcast media in Nigeria during the Second Republic, Akashoro, Okidu and Ajaga (2013, p. 49) note:

> The media compromised their own individual interests or editorial judgements and acceded to promoting government interests out of compliance. The media gave virtually little or no access to dissenting voices or views especially those that were political. And also, the media never pretended to act as a neutral observer but provided information that was slanted to suit particular interests.

However, the liberalisation of the broadcast media by the Ibrahim Babangida military government through Decree No. 38 of 1992 broke government monopoly of the sector and allowed for private ownership of radio and television stations. It was a significant achievement by the administration as this "loosened the tight rope of government monopoly on the electronic media" (Udeajah, 2005, p. 164). The liberalization has resulted in better competition and acquisition of modern technology among broadcast stations. Akashoro, Okidu and Ajaga (2013, p. 52) observe that the contemporary broadcasting is vibrant and technology driven:

> Like in the advanced world, many broadcast stations, both government and private have acquired and have started broadcasting with modern digital equipment or facilities in order to enhance their performance or delivery rating among their listenership or viewership.

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The liberalisation has also led to a proliferation of radio and television station across the country. The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the regulatory body for broadcasting, issued 114 new licences for radio, television and cable services within the first four years of operation and Nigeria now has over 150 television stations (Myers, 2014).

3.5   The Media System in Nigeria

Nigeria is described as having one of the most vibrant and varied news media in Africa (Freedom House Report, 2015). The media system is plural, made up of state and independently owned news media that operate across the 36 states of the country (Adeyemi, 2013). Their vibrancy has been attributed to the variety of interests controlling them (Daramola, 2006). There are over 100 national and local news publications and there are at least a radio and television station in every state capital (Ojo, Akinreti, Odegbenle & Jegede, 2013). The authors report that although the print sector is generally more outspoken, radio has a greater penetration across the country.

The news media in Nigeria is rated partly free by Freedom House, a global body monitoring press freedom, in its 2015 report (freedomhouse.org) and Nigeria ranked 111 out of 180 in the World Press Freedom Index released by Reporters Without Borders. As already pointed out, federal and state government-owned broadcast stations are usually partisan in favour of the party or government in power and switch loyalty when another party assumes power (Daramola, 2006). Central government controls the radio and television organizations, the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) and the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA). NTA has 45 stations across Nigeria, while FRCN has 60 (Ojo, et al., 2013).

The deregulation of the broadcast media and the proliferation of independent radio and televisions stations have afforded citizens access to alternatives unlike when the sector was a

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government monopoly (Myers, 2014). However, the use of advertising as a means of subtle control of the news media which started from the colonial government (Onu, 1998) has continued under subsequent governments (Daramola, 2006; Okwuchukwu, 2014). Umechukwu (2001) reports that newspapers such as *The Eagle, Lagos Critic* and *Record* that were pro-government received most of government's advertisement during colonial role at the expense of newspapers viewed as critical of the colonial administration. Okwuchukwu (2014) observes that the use of advertisements to control media outfits through deliberate denial of advertising patronage and revenue had continued under military and democratic governments in the country.

With the rapid growth of mobile telephone services, internet penetration is rising, affording people opportunity to receive and share information outside the traditional news media of radio, television, newspapers and magazines (Daramola, 2006). Many of the news media now have online presence which makes it possible for them to be viewed or read across the globe (Ojo, et al, 2013). Nigeria is experiencing one of the fastest internet penetration growth rates in the world. According to the Freedom House Report 2015, over 48 per cent of the estimated (as at then) 167 million people in Nigeria accessed the internet in 2014 (freedomhouse.org).

 The media system in Nigeria is yet to be well categorised or characterised in academic work on Nigerian journalism. This research project found that Nigeria does not fit into any of the media systems operating in Western countries and elsewhere. Rather, like many other countries in different parts of the world, features of different models of journalism can be found in Nigeria corroborating Voltmer's (2013) claim that multiple systems co-exist in some countries. The characteristics of various models found in Nigeria are summarised in the table below and discussed in subsequent sections.

Table 3.1   *Features of various media systems in the Nigerian news media*

Liberal Model	The Polarized Pluralist Model	Democratic Corporatist Model	Polish Media System	Russian Model	Asian Model	*Ubuntu* African Worldview	South African Model
Commercial orientation (Many depend on adverts) Existence of many privately-owned media Relative freedom from state intervention	Limited circulation of newspapers (circulation figures continue to drop) Intervention in state-owned news media High political parallelism Weak professionalism in some news media.	High historical, cultural /religious influence Politically and commercially linked media co-exist Occasional state intervention in private news media.	Survival and commercial pressures	State intervention (in state-owned media) Political parallelism	Ethnic and religious pressures Political pressures	Group solidarity and belonging Propaganda journalism Journalism of association, affiliation and belonging	High political parallelism Social and Political influences

As seen in the table above, variants of the three media systems enunciated by Hallin and Mancini (2004) and other models can be found in Nigeria. Thus, as is the case with many other countries, attributes of various media systems are found in Nigeria similar to what Pfetsch (2013, p.163) called "paradigmatic constellations of media-politics relationships" which influence global systems.

Hallin and Mancini (2004) categorise 18 Western countries into North Atlantic, Northern European and Southern European which have different media systems operating in them. The media systems are the Liberal, Polarized Pluralist and Democratic Corporatist models. Hallin and Mancini (2004) propose four analytical dimensions for the models which are, the degree and nature of state involvement in the media; the degree of political parallelism (i.e. the level of formal or informal link of the media with political parties or institutions); the degree of professionalism in journalism in relation to independence and adherence to high ethical standard, and commitment to public service. Features of these and other models as found in Nigeria are discussed below.

3.5.1 The Liberal Model

Proposed as the model representing the media system in the United States, Britain, Ireland and Canada, its main features are commercial news market, limited amount of state intervention, high degree of journalistic professionalism and weak political parallelism. Nigeria exhibits two of these features. The commercial market orientation is strong in Nigeria where many news organisations depend on advertisement for their survival. No independent news media enjoys any subvention or subsidy from government so they rely on advertising revenue. Another feature is that most independent news organizations are, as the Liberal model prescribes, largely free from state intervention. However, state security agents

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sometimes invite journalists for questioning or conduct searches in media houses when they publish something government functionaries or agents are not happy with.

3.5.2 *The Polarized Pluralist Model*

Elements of this model, which was proposed as representing the media system in Mediterranean countries, can also be found in Nigeria. The model is characterised by limited circulation of papers, intervention of state, high political parallelism and a weak level of professionalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). Some of these features are seen in government owned newspapers in Nigeria, where politicians in government and their parties influence editorial appointments and what gets published. They have less appeal to the audience because they are seen more as megaphones of the political parties in power which control them, which results in poor circulation. The independent news media also exhibit some of the traits of the polarized pluralist model. For example, following the change in the global media ecology which has shifted interest away from newspapers, there are only a few mass circulation newspapers left in Nigeria. There is also a high level of formal and informal linkage between journalists and political parties or institutions. Many journalists relate with and rely on politicians as both potential sources of information and for financial patronage (Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003; Golwa, 2011; Kayode, 2011).

3.5.3 *Democratic Corporatist Model*

This model which is associated with Northern and Central European democracies exhibits a strong influence of historical, cultural, political and market forces; the co-existence of commercial and politically-linked media; little or no state intervention and a high degree of journalistic professionalism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004). In Nigeria, there is a strong influence

of historical, cultural, political and market forces in the news media (Pate, 2011b). Being a multi-ethnic country with over 250 ethnic nationalities, who are majorly divided along the Christian-Muslim religious lines, cultural and religious influences are strong within the society and this rubs off on the news media (Pate, 2011a; Suraj, 2013). Also, some of the news media are owned by politicians hence the tendency to be influenced by them. There is therefore the co-existence of commercially-oriented and politically linked news media in Nigeria (Daramola, 2006).

Based on the four analytical dimensions, aspects of the three models can be found in Nigeria with traits of the Liberal and Democratic Corporatist models dominant. As noted, this is yet to be well classified in literature and needs further exploration in future research.

3.5.4 Other Models

As already stated, like Nigeria, some other countries also exhibit the characteristics of different media models. For instance, Dabok-Ostrowska and Glowacki (2008) contend that the Polish media system is somewhere between the polarised pluralist and liberal models. They note that pressures of commercialization and tabloidization which followed foreign take overs of the news media were challenging journalism autonomy in the country. Although there are no such foreign take-overs in Nigeria, her news media face the pressures of commercialization and survival occasioned by dwindling income.

Similarly, Elema (2012) notes the influence of the political and business elites in imposing hegemonic patterns of power on the media in Russia where state intervention and political parallelism is dominant. Although state intervention in the news media in Nigeria is varied - with government-owned organisations experiencing more frequent intervention and private-owned, occasional intervention (usually when they publish what offends government

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officials) - affinity to the political class is common (Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003). There are thus some similarities between the two countries.

In the same vein, McCargo (2003, p.201) proposes an Asian model which he tagged 'partisan polyvalence' which depicts a situation of extreme partisan pressures on the media by various interests. He notes that the interests coexist and contest within the extremely diversified society. This is also applicable to Nigeria in some ways because various ethnic, religious and political interests exert pressure on the operations of the news media in different ways (Ochogwu, 2011; Golwa, 2011). As pointed out in 3.1, Nigerians have strong attachments to their ethnic and religious identities which reflect in various sectors of the country including the news media. Patronage of the news media by the various groups is related to whether they are perceived as friendly or antagonistic to their interests (Golwa, 2011).

From the above, it would be seen that while Nigeria cannot fit into any of the media systems discussed, but she exhibits some of their features. The existence of media patterns that are different from the ideal types have increased the call for the formulation of new models that will take cognizance of these varieties. Hadland (2012), for example, enunciates a new post-colonial African model of media-state relations that recognises the obstacles to democratization proposing that the news media should have a national development agenda. With reference to the situation in South Africa, he lists the preponderance of dominant single party, ethnic and tribal tensions, the rise of clientism, inequality and urban- rural divides, as some of these challenges. Similarly, Albuquerque (2012) in a discourse on the media system in Brazil calls for a model that specifies an active role for the news media as political agents in their own right.

The debate on the universal application of existing media system models is unlikely to end soon but Hallin and Mancini's (2004) three models, like the *Four Theories of the Press*

(Siebert, et al, 1956) before it, serve as a useful lens for comparative research of media systems in different parts of the world (Patterson, 2007). As Patterson asserts, "we understand media systems more fully by thinking about them through those models and by thinking about variations within the models" (2007, p.330).

For this study, the various elements outlined above are beneficial in the quest of a better understanding of socio-political and other influences on professional journalism standards in Nigeria.
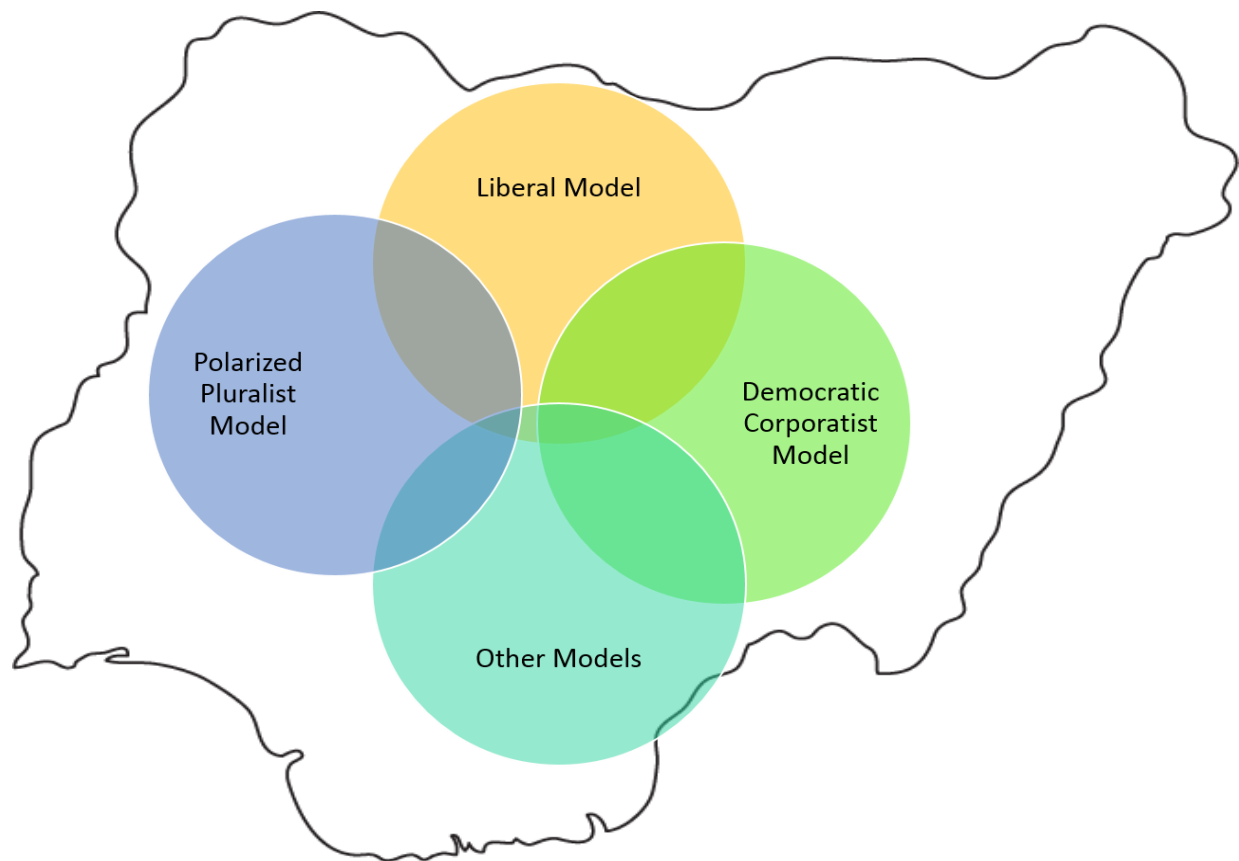
Figure 3.1   Map of Nigeria showing the interacting Media System Models.
Source: The Researcher

3.6 The Challenges of Journalism Practice in Nigeria

Nigeria had a vibrant press long before it secured independence from Britain in 1960 (Ogunlusi, 2013). Viewed in some quarters as one of the most vibrant in Africa, the Nigerian press (as the news media are generally referred to) was in the forefront of the struggle for independence and, later, the fight for the return of democracy to the country (Adesoji, 2006). As had been discussed, although there are no media conglomerates or well defined media systems as exist in the developed world, the vibrancy of the news media in Nigeria is buttressed by its plurality which ensures a counter-balancing of tendencies, because the audiences have access to a variety (NOUN, 2006).

However, a combination of the global and local phenomena in the news media industry appear to be generating responses from journalists which might account for the criticisms found in the literature (Adesoji, 2006; Daramola, 2006; UNDP, 2010). Factors like open disregard for journalism ethics, loss of interest or passion for the profession resulting in quest for opportunities to quit it for more profitable ventures, abandonment of codes of conduct resulting in the virtual institutionalizing of envelope journalism (offers of cash in exchange for coverage or turning a blind eye to wrong doing) are identified in the literature as practices among journalists which have resulted in a falling standard of journalism (Abidde, 2012; Adeyemi, 2006; Daramola, 2006; Jibo and Okoosi-Simbine, 2003). For example, Adeyemi (2013, p.221) observes that audience confidence in the news media in Nigeria "is today at an all-time low […]." Similarly, a UNDP (2010) report on the coverage of the 2007 election in Nigeria notes that journalists condoned election rigging by "looking the other way" (p. 63). Also, Jibo and Okoosi-Simbine (2003) accuse journalists of promoting the North-South divide and being biased in their reportage. Similarly, Adesoji, (2006) notes that the news media in Nigeria have departed from the noble roles they once played and are now deeply involved in corruption with envelope journalism almost becoming a norm. He also identifies

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the policy of incorporation, where journalists are offered political appointments as commissioners, special advisors or serve as contractors and media consultants to political leaders.

Abidde (2008) equally opines that journalists have ceased to be the conscience of the nation:

> Nigeria is in a mess. And no profession, save for party politics, mirrors what the country has become more than the journalism profession. Today, Nigerian Journalism is in a state of disarray […] the profession has become a cathedral of excesses, a pool of duplicity. However goes journalism goes a nation. In Nigeria, both are going to the dogs. (Para 1.).

On his part, Ochogwu (2011, p.3) identifies "harsh constricting conditions", "harsh socio-economic and political realities in the country which journalists also contend with", for their inability to report as they should. Probably owing to its novelty, intensity and protracted nature, the coverage of the *Boko Haram* insurgence in Nigeria has attracted the attention of scholars. *Boko Haram* insurgence refers to the sectarian violence perpetrated mainly in the North-Eastern part of Nigerian by an Islamic movement which wants to introduce the Islamic sharia law across the country in place of the secular system of government (Owens-Ibie, 2016). According to the Network of Civil Society Organisation over 23,000 people had been killed and over two million displaced by the activities of the group which employ suicide bombing, burning, looting against innocent civilians and communities as at 2016 (vanguardngr.com). Assessing the coverage of the insurgence, Maiangwa (2013, p.55) gives a negative rating of the news media, arguing that the news media and several others have "erroneously misinterpreted" the insurgence as another form of religious violence whereas to him, "Boko Haram is primarily a political reaction to bad governance, organized under the cloak of religion." Another negative verdict comes from Nwabueze and Ebeze (2013) who re-

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echo accusations that the news media in Nigeria contribute to worsening the state of insecurity and conflicts by their style of reportage. They accuse the media of being more concerned with maximizing profit and increasing audience base.

Okoro and Odoemelam (2013) in their work draw an ambivalent conclusion by returning a negative and positive verdict from a content analysis of four Nigerian newspapers (The Guardian, Daily Sun, Vanguard and This Day). They base their analysis on ten frames: response, political, economic, religious, ethnic, powerlessness, attribution of responsibility, labelling, human interest and conspiracy. These relate to reports on Boko Haram activities in 2012. They conclude that there were contrasting patterns in the coverage by the newspapers within the period.

In a slightly different study, Suraj (2013) who conducted another analysis of newspaper coverage of the insurgence by three dailies (The Guardian, The Nation and The Punch) from April to June, 2012 sought to establish the influence of political partisanship, media ownership and ethno- religious affiliation in the patterns of reportage by the newspapers. He found that they "avoided sensationalism" (p.116) in their coverage but that ownership and political affiliation influenced how they portrayed the Boko Haram stories.

Some others have criticized journalists in Nigeria for not upholding the ideals of journalism as practiced in other parts of the world (see Idowu, 2014; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003). Abidde (2008) argues that the social environment appears to have literarily beaten journalists into 'submission' such that journalists are either no longer professionally conscious or that they seek opportunities to abandon the profession for greener pasture. Some commentators also assert that journalists of this era no longer exhibit the kind of commitment that was in evidence some years ago. Abidde (2012) illustrates this in a review of the state of journalism in contemporary Nigeria:

Unlike the 1960s through the 1980s, news coverage is getting weaker and weaker. And many a time, critical examination of people and events are missing. In addition, you don't see strong investigative journalism, anymore. What passes for news, many a times, looks like government dictated public service announcement. And many editorials are nothing but apologies and infantile opposing viewpoints. Except on few instances, commentaries and opinion pieces by some columnists are dull and dumb. It is as if some are afraid to speak their mind; afraid to offend; afraid to lose favour; and afraid to push the envelope (para.6)

He adds:

And indeed, many journalists go on to work as media aides and or spokespersons for governors, ministers, and governmental agencies. Many trained journalists no longer care about the news or the news business. The financial reward is what most are after. And because the salary and overall compensation of the average journalist is so meagre, many resort to shady schemes just to augment their income (para. 9).

These perspectives raise curious issues that call for empirical investigation to ascertain the situation and this study is a response to this.

3.6.1 *Nigerian Journalists and Ethical Challenges*

Credibility is a foundational principle of journalism and it is threatened when journalists ignore ethical prescriptions in carrying out their duties (Onyebadi & Alajmi, 2014). According to Kalu (1989, p. 14), professional journalism "means being organized and having a code of ethics that works. Professionalism must be expressed in superior performance, ethical behaviour, journalistic diligence […]." One of the recurring issues in the literature about journalism practice in Nigeria is the phenomenon of 'envelope journalism' (e.g. Abidde, 2012; Adeyemi, 2013; Daramola, 2006). Journalists are accused of soliciting and collecting gifts which is against the ethical code guiding the profession. What framework is

in place to check or sanction journalists who operate unprofessionally or who violate the ethical code?

To ensure that practitioners do not engage in acts capable of eroding the credibility of the profession, various journalism professional groups prescribe an ethical code for members which, among others, enjoin them to act independently and avoid any act capable of eroding their credibility or influence their editorial decisions (Ogunlusi, 2013; Onyebadi & Alajmi, 2014)). For instance, the US based Society of Professional Journalists (SPJ), the National Union of Journalists of Britain and Northern Ireland, the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) and others in different parts of the world have ethical codes which warn against activities that could compromise journalistic integrity (McQuail, 2013). However, despite the ethical guides, the issue of solicitation and acceptance of gifts in various forms by journalists exist in different parts of the world (Onyebadi & Alajmi, 2014). Onyebadi and Alajmi (2014) assert that the practice goes by different pseudonyms and may be more prevalent in some countries than others. They also found that it has a global spread and could come in various forms including "all-expenses-paid trips provided by corporate organizations, tickets to event and all sorts of material gift items" (p.3).

Li, (2013) agrees that gift collection by journalists is not a new phenomenon while Sanders (2003) contends that it dates back to the 17th Century Europe. Skjerdal (2010) did a compilation of pseudonyms used for bribing reporters in different countries in Africa. According to him, the practice which is generally known as 'brown envelope' is called *soli* (short for solidarity) in Ghana and *ndalama yamatoko* (translated to mean money for buttocks) in Zambia. The Zambia pseudonym, according to him suggests that journalists are paid a kind of sitting allowance. Ristow (2010) found that in China, it is called *red envelope* while in Ukraine, it is referred to as *jeansa* (to describe the blue jeans commonly worn by journalists).

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Most studies tend to blame the poor financial and economic status of journalists for the phenomenon which predispose them to accepting inducements (see Kasoma, 2007; Li, 2013; Skjerdal, 2010. The studies also found that the situation is worse in developing countries especially in Africa, where the salary of journalists is low (Skjerdal, 2010; Mwesige, 2004). Onyebadi and Alajmi (2014) did a comparison of the salary earned by journalists in the United States and Zambia and found that whereas only about 18 per cent of the journalists surveyed in Zambia earned above 500 US dollars a month, the average monthly salary of a new communication graduate in the United States as at 2012 was $3,643. The authors described the gap as "phenomenon" (p.4) notwithstanding the different levels of economic development in both countries. According to Onyebadi and Alajmi, 2014, p. 4) the reporters who engage in 'gift' collection know what harm it does to journalism integrity but "the personal economic predicaments of the reporters who accept the inducements appear to take precedence over their adherence to ethical standard […]" This is the current reality of journalism practice in many developing countries like Nigeria.

3.6.2 *The Nigerian Press Council*

The Nigerian Press Council (NPC) like similar bodies in other parts of the world, was established to monitor and regulate the conduct of journalists in Nigeria, to ensure that they operate in accordance with professional norms (Daramola, 2005). Established by the Federal Government of Nigeria via Decree No. 85 of 1992 and amended by Act No. 60 of 1999, the NPC was designed to operate like similar journalism self-regulatory bodies in different countries to "make the press more responsible and also to fend-off restrictive government regulations and interference" (Daramola, 2005, p. 80). Hence, although it is a statutory regulator, it is expected to function in line with the liberal self-regulatory ideals practiced by

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journalists in developed democracies like the United Kingdom and the United States of America. Probably because it is constituted by various news media groups and with a few representatives of the government, it had been adjudged as ineffective and there are calls for an amendment of the law establishing it to enhance effectiveness (Ekpu, 2000). According to the decree establishing it, the NPC comprises 17 members made up of a chairman, four representatives of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), two representatives each, of the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), the Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON) and the public.

The council's functions are executed through four committees. These are, the Complaint Committee, the Research and Documentation Committee, the Registration and Disciplinary Committee and the Rights and Privilege Committee. The functions of the Nigerian Press Council according to Act 85 of 1992 include:

> *1. Enquiring into complaints about the conduct of the press and the conduct of any person or organization towards the press and exercising in respect of the complaints the powers conferred upon it under this Act;*

> *2. Monitoring the activities of the press with a view to ensuring compliance with the code of Professional and Ethical Conduct of the Nigeria Union of Journalists;*

> *3. Receiving application from, and documenting the print media and monitoring their performance to ensure that owners and publishers comply with the terms of their mission statements and objectives in liaison with the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria;*

> *4. Research into contemporary press development and engaging in updating press documentation;*

5. Fostering the achievement and maintenance of high professional standard by the Press;

6. Review developments likely to restrict the supply through the press, of information of public interest and importance or which are liable to prevent free access of press to information and advising on measures necessary to prevent or remedy such development; and

7. Ensure the protection of the rights and privileges of journalists in the lawful performance of their professional duties.

Evidence unearthed in this research project suggests that these functions are not being performed. The NPC is bogged down by personality clashes among the members and lack of agreement on how the functions would be executed. One of those interviewed for this research project, JP10, who was a member of the NPC council described it as 'moribund'. According to him, NPC "is supposed to be the regulatory organ for setting the standards and everything, but due to disagreement among the stakeholders, the body is just there, without a board, inactive and stuff like that" (Interview 10, 2015). Ray Ekpu, a former Secretary of the Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), one of the bodies constituting the NPC, blames the ineffectiveness of the council on its inability to enforce its decisions:

> The Nigerian Press Council, like several other press councils in the world, depended on moral suasion for its regulatory duties. But it soon found out that many editors would not even reply to its queries, would not appear before it to give testimony and would not publish the adjudications of the Council. They simply treated the Council with levity […] The Council could not enforce its decisions, could not impose sanctions (Ekpu, 2000, p. 72).

The above opinions tend to explain why a majority of respondents to this study rated the journalism regulatory bodies as ineffective.

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3.6.3 *The Nigerian Union of Journalists Code of Ethics*

The Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) doubles as a professional body and a trade union. As a professional body, it registers practising journalists and issues them with identification cards. The union is constituted by state councils which are made up of chapels formed by journalists employed by news media organisations in different states of the federation (Ogunlusi, 2013). Every professional journalist is expected to belong to the NUJ but there is no law making this compulsory. Like their counterparts in other parts of the world, the NUJ has a code of ethics to guide the conduct of members in carrying out their professional duties. The current code, also known as "The Ilorin Declaration" was adopted in 1998. The preamble to the code of ethics aptly captures its essence:

> Journalism entails a high degree of public trust. To earn and maintain this trust, it is morally imperative for every journalist and every news medium to observe the highest professional and ethical standards. In the exercise of these duties, a journalist should always have a healthy regard for the public interest (NUJ Code of Ethics).

The code has fifteen key provisions including, editorial independence, accuracy and fairness, decency, reward and gratification, public interest, and social responsibility:

1. **Editorial Independence:**

   Decisions concerning the content of news should be the responsibility of a professional journalist.

This implies that news content should not be influenced by non-professionals. Decisions as to what constitutes news must be taken by journalists without interference from proprietors, advertisers and other non-journalists on what gets published. The literature (Alan, 2012;

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Odunewu, 2000; Phillips, 2015) confirms that journalists face enormous pressure in the course of duty which ultimately influences journalistic output. This provision, meant to free journalists from such influences, has not achieved much as proprietors, editors and other interests influence editorial decisions (Odumu, 2009; Ogunyemi, 2014).

2. **Accuracy and Fairness:**

i. The public has a right to know; factual, accurate, balanced and fair reporting is the ultimate objective of good journalism and the basis of earning public trust and confidence.

ii. A journalist should refrain from publishing inaccurate and misleading information. Where such information has been inadvertently published, prompt correction should be made. A journalist must hold the right of reply as a cardinal rule of practice.

iii. In the course of his duties a journalist should strive to separate facts from conjecture and comment.

Truth is the cornerstone of journalism and this three-layered provision stresses this point. Accuracy and fairness in the reportage of issues is crucial considering the damage any inaccuracy could do to the credibility of a journalist and his/her organisation. According to the code, reports must not just be as accurate as possible but must be fair. Odunewu (2000, p. 2) asserts:

> Accuracy is also critical to ethical performance of a journalist. Stories free from mistakes should be the goal. It is unethical for a journalist to cut ethical corners for the sake of scooping the competition or meeting a deadline. If he should get it first, he should get it right.

The trust and credibility that journalists enjoy from their audience are based on the assumption that they would not publish inaccurate information. However, the level of

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observance of this clause is questionable going by accusations of bias and inaccuracies against the news media in Nigeria (Eke, 2014; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003).

3. **Privacy:**

As a general rule, a journalist should respect the privacy of individuals and their families unless it affects the public interest.

a. *Information on the private life of individuals and their families should only be published if it impinges on the public interest.*

b. *Publishing of such information about individuals as mentioned above should be deemed justifiable only if directed at:*

   i. *Exposing crime or serious misdemeanour;*

   ii. *Exposing anti-social conduct;*

   iii. *Protecting public health, morality and safety;*

   iv. *Preventing the public from being misled by some statement or action of the individual concerned.*

This clause which is backed by the Invasion of Privacy Law in Nigeria, aims at preventing undue intrusion into individual's private lives. Considering the distinction in law between public and private persons (Obateru, 2016) and the 'justifiable' conditions in sections i-iv of the clause, it is not surprising that the private lives of celebrities and public officers are sources of 'scoops' and exclusive stories for journalists globally and Nigeria is no exception. The dawn of *infotainment* in the media where journalists compete for gossip and similar stories (Christians, et al.; McQuail 2013) is undermining this clause. In a bid to 'satisfy' their audiences who Hachten (2012, p. 173) notes "want to be entertained by the news media, not challenged to think seriously about salient public issues" the news media pry into the private

lives of performing artists and other celebrities in a manner that tend to compromise their privacy (Odumu, 2009).

4. **Privilege/Non-disclosure:**

i. *A journalist should observe the universally accepted principles of confidentiality and should not disclose the source of information obtained in confidence.*

ii. *A journalist should not breach an agreement with a source of information obtained as "off-record" or as "background information".*

This article is meant to protect those who give usually 'privileged' information to journalists. This ensures that those who assist journalists in doing their job, mostly in confidence, are not endangered. A breach of confidentiality would make such 'sources' to lose confidence in journalists and refuse to volunteer such information in future. Would-be sources are also likely to be scared of giving information to journalists for fear that their identities could be divulged.

5. **Decency:**

i. *A journalist should dress and comport himself in a manner that conforms to public taste.*

ii. *A journalist should not present loud details, either in words or picture, of violence, sexual acts, abhorrent or horrid scenes.*

iii. *A journalist should refrain from using offensive, abusive or vulgar language.*

iv. *In cases involving personal grief or shock, enquiries should be carried out and approaches made with sympathy and discretion.*

v. *Unless it is in the furtherance of the public's right to know, a journalist should generally avoid identifying relatives or friends of persons convicted or accused of crime.*

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The section addresses different areas covered by journalistic activities and enjoins journalists to maintain 'good taste'. These include dressing well to command respect as it is considered that an inappropriately dressed person is unlikely to be taken seriously. With increasingly market-driven and commercialized journalism, the values specified in ii-v have been substantially eroded (Phillips, 2015). As Bourdieu (1998, p. 72 observes, the news media, are in a "permanent amnesia" of seeking for 'new' or 'catchy' news in a 'battle' for customers which makes them to publish horrid pictures, near-nude photographs and others hitherto considered as being in bad taste.

6. **Discrimination:**

   A journalist should refrain from making pejorative reference to a person's ethnic group, religion, sex or to any physical or mental illness or handicap.

This article of the code aims at protecting the underprivileged and other disadvantaged persons from ridicule or discrimination in the manner they are portrayed by the news media. It recognises the role of journalists in framing public opinion on issues and assumes that the manner in which people are presented in the news media could influence how the public relates to them. However, there is variance in its observance by journalists depending on the issue being treated. For example, the news media in Nigeria have been accused of exhibiting bias and indiscretion in the handling of ethnic and religious issues, which sometimes result in violence (Golwa, 2011; Nwabueze & Ebeze, 2013)

7. **Reward and Gratification:**
   i. *A journalist should neither solicit nor accept bribe, gratification or patronage to suppress or publish information.*
   ii. *To demand payment for the publication of news is inimical to the notion of news as a fair, accurate, unbiased and factual report of an event.*

This is a particularly thorny and interesting article of the code. The section forbids journalists from soliciting or accepting a bribe, gratification or patronage in return for publishing or by contrast suppressing information. News that is induced can hardly be fair, accurate and unbiased (Kayode, 2011). The 'brown envelope syndrome' which the literature says is widespread among journalists in Nigeria (Abidde, 2008; Eke, 2014; Nwabueze, 2010) is covered by this code. This affirms that if the 'syndrome' is widespread as suggested in the literature, it constitutes a violation of the code of ethics for professional journalists and any journalist engaging in it is being unethical. Golwa, (2011) and Onyebadi and Alajmi, (2014) argue that certain factors such as irregular or poor salary dispose journalists to collecting 'reward and gratification' which might include collection of money or other favours such as paid trips or other gifts, even though they are aware that it is unethical. This does not, however, justify the syndrome. Another issue is, where does advertisement and profitability stand in an era of news commercialisation? Is it possible to solicit for patronage (i.e. advertisement, supplement, etc.) and still remain objective in matters concerning one's potential customers?

If news organisations officially charge a fee to cover a news event as is currently the case in some news organisations, is this not a breach of the code? In addition, would journalists not be taking a cue from their organisations if they demand 'something' for themselves when covering an event for which their employer has charged? Would such organisations be morally justified to sanction their employees who demand for or receive gratification from those they cover? The findings of this study presented and discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six provide answers to these questions.

8. Violence:

A journalist should not present or report acts of violence, armed robberies, terrorist activities or vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies such acts in the eyes of the public.

This section enjoins journalists to avoid 'sensationalising' news or glorifying violence or criminal acts, but the stiff competition in media industry where professional journalists are competing with rival organisations and citizen journalists appear to be undermining its observance (Galadima, 2011). In the quest to give different angles to news or get 'exclusive' stories, many journalists go for 'scoops' which make them tend to glorify violence or terrorism. For example, Suraj (2013), in a study on the coverage of the *Boko Haram* insurgency by some newspapers in Nigeria, observes that the media aphorisms, 'if it bleeds, it leads' or 'bad news sells' were evident in the coverage, which made it appear that the news media were partners with the terrorists. He states that "it is something of a common fact that the media thrive in crisis reportage and terrorists have exploited this seeming weakness of the press to their full advantage" (Suraj, 2013, p.103).

In a similar study, Okorie & Chukuma (2012, p, 53) report that the coverage of the *Boko Haram* insurgents by the broadcast media "glorified the act of terrorism". Bourdieu (1998, p. 4) equally opines that journalists for fear of being boring, "opt for confrontations over debates, prefer polemics over rigorous argument, and in general, do whatever they can to promote conflict". Owens-Ibie (2016, p. 83) acknowledges the dilemma faced by journalists in this regard:

> Though it remains attractive in the increasingly commercialised press, covering and communicating conflict is an uphill task particularly for local practitioners who must effectively screen major news sources. Their professional challenge is how this is done whilst maintaining the desired level

of commitment to truth, accuracy and respecting demands of national security and personal safety.

As the section states, journalists should not, in a quest to shore up sales or ratings, contravene the code by publishing stories that tend to glorify violence, terrorist activities and ostentatious lifestyle. They should rather, exercise caution "in reporting activities that undermine social values so that reports about them do not appear to justify or present them as values of a nation and a people" (Odumu, 2009, p. 55).

9. Children and Minors:

A journalist should not identify, either by name or picture, or interview children under the age of 16 who are involved in cases concerning sexual offences, crimes and rituals or witchcraft either as victims, witnesses or defendants.

This article aligns with the universal principle of protecting children and minors who are deemed not to be old enough to fully realize the consequences of their actions, so that nothing is done to jeopardize their future. The popular strategy adopted among the news media in order not to breach this article is the use of illustrations or pseudonyms, where necessary, to protect the identity of such minors.

10. Access to Information:

A journalist should strive to employ open and honest means in the gathering of information. Exceptional methods may be employed only when the public interest is at stake.

The section enjoins journalists to obtain information through acceptable methods, such as making their identity known and making clear their purpose when obtaining information. However, journalists in Nigeria and other developing countries face hostilities from public officers and others affected when investigating stories. Even with the Freedom of Information

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Act, many public officers and institutions still make access to information difficult for not only journalists, but other members of the public. The difficulty in accessing needed information tends to encourage some journalists to hide under the 'public interest' clause to employ unconventional means to obtain information while investigating stories (Odumu, 2009).

Public Interest:

A journalist should strive to enhance national unity and public good.

This article encourages journalists to avoid anything capable of undermining national unity or public good. A journalist is expected always to pursue and defend public good. His/her professional activities should promote national unity and the well-being of society generally. This means that journalists should not disseminate information likely to result in a breach of peace or create disaffection among the people. Despite this code, journalists and news media in Nigeria allegedly heighten religious and ethnic divisions within the country through the manner they handle ethnic religious and political issues (Galadima, 2011; Ochogwu, 2011).

Shaw (2011, p. 364) notes that the news media tend to pursue 'dishonest' or 'propaganda' journalism "which fits the problematic war journalism model" as against 'honest' journalism which fits the peace journalism model.

11. Social Responsibility:

A journalist should promote universal principles of human rights, democracy, justice, equity, peace and international understanding.

To be socially responsible according to this article, is not to do anything capable of undermining universal principles of human rights, justice, equality, peace and international understanding. It entails reconciling freedom of the press with a responsibility to society such

that journalists would not in the exercise of their freedom, compromise or undermine the principles mentioned in the code. In line with this code, the news media in Nigeria often take up cases of human rights abuses against citizens and also support democracy. Nigerian journalists, for instance, were very active in the struggle for a return of democracy in the country after many years of military rule (Adelabu, 2008). However, the reverse also appears to be the case when it comes to ethnic, religious issues whose coverage is seen as biased (Pate, 2011a).

Plagiarism:

A journalist should not copy, wholesale or in part, other people's work without attribution and/or consent.

This section warns against the use of other people's works without permission or credit. It advises journalists not to 'steal' the work of other people and to acknowledge the source of any material they use. In spite of this warning, cases of plagiarism are observed in the news media in Nigeria. The advent of the internet has promoted this tendency among journalists as many access information online and use without necessary acknowledgement (Odumu, 2009). For example, in the print media, some journalists are reported to copy verbatim, news stories from their colleagues and append their byline (Daramola, 2006).

12. Copyright:

i.   *Where a journalist reproduces a work, be it in print, broadcast, artwork or design, proper acknowledgements should be accorded the author.*

ii. *A journalist should abide by all rules of copyright established by national and international laws and conventions.*

Like the article on plagiarism, this urges journalists to respect the rights of the owners of the intellectual property they use in the course of duty through acknowledgement or seeking

permission where necessary. To avoid flouting this article, journalists need to be abreast of the relevant sections of the copyright law which stipulates guidelines on usage of other people's intellectual property.

13. Press Freedom and Responsibility:

A journalist should strive at all times to enhance press freedom and responsibility.

This article enjoins journalists to be advocates of press freedom. While they enjoy this freedom to express and disseminate information, they should not undermine or prevent other journalists and other people from enjoying the same freedom. This may apply more to journalists in management positions who determine what gets published. Ogunsiji (1989) notes the tendency by some editors and other senior journalists to dictate what and how journalists under them report, to suit certain interests. While some of their actions might be to ensure good taste, balance or responsibility, the intention of the article to make all journalists promote press freedom with responsibility for enhancing professionalism is clear.

As pointed out in the discussion of various sections of the code of ethics, the observance of the code among journalists in Nigeria is varied. While some strive to abide by the tenets, others do not (Idowu, 2000). The literature on ethics in the Nigerian media rates the level of observance as low (Abidde, 2012; Eke, 2014; Esan, 2016; Kayode, 2011). Different reasons have been adduced for the situation. Odumu (2009, p. 59) explains:

> The tenets of the Journalism code of Ethics are too general and wide in content without specific sanctions attached to any of them. This superficial promulgation of a document that should be sacrosanct gives any reader of the code, the impression that the document is not a serious one and can be treated with levity. Perhaps, this is one of the reasons why journalists themselves do not respect the contents of the code and flout them with impunity.

While Odumu might have a point, there is more to the observance of ethics than the absence of sanctions in the code. It is doubtful if prescription of sanctions alone would ensure the observance of ethics without countenancing other factors that promote or dispose journalists to flouting them. Moreover, the stipulation of penalties for crimes in various countries' laws have not stopped the commission of such crimes since other factors come into play. Odunewu (2000, p. 4) also notes that "there is no legally enforceable code of ethics that reflects industrial wide agreement on how journalists should behave". This perspective is probably based on the lack of agreement among news media owners and managers on some ethical issues in journalism practice (Odumu, 2009).

3.6.4 *Journalists in Nigeria and the Concept of Development Journalism*

Another concern of journalists in developing countries like Nigeria is making ethical choices between reporting as they should and living up to the ideals of Development Journalism which enjoins journalists to be partners in development (Kasoma, 2007). The idea of development journalism gained attention among journalism scholars for about 50 years in the search for journalistic models that would be suitable for the peculiarities of developing democracies especially in Asian and African countries (Hanusch & Uppal, 2015; McQuail, 2005). Development journalism argues that journalism should be an agent of development within the society in which it operates and should partner with government to pursue the development agenda (Obijiofor & Hanusch, 2011).

Various scholars have their perspectives on the concept. For instance, Waisbord (2012) identifies communitarian and statist strands of development journalism. According to him, the communitarian perspective is community and rural-oriented, seeking to promote social development like health, education and other economic issues that affect a majority of the people. It is a shift from the elite-oriented journalism of paying no attention to the concerns

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of the less-privileged. The statist strand of development journalism identified by Waisbord (2012:149) argues that journalists should be involved in the "broad political and social efforts towards development, national integration, and internal cooperation." The two strands are relevant to Nigeria where journalists have been accused of always neglecting the rural areas unless a big story breaks in them and where ethnic and religious conflicts frequently occur (Idowu, 2014).

Also, Romano (2005) presents five variants of development journalism where journalists are nation builders, partners of government, agents of empowerment, watchdogs and guardians of transparency. As he argues, under these types of development journalism, objectivity is downplayed for journalism to be able to play the identified roles. There is also *Ubuntu,* which is a coinage used to describe a variant of development journalism in which journalists are active participants and not mere observers in promoting development and harmony in their communities. Under the Afrocentric model, African values of compassion, harmony and reciprocity should be guiding principles (Kasoma, 1999).

However, as noted in a previous section, development journalism has been criticized for not delivering on its various postulations as it has been hijacked by political leaders in developing countries who employ it to block any form of criticism or to justify misrule (Hanusch & Uppal, 2015). It has also been described as a veneer for state control of the news media and a smokescreen used by dictators "to subject their press to iron controls and strict censorship" (Altschull, 1995, p. 236). Waisbord (2012, p. 155) agrees that development journalism had been plagued by "theoretical rigor' which refers to the rigidity of its prescriptions. He argues that some of its ideals are still relevant and suggested a fine-tuning of some ideals ascribed to it such as unquestionable support for government, which "are antithetical to democratic governance and civic life." He stresses the importance of participation, debate and criticism to identify priorities and agree on what needs to be done. Oso (1991) agrees that submitting

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to the idea of development journalism which advocates media's support for government's development efforts, would compromise the ideals of their profession. According to Oso (1991, p.50)

> The implication of the practice of development journalism is that the autonomy of the media is circumscribed by and subordinated to nationally (elite) defined political and economic goals. The mass media thus become instruments (Nigerian politicians would say partners) for the prosecution and attainment of these goals.

Despite the criticism, the idea of being partners in national development is still popular among journalists in developing parts of the world (Hanustch & Uppal, 2015).

3.6.5 *Journalism and Politics in Nigeria*

As noted in the discussion of the Nigerian media system, there is a strong link between journalists and politics in Nigeria (Pate, 2011b). The symbiotic relationship between journalism and politics dates back to the pre-independent era when nationalists agitating for Nigeria's independence used the news media as a major campaign platform (Ogunlusi, 2013). This relationship has continued to blossom because politicians strive to use the news media to achieve their ends while journalists rely on them as news sources and for patronage (Daramola, 2006). Oso (2012, p.272) states:

> From inception, politics has served as the main staple in the menu of the Nigerian press. Due to the character of the colonial government under which it evolved, the Nigerian press assumed a highly political profile from birth in the hands of its owner-journalists […]. Even during the military regime which spanned a period of more than 30 years of the nation's 50-year post-independence existence, it was difficult to suppress the press high-political temper.

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Pate (2011b) argues that a vibrant media system is vital to the enthronement and sustenance of democratic ideals. Like their counterparts in other parts of the world, the news media in Nigeria often receive commendation and bashing at various times over the coverage of political and other issues. Pate (2003) views this as a reflection of the socio-economic, tribal, political and other contradictions in the country. He asserts that the ability of the news media to fulfil their responsibility of being responsive to those who look up to them for information and education is dependent on various factors both internal and external.

Similarly, Oso (1991, p.43) notes that the "overt political nature" of the Nigerian news media had its roots in the anti-colonial agitation in which it was involved. He argues that the separation of politics from journalism in Nigeria had remained incomplete contending that in pursuing national goals such as promoting unity and development, the journalism ideals of neutrality, objectivity and detachment are often compromised by the news media.

Pate (2011b) concurs, stressing the importance of a vibrant media system to the enthronement and sustenance of democratic ideals. He argues that politicians posed the greatest challenge to the ability of the news media to play their expected role in strengthening democracy. According to Pate (2011b, para. 32) "the non tolerant behaviour of politicians to alternative views or options […] is frightening and threatening to democratic values." He lists underfunding, ownership influence, commercialization which prevents those without means from engagement with the media, and poor equipment and training as some of the problems inhibiting journalism performance in Nigeria.

3.6.6   *Journalists in Nigeria and Conflicts*

As a multi-ethnic country with varied interests, conflicts between and among various interests occur regularly in Nigeria something which journalists have to cover. The *Boko Haram* problem is just one of such and oftentimes journalists are either accused of sensationalizing

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the conflicts and/or taking sides (see Idowu, 2014; Ochogwu, 2011). In some cases too, journalists are accused of provoking conflicts by the way they report or are blamed for working with the authorities (government) to cover up facts which they fail to report (Pate, 2011a). According to Suraj (2013, p. 97) despite being arguably the most vibrant in Africa, the Nigerian media is often enmeshed in accusations and statements of ethnic biases through which crisis is aggravated.

Journalists in Nigeria are not alone in receiving such blame because the coverage of conflicts often attracts knocks for the news media in many other places. Blumler and Cushion (2013) describe what looks like a no-win situation for journalists in the handling of conflicts. They cite as example, the coverage of US military actions in Afghanistan in 2001 and the Gulf War of 1991 in which journalists who critiqued or asked questions or reflected alternative views were branded unpatriotic or even accused or treason. This, according to the authors, was because most sections of the media had taken sides with government and would not interrogate any of her claims.

McQuail (2013.p.21) notes that in periods of crisis, war, or national emergency, the news media voluntarily cooperate with the authorities "both by way of positive acts of news selection and access, and also by omission or self-censorship." This seeming 'surrender' of journalistic independence during crisis has also been acknowledged by Moeller (2004). Allan and Zelizer (2004) identify issues associated with coverage of conflicts to include, the influence of censorship and propaganda; the 'us' and 'them' news narratives; access to sources; 24/7 rolling news and the tension between objectivity, patriotism and humanitarianism.

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Probably in realization of the difficulty journalists face in balancing between playing their role as information givers and at the same time avoiding possible escalation of a conflict through their report, the concept of 'peace journalism', which explores alternatives to conflicts in reporting news, has evolved (see Lee, Maslog & Kim, 2006; McGoldrick & Lynch, 2005). Peace journalism encourages journalists to deliberately pick facts and information that would promote peace and not those likely to escalate a conflict. According to McGoldrick and Lynch (p. 314), by pursuing "careful, consistent, and conscientious application of peace journalism practices, the peace journalist hopes to create a setting in which the causes of and possible solutions to the conflict become transparent." Peace journalism is being propagated in Nigeria by various institutions who have been training journalists in this regard (Ochogwu, 2011).

3.6.7 Professional and 'Citizen' Journalism in Nigeria

Globally, the advent of the Internet and the access it affords individuals to generate, gather and disseminate content has brought about what is known as citizen journalism or what McQuail (2013) calls 'deprofessionalisation' of journalism. Bowman and Willis (2003, p. 9) define citizen journalism as when individual non-journalist plays an active role in collecting, reporting, analyzing and disseminating news and information for the purpose of providing "independent, reliable, accurate wide-ranging and relevant information." Dare (2011, p. 15) illustrates it thus:

> A citizen at a location of an important event instantly gets the opportunity to capture the event and feed the content into the various social media outlets in cyber space […]. We see almost every day on the internet diverse acts of journalism done by ordinary citizens who share information and videos among themselves.

Dare (2011) asserts further that citizen journalism is thriving in Nigeria because of the explosion in internet penetration which jumped from 0.1 per cent in the late 1990s to year 2000, to 28.9 per cent in 2010. The internet penetration rate in Nigeria had risen to 48 per cent by 2014 (Freedomhouse.org) with about 67 million Nigerians said to have been online in 2014 (internetlive.com). The leap in internet access rate is linked to the rapid spread in the use of mobile phones among Nigerians a development which Dare (2011, p. 21) says,

> […] has gradually created a ready-made audience base for the journalistic outputs of citizen journalism on one hand, while on the other hand, cell phone-wielding audiences have become volunteer citizen journalists providing information, news and videos – the life-blood of citizen journalism.

Not only has the 'monopoly' of news dissemination which professional journalists enjoyed hitherto, been broken, journalists now, in a reversal of roles, get notice of breaking news from 'non-professionals'. In other words, professional journalists now monitor 'citizen' journalists on different platforms for news breaks (Dare, 2011). Thus, 'citizen' journalism has altered the foundation of the profession (Alan, 2012).

Dare (2011) submits that the making and dissemination of news is no longer exclusive to journalists because with the internet, audience members have changed from being passive receivers of news to active creators and disseminators of content. Gillmor in Dare (2011) states that ubiquitous tools have enabled the audience to challenge the erstwhile hegemony of the mass media by becoming creators and producers of content. To Wihbey (2014, p.2) the internet has brought many hitherto obscure people into limelight:

> Because of the Web, we have seen amazing examples of "nobodies" becoming "somebodies" overnight, of whiplash-fast events arising in previously obscure corners of the world. We witness instances of super-empowered citizens, viral phenomena, and the seemingly instant coordination of protests and celebrations alike. Memes and hashtags zip and proliferate.

Ogola (2015, p. 99) concurs that new media technologies have brought phenomenal developments into journalism practice by providing opportunities for news audiences in Africa to assert their discursive interests. "The possibilities which the new platforms and technologies make available to users, make them particularly useful in fighting both the overt and covert censorship policies instituted by repressive governments." This trend explains Wasserman's (2014, p.2) position that "questions of media access and assessments of how access can be broadened by new media technologies remain important topics on the research agenda in the field of African journalism."

Although citizen journalism has changed journalism practice from a lecture to a conversation and has 'democratized' information dissemination (Dare, 2011), its unregulated nature has raised concerns. Alan (2012) notes that citizen journalists are accused of being subjective and failing to separate facts from values and opinion. He distinguished between what he called the 'raw' journalist who knows little or nothing of principles, in need of university education and the 'citizen' with 'day jobs'.

From this literature review, certain key issues have emerged on journalism practice in Nigeria. First is the fact that poor conditions of service, lack of job security and an unfriendly working environment are negatively affecting the standard of journalism practice in Nigeria. The issue of envelope journalism was also prominent in the literature. Second, the commercialisation drive by the news media undermines ethical considerations and journalists often struggle to balance different interests. There is also the impact of 'citizen' journalism which has altered traditional professional journalism practice. All these seem to be taking a toll on professional standards in various ways. These issues motivated the researcher to seek an understanding of precisely how professional challenges are impacting journalistic practices in Nigeria and the responses of journalist to them, through this research project.

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3.7   Conclusion

This chapter focussed on the development of journalism in Nigeria from pre-colonial up to modern times. It discussed the different epochs in the development of the print media from which journalism development commenced as well as the broadcast media which emerged later and which remained a government monopoly until the 20th Century. It showed how the liberalisation of broadcasting has translated into increased access to radio and television stations in the country. The chapter also examined various issues related to the normative roles of journalism as propounded in McQuail's (2013) Social Theory of Journalism and Bourdieu's (1998) Field Theory, in relation to Nigeria. It analysed the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria in relation to existing ethical and regulatory frameworks to justify the necessity for an empirical study on how contemporary challenges - and the response of journalists to them - impact professional journalism standards in Nigeria. The next chapter discusses the methodology for the research project.

Chapter Four

Researching Journalists' Response to Professional Challenges: A Methodology

4.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter explains and justifies the methodological approach of this research and outlines its chosen research methods. It provides detail of the incorporation of ethical standards into the research process. The chapter explained the project design, the development of research instruments, selection of participants, the pilot study, and the data collection and analysis process.

4.2 Methodology

Research methods are core to scientific activity and provide a means through which intellectual development and understanding of phenomena within society are enhanced (May, 2011). While some authors use the terms 'method' and 'methodology' interchangeably, (e.g. Somech & Lewin, 2005), some others see them as distinct activities of the process (see for instance, Leedy & Ormrod, 2005; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Schram, 2006). In a review of the different positions, Mackenzie and Knipe (2006, p. 7) assert:

> The most common definitions suggest that *methodology* is the overall approach to the research linked to the paradigm or theoretical framework while the *method* refers to the systematic modes, procedures or tools used for collection and analysis of data.

This study adopted the above distinction by viewing **methodology** as the overall research approach linked to the pragmatism worldview which guides mixed methods research (Creswell, 2014) and **method** as the procedure used in collecting and analyzing secondary

and primary source documentation and data. Details of the methods and methodology are discussed in subsequent sections.

4.3   The Research Process

Research is a process which involves various steps and stages (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Punch, 2006). According to Punch (2006 p.2) research requires "a process of planning, designing and setting up of the research, including placing it in different context and connecting it to relevant literature." Mackenzie and Knipe (2006, p.10) argue that research is "cyclical with the researcher returning to earlier steps while at the same time moving ahead to later steps."

This study was conducted in line with these arguments. It adopted Punch's (2006, p.16) simplified model of research which involves the following:

- Framing the research in terms of research questions

- Determining what data are necessary to answer those research questions

- Designing the research to collect and analyze those data

- Using the data and the result of the post-data analysis to answer the
  research questions.

Punch (2012, p.7) argues that methods should follow from questions, not the other way round and that what a researcher does should be guided by what he or she wants to find out in a 'question-method fit'. Research involves investigating the relationship between two or more variables, taking into cognizance previous studies on that relationship through a literature review (Gray, 2014). According to Gray (2014, p.35), a research project should begin with identifying what is being researched linked to "your appreciation and commitment to one or more of the epistemological stances" before deciding what data gathering tool or approach to use. In line with the above positions, the researcher, upon identifying the research problem

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(see Chapter 1), went from framing the research questions (see Chapter 1) to deciding on what data were needed to answer the research questions and what instruments would assist to achieve the set objectives.

4.4   Purpose of the Research

Social research has many purposes, but the three most common are exploration, description and explanation (Babbie, 2007). However, most researches serve more than one of these purposes (Merrigan & Huston, 2009). For exploration research, the researcher examines a new interest and conducts a research to familiarize him or herself with the topic. According to Babbie (2007), the three major goals of exploration studies are to give the researcher a better understanding of the phenomenon and satisfy his curiosity, ascertain if a more extensive study needs to be undertaken and to develop appropriate methods to be used in future studies. For a descriptive study, the researcher, he adds, describes situations and events based on careful observation. A lot of qualitative studies aim at description but sometimes follow up to examine the 'why' of the observed patterns and their implications (Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2014; Gray. 2014). Thus, an explanatory study accounts for why the situation described is so by providing the reason(s) for the phenomenon.

This study is descriptive and analytical, seeking to provide evidence for and understand the 'what' and 'how' of the phenomenon being studied which is, in this case, the challenges of professional journalism practice in Nigeria, the response of journalists to it and how this is impacting the standard of practice. The data gathered from the field and analysis of them to create findings allowed this understanding, which then prompted the development of an explanatory framework, *the survival struggle in journalism practice in Nigeria* which is the major conceptual contribution of this study.

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4.5   The Research Worldview

It was indicated in Chapter One that Pragmatism is the philosophical underpinning for this study. The importance of the relationship among the philosophical assumption, the research design and the specific procedure for achieving the ends of the approach cannot be over-emphasized (Creswell, 2014). Mackenzie and Knipe (2006) contend that the choice of paradigm establishes the intent, motivation and expectation for a research project.

Research paradigm or worldview relates to the development of knowledge in a particular field and the nature of that knowledge (Babbie, 2007; Saunders, Lewis, & Thornhill, 2012). Each worldview or philosophical position is guided by ontological and epistemological assumptions to which it subscribes (Merrigan & Huston, 2009). Ontology is concerned with the nature of social reality whereas epistemology refers to what is considered acceptable ways in which this reality can be got or accessed (Blaikie, 2007). According to Saunders, et al. (2012), different research philosophies are suited for achieving different things depending on the research question(s) a study seeks to answer. For this research which sets out to identify the contemporary challenges facing journalists and how their responses impact professionalism journalism practice in Nigeria, the pragmatic worldview which is problem-centred, pluralistic and realist-world practice centred and focuses on the consequences of action (Creswell, 2009) is deemed appropriate. More so, this research project has also made recommendations relevant to its findings.

As stated earlier, various research paradigms have developed over time and have been accepted as influential in the way knowledge is studied or interpreted (Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006; Mertons, 2005). They also define the motivation and expectations for research. Although, as already indicated, this study is hinged on the pragmatic worldview, it is

considered germane to examine the positions of some other common paradigms found in literature which were also studied:

4.5.1 Positivist/Postpositivist Paradigm

Also referred to as science research or the scientific method, positivism originated from the works of Aristotle, Francis Bacon, John Locke, and Emmanuel Kant (Mertons, 2005). It is rooted in the view that causes determine outcomes and that it is possible to study the social world the same way as the natural world which would provide explanations of a causal world (Creswell, 2003; Mertons, 2005). Positivists test theories or describe an experience through observation and measurement. Positivism was developed after World War II into post-positivism which works on the assumption that every research is influenced by a number of well-developed theories (Mackenzie & Knipe 2006; Mertens, 2015). It holds that theoretical assumptions are tentative as new findings and understanding might eventually supplant them. Positivist and postpositivist research is mostly associated with quantitative methods of data collection and analysis but O'Leary (2004) views postpositivism differently. According to the author, "postpositivism is intuitive and holistic, inductive and exploratory with findings that are qualitative in nature" (pp.6-7). O'Leary's position conflicts with the more widely used definition as it tends to align with the constructivist paradigm, but it might well fit into the category of 'new findings' which might be further developed and become more popular under the paradigm..

4.5.2 Interpretivist/Constructivist Paradigm

This paradigm grew out of the philosophy of Edmund Husserl's phenomenology and the works of German philosophers who studied interpretative understanding which they called hermeneutics (Mertens, 2005; Creswell, 2014). It seeks an understanding of the world of human experience and argues that reality is socially constructed. It differs from the

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postpositivist paradigm which begins with a theory. Rather, it inductively develops a theory or patterns of meanings from what is being studied, relying upon the views of participants (Creswell, 2009; Mertens, 2005). Creswell (2014, p.8) explains that social constructivists believe that individuals develop subjective meaning to their experiences in trying to understand "the world in which they live and work" and that meanings are not imprinted but are rather "negotiated socially and historically." The researcher therefore generates a theory or identifies patterns of meaning that emerge from interpretation of data. The inductive approach uses evidence from data "to establish patterns, consistencies and meanings" (Gray, 2014, p. 18).

4.5.3   *Transformative Paradigm*

This paradigm developed in the 1980s and 1990s as a reaction to the postulations of the dominant research paradigms – post-positivist, constructivist and pragmatist - and practices which were seen by its advocates as discriminatory and restrictive (Gray, 2014; Mertens, 2005). Transformative researchers argue that much of sociological and psychological theory in the dominant paradigms were based on "white, able-bodied male perspective and was based on male subjects" (Mertons, 2005, p. 17), which did not adequately address issues of social justice and marginalized peoples. They thus argue that inquiry should be "intertwined with politics and a political agenda" (Creswell, 2003, p. 9) which will incorporate an action agenda for reform to transform the lives of the participants, the institutions where people work and live and even the researcher's life. Mertens (2010) cited in Creswell (2014, p. 10) gave the following as the key features of the transformative paradigm or worldview:

- It places central importance on the study of lives and experiences of diverse groups that have traditionally been marginalized. Of special interest for these diverse groups is how their lives have been

constrained by oppressors and the strategies that they use to resist, challenge and subvert these constraints.

- In studying these diverse groups, research focuses on inequities based on gender, race, ethnicity, disability, sexual orientation, and socioeconomic class that result in asymmetric power relationships.

- The research in the transformative worldview links political and social actions to these inequities.

- Transformative research uses a program theory of beliefs about how a program works and why the problems of oppression, domination, and power relationships exist.

In essence, the Transformative worldview serves as a voice for the marginalised or oppressed within society by employing research to draw attention to issues affecting them and advancing an agenda for change.

4.5.4   *Pragmatism*

Pragmatism, which guides this research, is generally associated with mixed methods studies (Creswell, 2014). It is not committed to any particular philosophy but affords researchers freedom to choose the methods and techniques that they deem most suitable for their purpose (Creswell, 2014; May, 2011). Pragmatist researchers employ mixed methods to provide the best understanding of research problems in the belief that truth is what works at a given time (Babbie, 2007). They examine the 'what' and 'how' to research based on what they intend to do with it (Morgan, 2007, Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010). Pragmatism as a new paradigm challenges the assumptions of older approaches that were rooted in the philosophy of knowledge and provides promising new directions for understanding the nature of social research (Morgan, 2014). Creswell (2014, p.110) notes that "for the mixed method

researcher, pragmatism opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews and different assumptions as well as different forms of data collection and analysis."

Morgan (2014) advocates pragmatism as a new philosophical paradigm for social research irrespective of whether the research uses qualitative, quantitative or mixed methods. He posits that the new pragmatism paradigm should replace older philosophy of knowledge approach which saw social research in terms of ontology, epistemology and methodology to "demonstrating the broader value of pragmatism as a philosophical system along with its immediate practicality of issues such as research design" (p.1045). Pragmatists are concerned with solution to problems and adopt all approaches to understand the research problem instead of focusing on methods (Creswell, 2014).

On his part, Gray (2014) does not see pragmatism as a new philosophy. Rather, he sees it as a relatively old philosophy which developed from the works of Charles Pierce, William Jones and John Dewey in America at the beginning of the 20th Century which is just witnessing a revival. Among other reasons, pragmatism is regaining popularity because it provides an epistemological justification for mixing approaches and methods as legitimate and in some cases necessary (Brannon, 2005; Gray, 2014; Morgan, 2014).

To Johnson, Onwuegbuzie and Turner (2007) mixed methods research uses the pragmatic philosophy which views knowledge as being socially constructed based on real world experience. According to them, it employs induction to identify patterns, deduction to test theories and hypotheses, as well as abduction, finding and using the best explanations possible for understanding the results. Generally, pragmatists argue that research methods should not be "determined dogmatically" (Gray, 2014, p. 195) based on assumptions linked to some paradigm but should rather derive from the nature of the research questions and what is considered the best way to obtain useful and workable answers (Creswell, 2014).
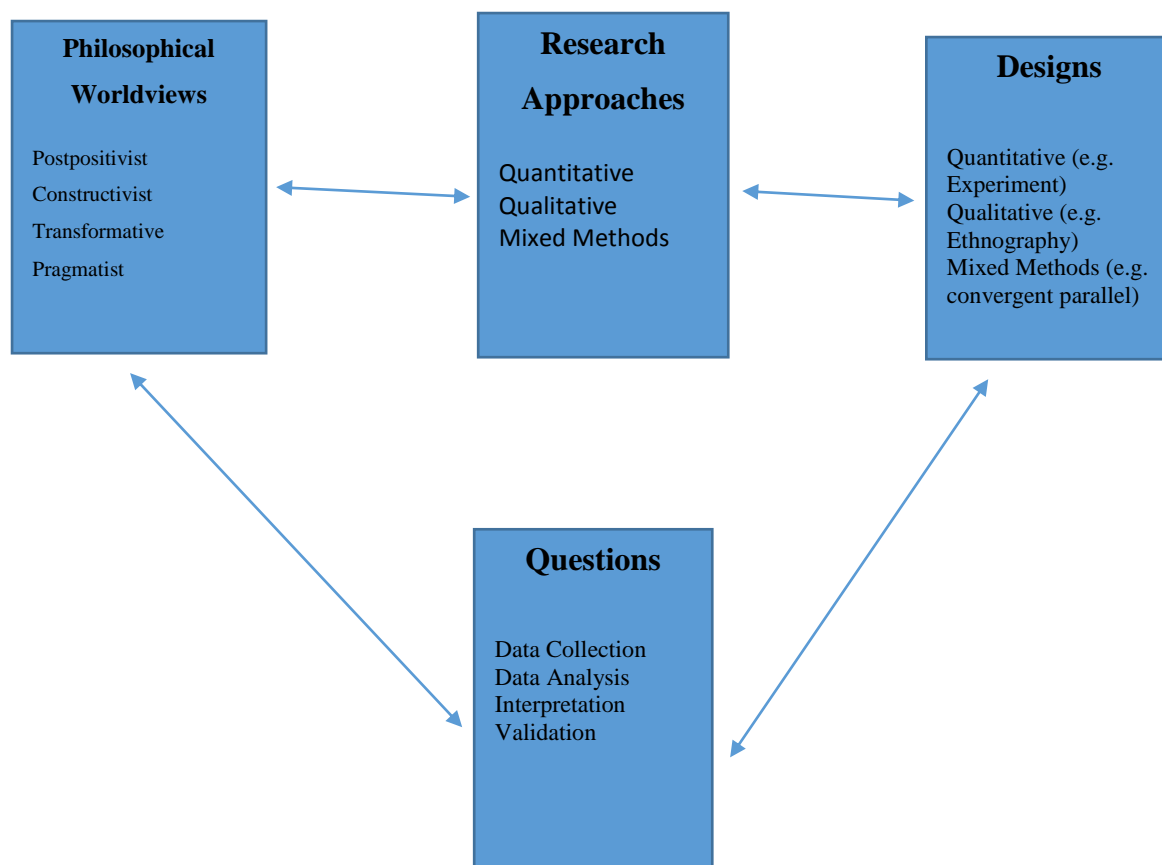
Figure 4.1   The Interconnection of Worldviews, Design and Research Methods (Adapted from Creswell, 2014, p.5)

4.5.4.1 Why Pragmatism?

Pragmatism is considered a good epistemological justification for this study which employs quantitative and qualitative methods to study the challenges of professional practice confronting journalists in Nigeria, their response to the challenges and its impact on professional standard. The choice of pragmatism which Creswell (2014, p. 60) describes as the "philosophical underpinning" for mixed method studies is considered justified, because it "opens the door to multiple methods, different worldviews, and different assumptions, as well as different forms of data collection and analysis" (Creswell, 2014, p. 11), to gain an understanding of the research problem. By employing a mixed methods approach, the disadvantages of quantitative and qualitative methods when used alone, are minimized while

the research benefits from the combined advantages of the two methods. For example, a survey was used to elicit quantitative data which measured the disposition of journalists across Nigeria to the variables. The variables were derived from concepts and constructs found in the literature on the news media generally and Nigeria in particular (E.g. Abidde, 2012; Adeyemi, 2013; Alan, 2012; Cottle, 2012; Donsbach, 2012; Voltmer, 2013). It measured their level of agreement or disagreement with the variables on a five-point Likert scale and the survey generated the quantitative data for this study. Standing alone, the quantitative data would have merely provided a broad picture of the disposition of journalists to the variables but the deeper understanding provided by the qualitative data would have been missing. Semi-structured in-depth interviews were conducted with journalists from across Nigeria who were also participants in the survey. Since the interview questions were structured to get deeper and more in-depth explanations from participants on the issues featured in the survey, it complemented the survey data by providing a deeper and more resolute picture of how journalists' response to professional challenges is impacting professional journalism practice in Nigeria.

4.6   The Research Approach

As stated in Chapter One, this research employed the mixed methods which combines quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry. Quantitative and qualitative techniques, it is argued, together promote the achievement of the research objectives to an extent not achievable through using either of them alone (Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014; May, 2011; Mertens, 2015). According to Creswell, 2014, p. 4) mixed methods research is a system of inquiry "[…] involving collecting both quantitative and qualitative data, integrating the two forms of data, and using distinct designs that may involve philosophical assumptions and theoretical frameworks." The mixed methods has also been referred to variously as,

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integrating, synthesis, multi method, mixed methodology or qualitative and qualitative methods but recent writings are adapting the use of *mixed methods* to describe it (Creswell, 2014).

In using mixed methods, researchers exercise the freedom to choose the methods and techniques that they deem most suitable for their purpose (Brannon, 2005; Morgan, 2007). Mixed methods researchers also work to provide the best understanding to research problems by combining quantitative and qualitative data which draw from pragmatic knowledge claims or philosophical assumptions (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014). The researcher collects both types of data, develops a rationale for mixing and integrates data at different stages of inquiry (Babbie, 2007; May, 2011).

Blaikie (2007) distinguishes between research strategies as logic of enquiry and research strategy as a method of data gathering or analysis. As he argues, logic of enquiry is based on four styles of reasoning which are induction, deduction, retroduction and abduction, which all have distinct ways of answering research questions. The deductive research strategy is more appropriate for answering 'why' questions (Blaikie, 2007, Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). It begins from an already established pattern of regularity which requires explanation. The researcher formulates a possible explanation or theoretical argument for the existence of the regularity in the social phenomenon being investigated by deducing one or more hypotheses from it before collecting necessary data (Babbie, 2007; Gray, 2014). The inductive research strategy by contrast is the logical model in which general principles are developed from observation in trying to understand an issue (Babbie, 2007). It starts with the collection of data, followed by data analysis before deriving generalisations through inference from observed facts (Blaikie, 2007). Retroduction is the provisional adoption of a hypothesis in a research based on existing facts. The hypothesis is tentatively held as true and is taken as such so long as the facts will permit (Blaikie, 2007). Blaikie (2007) describes retroduction as

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an alternative way of answering 'why' questions and involves a process of working back from data to an explanation by the use of creative imagination and analogy. The abductive research strategy was originally proposed as a method for generating hypotheses in the natural sciences but is now proposed as the suitable method of theory construction in social science (Babbie, 2007; Blaikie, 2007). It is based on the idealist ontology and the epistemology of constructivism. It involves the construction of theories derived from language, meanings and accounts of social actors from their daily activities.

4.6.1 The Purposes of Mixed Methods Design

Mixed methods is described as the "third methodological movement" (Gray, 2014, p. 205).

There are five key motivations or benefits of mixed methods (Greene, Caracelli & Graham, 1989; Mayoh & Onwuegbuzie, 2015). These are, (a) triangulation - to minimize bias and boost the validity of data; (b) complementarity - to minimize the weaknesses inherent in individual methods and enhance their strengths; (c) initiation – to make for the analysis of data from different viewpoints; (d) development – to use the results of one method to enhance the other, and (e) to increase the overall scope of research. Mixed methods at a practical level "provides a sophisticated, complex approach to research that appeals to those on the forefront of new research procedures (Creswell, 2014, p.218). The various purposes of mixed methods research are discussed below:

- *Triangulation*: This is the combination of different methods within a research methodology or combining quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell, 2014). The different methods are used to obtain data side by side after which both data sets are brought together and compared to answer the research questions. Flicker (2006) emphasizes that the different methods operate side by side while remaining

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autonomous. It aims to establish convergence, corroboration and correspondence from the methods used "to increase the validity of constructs by counteracting or maximizing the heterogeneity of irrelevant sources of variance attributable to inherent method bias, inquirer bias or biases in inquiry content" (Gray, 2014, p.198).

- *Complementarity*: This allows for methods to be combined "to measure overlapping but also different elements of a phenomenon" (Gray, 2014, p. 197). It is used to elaborate, clarify or illustrate the results of one method from the other (Green, 1989). Unlike in triangulation where different methods are used to measure the same phenomenon, complementarity measures similar, as well as, different aspects of the same concept. The two measurements thus complement each other in providing a fuller understanding of the different aspects of the concept (Creswell, 2014). This enhances the validity and meaningfulness of constructs by balancing between the strengths and weaknesses of both methods (Gray, 2014).

- *Development*: This involves a sequential process whereby a particular method is used to gather data and the outcome used to develop the second aspect using a different method (Green, et al., 1989). For example, a quantitative survey might be conducted first and used to develop a qualitative in-depth interview. Development employs the result of one to inform the other method to increase the validity of constructs and the results from both efforts (Gray, 2014).

- *Initiation*: This is the mixture of methods to uncover contradictions, paradoxes and new perspectives of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2014). It differs from triangulation, where methods are mixed towards eventual convergence of data sets. Initiation focusses on generating new insights that could necessitate reframing of research questions along the process (May, 2011). This increases the depth and breadth of the

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results and interpretations of the enquiry through analyses from different perspectives and paradigms (Gray, 2014).

- *Expansion*: Mixed methods could also be used to widen the scope of a study (Green, et al., 1989). One method could be employed to examine an aspect of an issue and another to broaden the scope by looking at another aspect, which means an expansion of the study. By this, the range of the inquiry is extended using a different method considered most appropriate to achieve the goal of the inquiry (May, 2011).

Triangulation was adopted for this study because it suits the timeframe for this study by allowing simultaneous collection of quantitative and qualitative data which are compared to answer the research questions. Data collection was done at different locations in Nigeria which meant that quantitative and qualitative data were collected in one location before moving to another. Since the research is interrogating the contemporary challenges facing journalists and how their response to these challenges impacts professional journalism practice in Nigeria, triangulating both data sets provided a richer insight for answering the research questions.

4.6.2 Why Mixed Methods?

This study drew inspiration from Mertens (2015, p.5) who stressed the need for effective use of research to address society's problems for "a fuller understanding that is interdisciplinary and transdisciplinary." Survey was used to generate quantitative data while interviews were used for the qualitative aspect. Since the main goal of the study is to evaluate critically, how journalists in Nigeria are responding to the challenges of professional practice and how these responses are in turn affecting the standard of that practice, a combination of the quantitative and qualitative data was considered best for achieving this objective. The survey which used a questionnaire based on the Likert Scale, a nominal scale which measures respondents'

disposition to variables on a five-option, generated quantitative data which reflected the attitude of respondents to the variables relating to the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria as found in the literature (E.g. Abidde, 2008, 2012; Adeyemi, 2013; Daramola, 2006; Golwa, 2011; Idowu, 2014).

However, although the quantitative data provided a general picture of the current state of journalism in Nigeria and the attitude of practicing journalists to professional challenges, it would not have provided the deeper insight and understanding of the situation generated by the interview in which participants were able to provide in-depth and more detailed responses which aided a fuller understanding of the issues. Therefore, complementing the findings from the quantitative data with those from the qualitative data was considered apposite to draw conclusions that would be generalizable (quantitative), detailed and illustrative (qualitative).

Also, Foss and Ellefson (2002) opine that knowledge gained from qualitative and quantitative studies should not be seen as irreconcilable but should be seen instead, as different perspectives on a knowledge continuum. They add that rather than seeing triangulation as a problem, it should be viewed as "a potential for improving the quality of research in general" (p. 246).

Despite the stated advantages of the mixed methods approach, it is not without its own problems, the major one being its complexity (Gray, 2014). For example, some scholars have argued that since both the quantitative and qualitative methods belong to distinct paradigms with fundamentally different epistemological frameworks, they cannot work together (see Foss & Ellefson, 2002). Some other scholars accuse proponents of mixed methods research of concentrating on the practical aspect of social research by underpinning it on pragmatism while ignoring its philosophical foundations (Denzin, 2003; Morgan, 2014).

Bryman (2007) argues that mere convergence of results from quantitative and qualitative data is not necessarily a guarantee of validity. He contends that it is possible for a researcher to misinterprete commonalities and differences in data sets especially where incompatible methods were employed. Also, apart from mixed methods being more expensive and time-consuming to carry out, synthesizing the findings and interpretations from the two approaches can be problematic (Gray, 2014). As Gray (2014, p. 199) notes, the findings might be "puzzling and quite discrepant […] adding more complexity rather than validation and congruence". Giddings (2006) equally notes that there is still considerable confusion on the interpretation of findings. Bryman (2007) accepts this position, observing that integration is hardly achieved in most mixed methods researches because most tend to emphasize one aspect over the other.

Notwithstanding the critiques, this researcher believes that the advantages inherent in combining both methods which eliminates or minimizes drastically the limits of using either of them separately, more than compensated for the identified shortcomings.
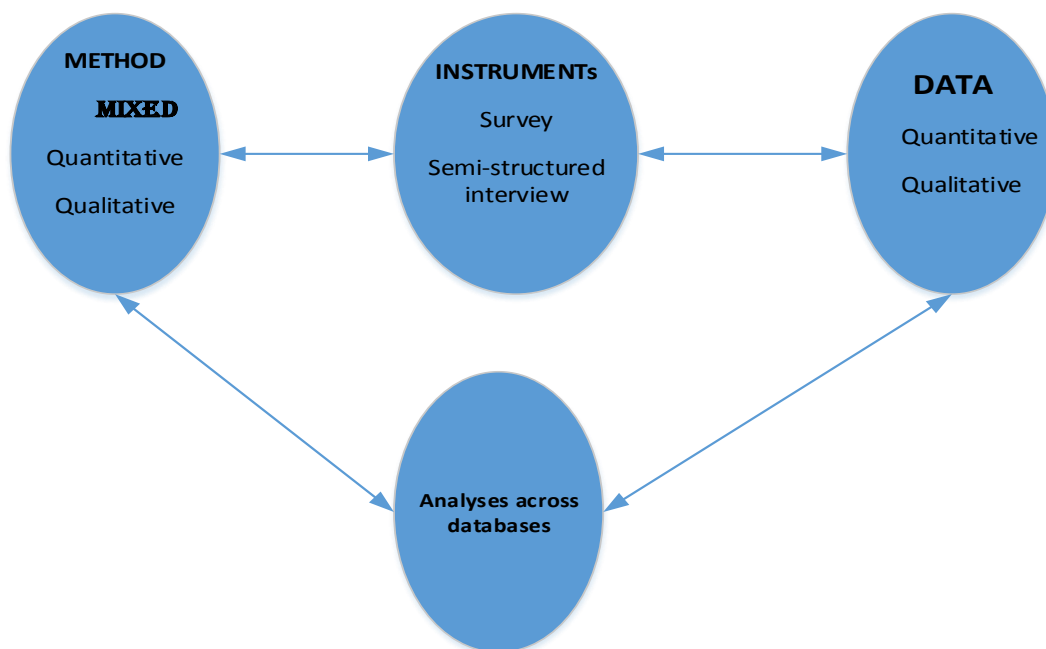
Figure 4.2   Mixed Research Structure Model adapted for this research from Creswell, 2014, p.11

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The model above shows how quantitative and qualitative data are triangulated. However, in the process of triangulation, the two data sets cannot be simply assumed will corroborate each other. There must be at least four possible outcomes to validate the result (Brannon, 2005; Bryman, 2001; Hammersley, 1996; Morgan, 1998). These are, corroboration, which means that the same results were derived from the two methods; elaboration in which the qualitative data analysis demonstrates how the quantitative findings apply in particular cases; complementarity, which shows different results but which together generate insight into the issues, and contradiction where data from methods conflict.

Contextualization is also a critical part of multi-method research in interpreting and making sense out of data (Mertens, 2015). The study sought to achieve one or more of these outcomes in various ways. For example, the 30 participants for the semi-structured interview were picked from among the 300 survey respondents to see if their responses would corroborate, complement or elaborate one another. Their questionnaire responses were compared to the interview recordings and were examined for these tendencies.

4.7   Research Strategy

As mentioned in Chapter One, the Convergent Parallel Mixed Methods is adopted for this study. It is one of the three "primary models" (Creswell, 2014, p.15) for mixed methods in the social sciences today. The others are the Explanatory Sequential Mixed Methods and the Exploratory Sequential Mixed Methods models. However, the three models are employed for different ends in research (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014). For example, in the explanatory sequential mixed method, the researcher first conducts quantitative research which is analyzed before embarking on the qualitative aspect to build on the results of the quantitative research. The initial quantitative data are explained in greater details with the qualitative data which comes later, hence the term sequential (Creswell, 2014). However, the difficulty in

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identifying the quantitative results to investigate further is identified as one of its drawbacks (Creswell, 2014).

For the exploratory sequential mixed methods method, the researcher starts with a qualitative research phase by exploring the views of participants. The data generated from that phase are analyzed and used to progress into the quantitative phase. The drawbacks of this design according to Creswell (2014) are in the difficulty in the choice of the appropriate findings from the initial phase and the samples to use for both phases. This strategy did not suit the objective of this research project which aimed to combine (triangulate) findings from the quantitative and qualitative data to gain a deeper understanding of the variables to answer the research questions.

The convergent parallel mixed method which allows the researcher to collect quantitative and qualitative data simultaneously to achieve the research objectives (Creswell, 2014, Gray, 2014) was therefore considered the best for this research. The strategy allows the researcher to converge or merge qualitative and quantitative data "in order to provide a comprehensive analysis of the research problem" (Creswell 2014, p.15). Under this strategy, both forms of data are collected at around the same time and are integrated in the interpretation of the overall results. Although the challenge of unequal sample sizes for the different data sets has been identified as the drawback of this strategy (Gray, 2014) it nevertheless suited the research objective better than the other strategies as each (quantitative or qualitative) made up for the shortcoming of the other.

The major objective of this study is to evaluate critically how journalists in Nigeria are responding to the challenges of practice and how this is impacting professional standards. Data from the survey was designed to get a statistical understanding of the attitude of journalists to the variables which were drawn from constructs found in literature. The

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quantitative data were interpreted and analyzed alongside the data from the semi-structured interviews which generated qualitative data, to gain deeper insights into the issues. The product of the integrated approach was therefore richer (combining the benefits of both approaches) than what each data set would have yielded, thus justifying the choice of the strategy.

As mentioned earlier, to test for consistency and allow for a deeper insight into the perspective of participants, the 30 respondents for interview were picked from among those who participated in the survey. Given that data were collected from different locations in Nigeria, the survey and interviews held side by side over the duration of the field work. Once the target for a particular location was met, the researcher moves to another location. The strategy paid off as the data generated were not only representative of journalists across Nigeria, but the variety of responses occasioned by the diversity of respondents enriched the data for a more robust analysis.

4.8   Time Scale

A research project can be cross-sectional or longitudinal, depending on the time available to the researcher (Gray, 2014). Cross-sectional studies use a 'snapshot approach' in which data are collected at one point in time (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014). The majority of research studies are cross-sectional because of pressure of time and resources (Babbie, 2007). Longitudinal studies, on the other hand, study development and change over a period. It is more suited for studies which have generous time scales (Punch, 2006). This study is cross-sectional because of the limited timeframe and resources available to the researcher. As has been mentioned, the quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time in line with the convergent parallel mixed method strategy adopted for the research.

## 4.9	Research Questions

This study has two research questions:

> What are the contemporary developments impacting professional journalism practice in Nigeria?

> How are journalists in Nigeria responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties and what are the implications of this?

## 4.10	Data Collection Methods

Data collection method describes the manner in which data are collected for a research. The instruments for data collection are determined by the research method since different methods dictate the appropriate instruments (May, 2011). Data collection strategy refers to how the data for a study are gathered. Data collection settings are the physical location from where data are actually collected. This could be in a field or laboratory environment (Merrigan & Huston, 2009). Data sampling is the process of picking a set of relatively smaller subjects to represent a larger group or population. Sampling frame refers to all members of the population being studied. The method of selecting the sample is important to a research because representativeness of sampling makes the result generalizable to other members of the target population, giving it external validity (Babbie, 2007). Since this study employed a mixed methods which combines quantitative and qualitative approaches, two instruments were used to gather data. Questionnaire was used to conduct the survey for the quantitative data while semi-structured interview was used for the qualitative data. As stated earlier, this was to afford the study the benefit of both approaches, to have generalizable (quantitative) and contextually rich (qualitative) data to answer the research questions.

To ensure that the instruments are valid and reliable, steps were taken to structure them to measure what was intended and to be consistent in their measurement (Babbie, 2007). A pre-test of the instruments was conducted which assisted in re-framing and restructuring them as required. According to Gray (2014, p. 151), "the central question around validity is whether a measure really measures that concept – does it measure what it claims to measure?" Reliability is consistency in the measure of the same thing. Although perfect reliability is difficult to achieve, it is improved by triangulation (Black, 1993; Gray 2014) which this study employed. The questionnaire and the semi-structured interview were both designed to measure how journalists' response to professional challenges was impacting the standard of practice. The principle of equivalence in testing reliability was employed by picking the participants for the interview from those who participated in the quantitative survey. According to Black (1993), comparing the responses given by the same set of subjects to different instruments is one of the ways to test reliability through equivalence. Although the participants were assured of their anonymity and were not obliged to supply their identities on the consent forms, they were requested to provide their mobile phone numbers or email addresses at the back of the questionnaire should there be need to contact them for clarifications. This strategy assisted in reaching those who were purposively selected for interview.

4.10.1 Population

The population for this study are all the professional journalists in Nigeria registered with the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ). Official figures obtained from the national headquarters of the NUJ in Abuja, Nigeria showed that there were twenty-five thousand registered members made up of nineteen thousand male and six thousand female journalists as at January, 2015. The total number of twenty-five thousand members therefore constituted the sampling frame for this research.

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4.10.2 Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting from a population, elements that represent the characteristics of the entire population (May, 2011). When a sample adequately portrays a population, it is said to be representative (Babbie, 2007). Representativeness refers to the quality of a sample having a closely approximate distribution of characteristics as the population from which the sample was taken. Probability sampling enhances representativeness and allows for generalizability of the results (Babbie, 2007). Representativeness is, however, limited to the characteristics relevant to a study's primary interests and not necessarily in all respects (Blaikie, 2007). The Equal Probability of Selection Method (EPSEM) which gives every member of a population the same chance of being selected into a sample is a basic principle of probability sampling (Babbie, 2007; May, 2011; Gray, 2014). Despite arguments that samples are hardly perfect no matter how carefully selected, probability samples are considered more representative of the population (Babbie, 2007).

In recognition of the imperfection of sampling, allowance is usually made for a margin of error. Sampling error is the degree of error to be expected in a given probability sample design. It is determined by three factors which are the parameter, the sample size and standard error (Babbie, 2007, Gray, 2014). For example, Probability Theory holds that 68 percent of larger number of samples would produce estimates within one standard error "thus a single random sample estimate has a 68 percent chance of falling within that range" (Babbie, 2007, p. 197).

4.10.2.1   Sampling Method

For this study, the stratified random sampling technique was used to select participants for the survey while purposive sampling was employed to pick participants in the interview.

Stratified random sampling which is one of the different probability samples was adopted to ensure representativeness of the population. Three characteristics – gender, age and status were used to stratify the sample size of 300 for the survey after which they were selected randomly. To ensure that participants were drawn from journalists across the country, fifty participants were selected from each of the six geo-political regions of Nigeria. For the interview, a purposive sampling method was used to select the 30 participants (five per geo-political zone) also for the purpose of achieving representation based on the three characteristics. Conscious of the much lower number of female journalists in comparison to their male counterparts, it was imperative to determine from the outset that a percentage of participants from each geo-political zone would be female journalists. Without stratification, a simple random sampling could have yielded a nearly all male sample or an insignificant representation of female journalists. Also, since some of the questionnaire statements and interview questions sought comparisons among different eras of journalism practice, a representation across various age groups was ensured. Finally, effort was made to ensure that those in management positions such as editors, news editors and line editors who determine stories that get published were represented. Their perspectives as members of management were considered vital to gaining insight into what drives or influences editorial output. To achieve the above, a decision was taken that of the 50 participants from each of the geo-political zones to respond to the questionnaire, at least 15 should be female journalists. Five of them should be in management positions and relative representation across various age grades would be ensured. For the interviews, a minimum of one female journalist and someone in a management position were targeted.

4.10.2.2 Recruitment of Participants

As a journalist who had worked in Nigeria for over two decades, the researcher had contacts in different parts of the country which assisted in recruiting participants for the research.

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Contacts were identified in the different geo-political zones and reached. The purpose of the research was explained to them and letters of invitation for the participants were subsequently mailed to each. The researcher subsequently travelled to Lagos, Abuja, Minna and Kano in different parts for the fieldwork. Coincidentally, a national delegates' conference of the NUJ was coming up around the time the data gathering was scheduled and one of the contacts drew the attention of the researcher to this. Hence the survey and interview for some of the participants were held in their hotel rooms at the conference.

4.10.3 The Pilot Study

As mentioned above, the two instruments employed for this study were pre-tested through a pilot study. A total of 50 journalists operating in Plateau State, (one of the 36 states in Nigeria) were the participants for the study. The choice of Plateau State was for convenience since the researcher had worked as a correspondent in the state and was familiar with many of the journalists. The questionnaire was administered to forty-five participants through a random sampling method. An interview was conducted with five journalists to test the wording of the questions. The pre-test was undertaken to ensure that the instruments worked as intended and the characteristics of participants were the same as those of other journalists across Nigeria, who were sampled in the main study.

Oppenheim (1992, p.47) argues:

> Pilot work can be immensely rewarding. There is an intellectual challenge in conceptualizing and re-conceptualizing the key aims of the study and in making preparations for the fieldwork and analysis so that not too much will go wrong and nothing will have been left out.

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The questionnaire and the transcribed interview data were analyzed to assess their level of accuracy and consistency. The responses showed that some aspects of both the questionnaire and the interview questions were either misunderstood or given different interpretations by various participants. These were subsequently re-worked or re-framed to improve the level of clarity. Some of the questions found to be repetitive because they yielded the same or similar responses were deleted. Based on the pilot study, two statements were added to the questionnaire to ensure that the intended variables were well measured. The instructions on the two sections of the questionnaire were also modified for clarity.

For the interview guide, the framing of some of the questions was changed as participants in the pilot exhibited reluctance to answer questions bordering on ethical breaches such as the collection of gratification. Similarly, despite assurances of anonymity, most balked when issues of salary and journalists' working conditions were raised. This informed the eventual adoption of the funnelling interview technique in which general questions on issues are first posed before dove-tailing into more probing questions occurs. Although the pilot work increased the cost and time spent on the research, it was very rewarding by helping to identify the shortcomings in the initial drafts of the instruments.

4.10.4 Survey

Survey research provides a relatively inexpensive and rapid way of collecting data (Babbie, 2007). The motivation for adopting survey for the quantitative aspect of this study was because of its advantages, As much as possible, survey research aims to eliminate bias from the research process and produce results that can be replicated by other researchers if they use the same procedure known as standardization, also referred to as equivalence of stimulus (May, 2011; Oppenheim, 1992). Replicability enhances reliability and validity since identical

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results from different surveys using the same sampling and process would boost confidence in the initial findings (de Vaus, 2002).

4.10.4.1 Questionnaire Development

Having decided on the major objective of the research based on the gap found in literature that little or nothing has been done in trying to understand how the response of journalists to professional challenges is impacting the standard of practice in Nigeria, the researcher opted for survey with questionnaire as instrument for the quantitative aspect of the study. This was because, as a former journalist, who had practiced in Nigeria for many years, the researcher was familiar with some of the issues found in literature which helped in identifying the research problem, which is, the absence of an empirical frame of reference for understanding how journalists' response to professional challenges is impacting the standard of journalism in Nigeria. An instrument like the questionnaire which, to a large extent, makes for verifiable measurement through replication (Creswell, 2014) was considered, to ensure that the researcher's perception or understanding of the issues does not bias the study. The Likert scale measuring instrument was chosen to ascertain the disposition of journalists to constructs found in literature. Since many of the constructs which included corruption, survival difficulties caused by dwindling income and changing media use, poor working conditions, political and ownership influence, partisanship, ethnic and religious bias, are common in literature and in the public domain in Nigeria more generally, attitude measurement was seen as appropriate. The questionnaire was therefore developed with this approach in mind.

4.10.4.2 The Likert Scale

Likert is a scaling method which allows respondents to fix themselves within an attitude scale by choosing from a set of five options which are, 'strongly agree', 'agree', 'uncertain', 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree'. It is the most popular sampling procedure used by social

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scientists (May, 2011; Oppenheim, 1992). The major utility of an attitude scaling is to divide respondents into broad groups in relation to a particular attitude "and allow us to study the ways in which such attitude relates to other variables in our survey" (Oppenheim, 1999, p. 187). Likert scale strives at uni-dimensionality or equality of items being tested or scaled to ensure that they all measure the same thing (Babbie, 2007; May, 2011). The five options are scored based on five weights of 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 assigned to each of them. In some cases, a four-scale measure is used (Creswell, 2014, Oppenheim, 1992). A decision is taken by the researcher as to whether a high scale score should mean a favourable or unfavourable attitude. For example, a 'strongly agree' response can be scaled '5' or vice versa but are basically for identification of the choice made by the respondent (May, 2011).

4.10.4.3   The Questionnaire Structure

The questionnaire (see Appendix II) had a total of twenty one questions and two sections (A and B). Section A had four questions which sought demographic information about participants. It dwelt on gender, age-bracket, level of education and number of years in practice. Although there are arguments in favour of leaving personal data questions to the end of the question set so as not to put off or offend the sensibility of participants to any of the issues (see Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014, May, 2011; Oppenheim, 1992), none of the questions was considered capable of generating such negative reaction. This decision was based on the researcher's knowledge of the cultural environment of the participants and understanding of the general disposition of respondents as journalists, to the effect that it was better not to start with tasking questions. The only question that could have been sensitive relates to age which some people are reluctant to disclose openly. This was overcome by the use of age categories which did not reveal the exact age of a respondent. The section was prefaced by an instruction which explained to participants that the information was purely for the purpose of data analysis and not for identification.

Section B had 17 questions which sought the disposition of respondents to statements on a five-scale range. It was also introduced with an instruction to participants on what was expected of them. The questions were arranged in sequences related to the constructs they were designed to test. For instance, questions 5,6 and 7 dwelt on the impact of technology on professional practice while questions 8 and 9 sought to measure the influence of advertisement on editorial input. Questions 10 and 11 measured ownership influence on editorial decisions, just as questions 12, 13, 14 and 15 focused on various issues seeking to measure the effect of welfare and working conditions on professional practice. The response of participants to professional challenges was measured in questions 17 and 18 while questions 19 and 20 measured how journalists rated journalism regulatory and professional bodies. Respondents rated the standard of journalism practice in Nigeria in questions 12 and 21.

A covering letter with the logo of the University of Salford was attached to the questionnaire and this helped to secure the confidence of would be participants. The letter explained the rationale for the survey, assured participants of their anonymity and thanked them for their participation. This enabled the respondents to understand the essence of the exercise and feel appreciated for taking part in it.

4.10.4.4 Sample Size for Survey

The questionnaire was answered by 300 journalists from across the six geo-political zones of Nigeria. The aim of this was to ensure a representation of journalists from all over the country to make the result generalizable.

4.10.5 Interviews

The qualitative data for this research came from semi-structured interviews. Face-to-face, also called personal interviews can be in a field setting or in a laboratory setting. For this

study, the field setting was more appropriate because of the nature of the research. Field setting arrangements are more natural than laboratory setting as "they are usually less likely to produce artificial effects due to the setting itself, but are usually less controlled environments" (Merrigan and Huston, 2009, p. 110). The choice of semi-structured interview for the qualitative aspect also had to do with the advantages inherent in interview as an instrument. Since it was semi-structured with some prepared questions and other follow-up questions as the researcher deemed necessary, it made for deeper probing into the issues by the researcher (May, 2011; Oppenheim, 1992).

The other advantages of personal interviews which informed its choice for this study include the following (Merrigan & Huston, 2009)

- Easier to establish a rapport and climate of trust

- More difficult for participants to avoid answering any question

- Allows for deeper probing and follow-up questions

- The researcher can monitor participants' non-verbal reactions

- Participants can ask for clarifications of questions they do not understand.

Efforts were equally made to minimize the effect of the disadvantages of personal interviews which include: possible subtle pressures on respondents that might affect their response; apprehension to sensitive questions, sample representativeness likely to undermine external validity (Babbie, 2007; May, 2011). By ensuring representation from across Nigeria based on the country's six geo-political arrangement, representativeness was achieved even though the number of participants was much smaller to those used for the survey. As noted above the funnelling interview style - whereby questions are first asked in general terms before moving to specific ones - was used. This was designed to draw out the participants to speak on issues

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devoid of how it relates to them personally. In many cases during the interviews, participants, on their own, brought themselves into the issues as examples to illustrate their points.

Gray (2014) submits that research interviews should be designed in a manner that will ensure that the findings are valid and reliable. In view of the limitation in generalizing the findings of interviews to a wider population, qualitative researchers tend to make use of other indicators of credibility (Gray, 2014; Oppenheim, 1992). These include, making sure that the questions relate directly to the research objectives; employing interview techniques that allow informants to freely express themselves through rapport and trust building, constructing questions drawn from literature and pilot study, and prompting interviewees to illustrate and expand on their initial responses (Arksey & Knight, 1999). The researcher was able to apply some of these at different points. For example, some of the respondents had to be encouraged by the researcher to be 'truthful' in answering questions related to the collection of 'inducements' in the course of duty with a reassurance of their anonymity. In other instances, questions were reframed when respondents seem not to comprehend them. These assisted to improve the quality of responses.

Two digital recorders were used to record the interviews to ensure accuracy and back up, in case either of them mal-functioned. The experience of the researcher as a journalist was useful as he was able to take notes with ease while observing the non-verbal cues of participants. Despite being conversant with issues related to journalism practice in Nigeria from interaction with literature as a scholar and personal experience as a journalist, the researcher strove to avoid bias by being dispassionate in asking questions and encouraging participants to open up as much as possible on the issues raised. Participants were constantly reminded that the goal of the research was to have an empirical frame of reference about the challenges of practice in Nigeria and their effects on professional standards. Since the interview was semi-structured (see Appendix III), the researcher did not stick to a particular

pattern of questioning and subsequent questions were dictated by the specific responses received.

4.10.5.1   Interview Guide and Rationale

Based on Berg's (2001, p. 75) suggestion that an interview schedule should be structured in a way "to draw out the most complete story about various subjects or situations under investigation", a question guide was prepared for the semi-structured interview. As had been explained, the purpose of the qualitative aspect of this research was to get deeper and richer data through the clarification and probing that the interview affords to complement or corroborate those of the quantitative data which were based on constructs on journalism practice in Nigeria as found in literature. The following comprises the rationale for the various sets of questions:

Questions one and two asked participants to describe their typical day as a journalist and their career motivations. This was in line with the funnelling approach to make participants speak in general terms on the issues before going to other questions. In most cases, respondents prompted follow-up questions as they drifted to other areas in answering the questions.

Questions three and four dwelt on contemporary issues influencing journalism in Nigeria, how they were affecting them as professionals and their response. The questions were designed to elicit in-depth responses from the respondents as they were key to answering the research questions. These questions produced the longest part of most of the interviews.

Question seven which sought a comparison of journalism in Nigeria 20 years ago and now was to get an assessment of various era of journalism in Nigeria. This is to provide a basis for knowing what had improved or gone worse over time.

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Questions nine and ten focused on the operational and welfare conditions in which journalists in Nigeria operate. They were meant to draw participants to speak on if and how regularly they get paid alongside other working conditions to be able to draw inferences on how these impact the standard of practice.

Question eleven which was the last, wanted participants to suggest ways in which the standard of journalism practice could be enhanced. Apart from generating suggestions, it was also another way of identifying the challenges of practice which they might have left out while answering other questions.

The questions served as an appropriate guide which prompted follow-up questions that, overall, produced a rich and deeper insight into the issues to complement the quantitative data gathered.

4.10.5.2 Sample Size for Interview

As stated under sampling method (see 4.10.2.1) thirty journalists, five from each of the six geo-political zones of Nigeria participated in the interview. The selection across the country ensured that the data reflected a fair representation of journalists from different parts of the country.

4.11   Ethical Considerations

This study conformed to relevant ethical requirements for a research. It was guided by the ethical guideline of the Social Research Association, the British Psychological Society and other ethical guides found in the literature (see Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014; May, 2011, Merrigan & Huston, 2009). Apart from obtaining the necessary ethical approval from the School of Arts and Media Ethics Panel at the University of Salford, the researcher followed the necessary ethical steps prescribed for a research as recommended by Merrigan

and Huston (2009). First, the researcher ensured that participants in the research were treated fairly, justly and respectfully and that their rights were protected. Informed consent was obtained from every participant after invitation letters were initially sent to them to participate in the study. The consent form explained their rights to freely participate in the exercise and to withdraw their participation at any point. Participants were also assured of their anonymity both during and after the research.

In addition, the participants were related with honestly as the researcher explained the essence of the research to them. No form of deception was employed under the guise of not wanting to influence participants as sometimes happens. The researcher also reported and evaluated the research ethically by being truthful and honest in handling data. No attempt was made to tamper with data to suit any pre-conceived end and the views of participants were fairly presented devoid of any misrepresentation. Recorded interviews were duplicated and backed up on different platforms to protect data. The questionnaires and the typed transcripts of interviews were also kept in safe places to avoid unauthorized access that could compromise the anonymity of the participants.

4.12   Conclusion

This chapter presented in detail, how the research was conducted. It commenced with a discussion of the methodology adopted for the research before explaining the research process, the research worldview and the strategy. It detailed the data collection method explaining how and why questionnaire and semi-structured interview were adopted as instruments. It also dwelt on the sampling for the research and the efforts made to ensure that participants were representative of the research population. It concluded with an explanation of the ethical steps taken for the research. The data generated from the research process discussed in this chapter are presented in Chapters Five and Six.

Chapter Five

Quantitative Data Presentation and Analysis

5.1   Chapter Overview

This chapter unveils the quantitative data results obtained in this research project. It presents the results of the quantitative inquiry generated through survey using Likert scale nominal measurement. The data are presented in tables generated from an SPSS analysis of each of the 21 questions on the questionnaire. Pie charts are presented to illustrate the demographic data. The results are also interpreted to provide a basis for comparison with the qualitative data presented in Chapter Six.

5.2   Quantitative Data Analysis

This section presents the descriptive statistics and interpretation of the quantitative data. The data were evaluated to test reliability, validity and how they connect to the research objectives. Descriptive statistics show how collected sample data appears in numerical and visual terms (Gray, 2014; Merrigan & Huston, 2009). As Babbie (2007, p.384) notes, "[…] the aim of data analysis is the discovery of patterns among the data, patterns that point to theoretical understandings of social life". The specific characteristics of the data based on frequency distribution, are presented using graphical analysis. Frequency distribution which refers to the number of instances of a variable in a survey, is a popular method of data analysis in the Likert Scale (May, 2011).

5.2.1   *Presentation of Results and Analysis*

In view the mixed methodology adopted for this research, the interpretation and analysis presented in this chapter represent the first stage of presentation of the results for of this

research. Under the mixed methods approach, quantitative and qualitative methods are triangulated to draw conclusions based on the two data sets. The results of this triangulation of the two data sets is presented in Chapter Seven.

5.2.2   Frequency Tables by Variables
Table 5.1

Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Female	61	29.9	29.9	29.9
Male	143	70.1	70.1	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

The frequency table above shows that 61 representing 30 per cent females and 148 representing 70 per cent males participated in the survey. Figures obtained from the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) had shown that of the 25,000 (twenty-five thousand) registered members, there are about 6,000 (six thousand) females which amounts to about 24 per cent. Males who are about 19,000 (nineteen) thousand constitute about 76 percent of members. As explained in the sampling section, a stratified random sampling method was employed to ensure that sub-sets of the sample are represented. The ratio of female-male participation in the survey illustrated in the pie chart below, is therefore considered a fair representation of the members of the NUJ who constitute the population for this study.
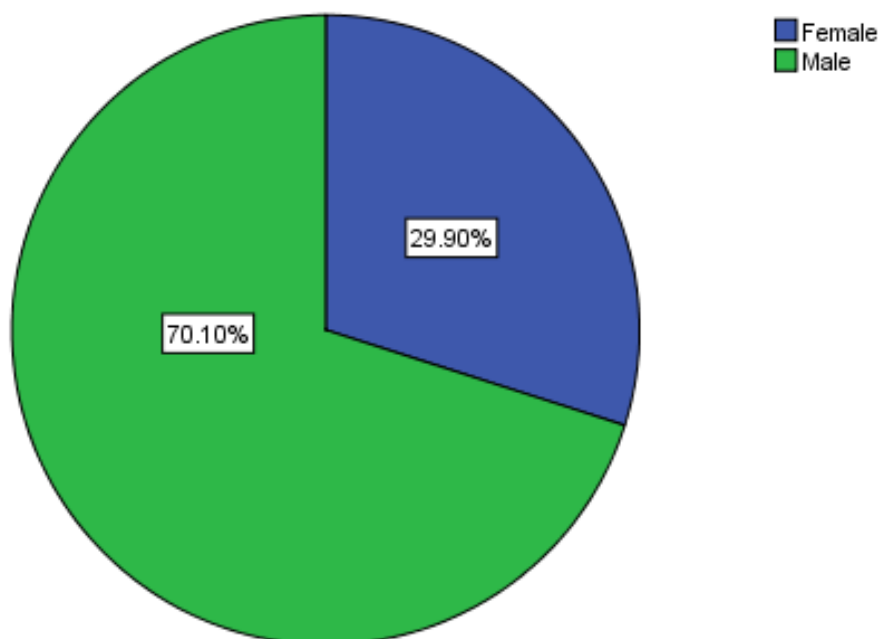
Figure 5.1   Gender distribution of participants.

Table 5.2

Age Range in Years

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20 – 25	3	1.5	1.5	1.5
26 – 30	20	9.8	9.8	11.3
31 – 35	71	34.8	34.8	46.1
36 – 40	59	28.9	28.9	75.0
Over 40	51	25.0	25.0	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

As the table indicates, participants cut across the five age ranges in the questionnaire.

However, those in their middle ages who fall within the age ranges of 26-30 and 31-35 years,

who are usually described as the young, constitute a total of 44.6 per cent, lower than the 57.4

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per cent of those from 36 years and above. Those in the age bracket of 30 years and below constitute 11.3 per cent. This could mean that the number of younger people joining the journalism profession in Nigeria is reducing, but it might take a longitudinal study, which this research is not, to establish this.
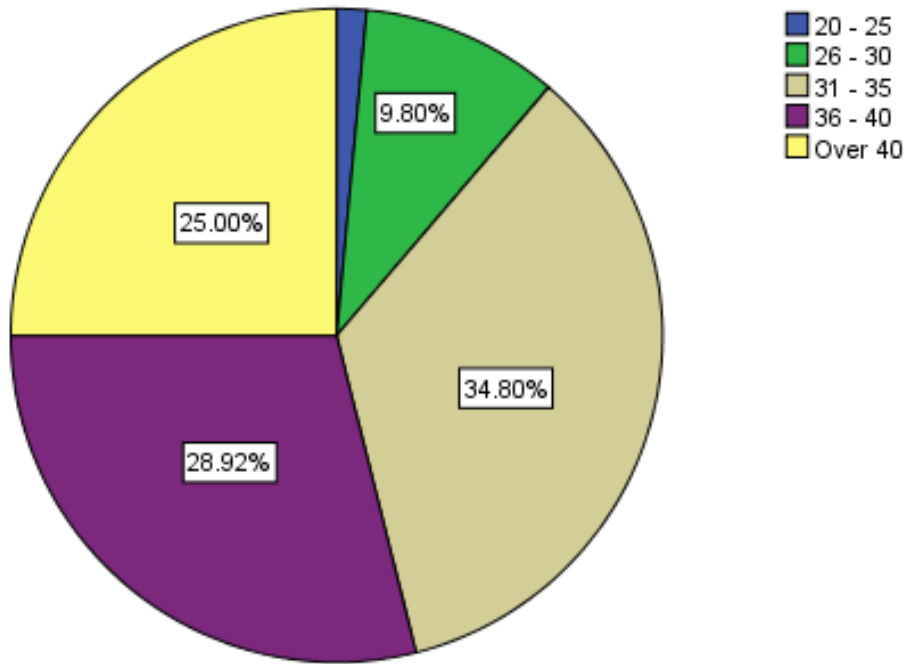
Figure 5.2   Age distribution of participants

Table 5.3

Level of Education

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Completed Sec. School	3	1.5	1.5	1.5
OND/NCE	22	10.8	10.8	12.3
B.Sc/B.A./HND	124	60.8	60.8	73.0

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Postgraduate	53	26.0	26.0	99.0
Unspecified	2	1.0	1.0	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

With over 80 per cent of respondents having equivalent of Bachelor's degree and above, the level of education among journalists in Nigeria appears relatively high. This suggests that some of the constructs in literature, such as the prevalence of envelope journalism and dependence on, or affinity with, politicians cannot be blamed on low level of educational attainment among journalists in Nigeria as some have argued (see Daramola, 2013; Omoera, 2010), and might have other causes.
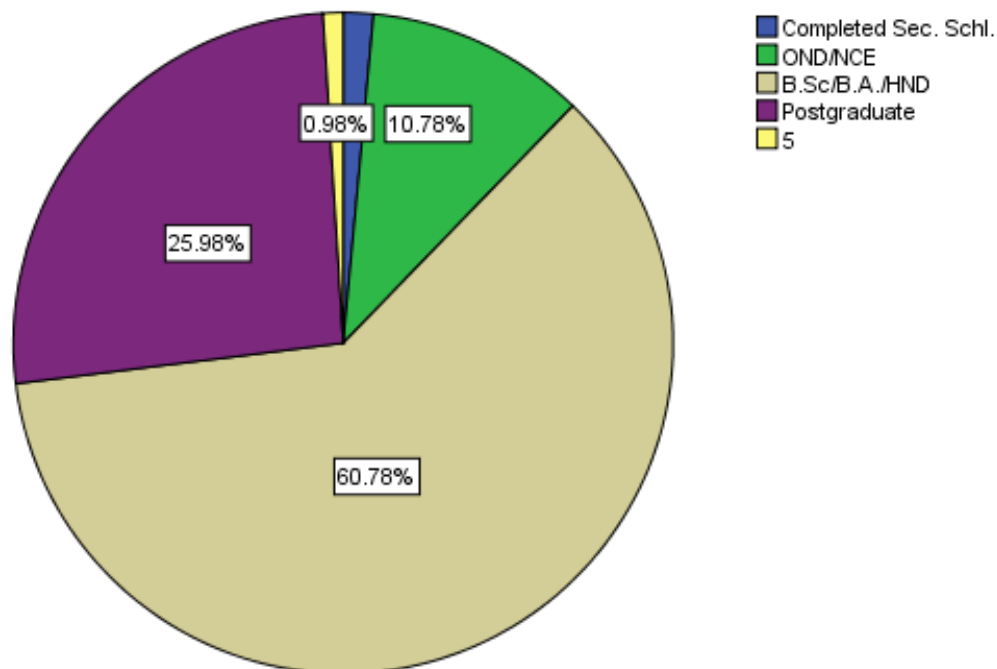
Figure 5.3   Level of education of participants

Table 5.4

Years of Experience in Journalism

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
1 - 5 Years	26	12.7	12.7	12.7
6 - 10 Years	47	23.0	23.0	35.8
11 - 15 Years	61	29.9	29.9	65.7
16 - 20 Years	45	22.1	22.1	87.7
Over 20 Years	25	12.3	12.3	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

The table shows that 52 per cent of respondents have between 11 and 20 years of experience as journalists. About 35 per cent have ten or fewer years of experience. Only about 12 per cent have spent over 20 years. This suggests that less people spend over 20 years as journalists despite the fact that the official length of service until retirement is 35 years. Could this be a corroboration of constructs in literature that journalists in Nigeria are seeking opportunities outside the profession? This is supported in responses to Statement 18, where 60 per cent of respondents said they would opt out if they got better jobs (see below).
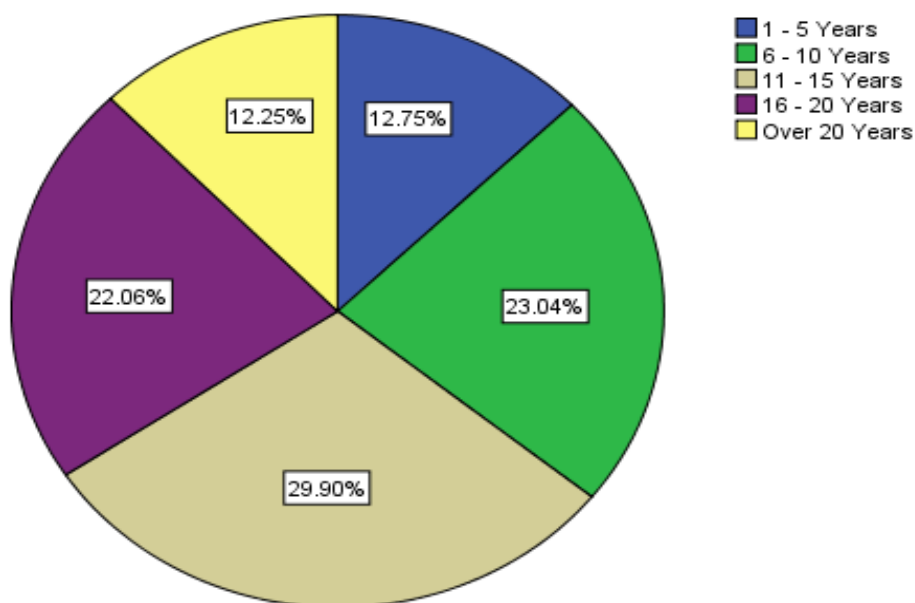
Figure 5.4   Years of journalism experience

Table 5.5

Access to the internet and new technologies like iPad, smart phones, etc. has enhanced my performance as a journalist.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	43	21.1	21.1	21.1
Disagree	48	23.5	23.5	44.6
Neutral	9	4.4	4.4	49.0
Agree	50	24.5	24.5	73.5
Strongly Agree	54	26.5	26.5	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

The statistics indicate that while about 45 per cent disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement, 51 per cent agreed that access to new technologies has enhanced their performance. The disagreement of about 45 per cent and neutral stance of 4.4 per cent who

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together constitute about half of the respondents suggests that a significant number of journalists either have no access or are not reaping the benefits of new technologies.

Table 5.6

Increasing access to new (social) media among Nigerians gives non-journalists opportunity to disseminate information on news events and happenings as journalists do.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	68	33.3	33.3	33.3
Agree	93	45.6	45.6	78.9
Neutral	10	4.9	4.9	83.8
Disagree	16	7.8	7.8	91.7
Strongly Disagree	17	8.3	8.3	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

Almost 80 per cent of respondents agreed that increasing access of the public to new technology and social media has empowered non-journalists to disseminate information about events. This aligns with the global trends where citizen journalism is gaining popularity and news organizations including those in Nigeria, are now creating platforms to have reports from citizens.

Table 5.7

Reports on news breaks in my beat are sometimes disseminated ahead of me by non-journalists through their mobile phones and other gadgets.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	50	24.5	24.5	24.5
Disagree	58	28.4	28.4	52.9
Neutral	11	5.4	5.4	58.3

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	47	23.0	23.0	81.4
Strongly Agree	38	18.6	18.6	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

While most respondents (about 80 per cent) agreed in Statement 6 that non journalists are now able to disseminate information via the new media, some of them did not accept the suggestion in this statement that non journalists sometimes beat them to news breaks. Almost 53 per cent disagreed with the statement. The approximately 46 per cent who accepted the statement and the just over 5 per cent who were undecided, constitute almost half of the respondents which suggests that the division here is almost balanced.

Table 5.8

Income from advertisements has dropped in the organization I work for.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	51	25.0	25.0	25.0
Agree	70	34.3	34.3	59.3
Neutral	32	15.7	15.7	75.0
Disagree	28	13.7	13.7	88.7
Strongly Disagree	23	11.3	11.3	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

A preponderance of respondents agreed that advertisement income has dropped where they work. This conforms to the global trend of dwindling advert income in many traditional news organizations. However, about 25 per cent disagreed with the statement, suggesting that they work in organizations that are still performing well commercially from seeking advertisement income.

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Table 5.9

Income generation is accorded much importance such that it can affect what gets published or not published where I work.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	44	21.6	21.6	21.6
Disagree	63	30.9	30.9	52.5
Neutral	20	9.8	9.8	62.3
Agree	35	17.2	17.2	79.4
Strongly Agree	42	20.6	20.6	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

The distribution of responses in the above table shows that the influence of income generation on editorial output differs in news organizations. A majority of about 53 per cent disagreed with the statement suggesting that income generation is not a determinant of what gets published. Another 38 per cent agreed indicating that this is the case where they work. About 10 per cent were undecided suggesting that they either do not know or are not concerned about the issue.

Table 5.10

Where I work, ownership influence is strong on what is published.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	51	25.0	25.0	25.0
Disagree	51	25.0	25.0	50.0
Neutral	26	12.7	12.7	62.7
Agree	47	23.0	23.0	85.8

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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	29	14.2	14.2	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

This variable which sought to measure the influence of proprietors of news organizations on editorial output showed 50 per cent disagreeing with the statement. This suggests that ownership has little or no influence on editorial output where they work. However, 37 per cent agreed with the statement and about 13 per cent were neutral, an indication that the situation differs from one organization to the other.

Table 5.11

Lack of editorial independence negatively influences my ability to uphold journalism code of ethics.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	43	21.1	21.1	21.1
Disagree	65	31.9	31.9	52.9
Neutral	33	16.2	16.2	69.1
Agree	33	16.2	16.2	85.3
Strongly Agree	30	14.7	14.7	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

For this statement, 31 per cent agreed that lack of editorial independence is undermining their ability to uphold journalism ethics. Their response suggests the presence of some form of editorial censorship or control where they work. A majority of 53 per cent disagreed with the statement while about 16 per cent were neutral. Considering the fact that a majority of news organizations in Nigeria are state-owned and are assumed in literature to be less independent

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than their privately owned counterparts, this finding calls for deeper understanding which the qualitative data is likely to provide.

Table 5.12

The standard of journalism practice in Nigeria is improving.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	35	17.2	17.2	17.2
Disagree	46	22.5	22.5	39.7
Neutral	23	11.3	11.3	51.0
Agree	56	27.5	27.5	78.4
Strongly Agree	44	21.6	21.6	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

Despite the fact that about 50 per cent of respondents agreed with this statement, it is significant that about 40 per cent disagreed. Added to the about 11 per cent who remained neutral, it showed that only about half of the respondents could categorically declare that standard is improving in their profession.

Table 5.13

My salary is paid regularly by my employer.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	28	13.7	13.7	13.7
Agree	59	28.9	28.9	42.6
Neutral	41	20.1	20.1	62.7
Disagree	37	18.1	18.1	80.9

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| Strongly Disagree | 39 | 19.1 | 19.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 204 | 100.0 | 100.0 | |

It is significant from the responses here that over 20 per cent chose to be neutral. Since it is impossible for them not to know whether their salaries are being paid regularly or not, choosing to be neutral might suggest that they are freelancers who are not receiving regular salary or are, in fact, paid irregularly. Almost 43 per cent agreed that salary is regular while 37 per cent disagreed. Brought together, this could be interpreted to mean that about 50 per cent of respondents are either not paid regularly or are freelancers not on regular pay.

Table 5.14

I accept gifts (in cash or kind) in the course of my professional duties when given.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	40	19.6	19.6	19.6
Agree	56	27.5	27.5	47.1
Neutral	38	18.6	18.6	65.7
Disagree	38	18.6	18.6	84.3
Strongly Disagree	32	15.7	15.7	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

The phenomenon of envelope journalism and payment of gratification (in kind or cash) to journalists is a recurring issue in discourses on journalism in Nigeria. This informed the insertion of this variable to verify empirically, if this is true. Forty-seven per cent of respondents agreed that they receive gifts in the course of duty while 35 per cent disagreed. A significant number, constituting 19 per cent of respondents, were neutral, suggesting that they

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wanted to be non-committal on the matter. Juxtaposing this with Statement 13 which indicated that a reasonable percentage do not receive regular pay might suggest a link between irregular or no salary and acceptance of gifts by journalists in Nigeria. The issue was also raised in the interview which afforded further probing that provided a clearer picture (see Chapter Six).

Table 5.15

There is no job security for journalists in Nigeria.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	70	34.3	34.3	34.3
Agree	72	35.3	35.3	69.6
Neutral	19	9.3	9.3	78.9
Disagree	19	9.3	9.3	88.2
Strongly Disagree	24	11.8	11.8	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

The agreement of almost 70 per cent of respondents with this statement affirms their disposition to the variable. If lack of job security is linked to Statements 14 and 16, could the responses relate to the current level of journalism practice in Nigeria? However, more detailed responses for this variable were obtained in the qualitative inquiry which made the picture clearer (see Chapter Six).

Table 5.16

As a professional journalist, I try to strike a balance between upholding ethical standards and making ends meet.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

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	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	40	19.6	19.6	19.6
Disagree	53	26.0	26.0	45.6
Neutral	21	10.3	10.3	55.9
Agree	57	27.9	27.9	83.8
Strongly Agree	33	16.2	16.2	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

Over 45 per cent of respondents disagreed with this statement to the over 43 per cent that agreed. Another over 10 per cent was neutral. The variable was meant to measure how the respondents stand between the need to uphold professional ethics and 'making ends meet'. Linked to the response in statement 14 in which majority admitted to collecting gifts in the course of duty, which is against journalism code of ethics, the interviews were used to investigate further this finding.

Table 5.17

My passion for journalism is still high despite the challenges in the profession.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	37	18.1	18.1	18.1
Disagree	54	26.5	26.5	44.6
Neutral	11	5.4	5.4	50.0
Agree	60	29.4	29.4	79.4
Strongly Agree	42	20.6	20.6	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

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Most professionals are driven by a passion for their job and journalists are unlikely to be an exception. In view of some of the professional challenges faced by journalists in Nigeria as seen in literature and from the personal experience of the researcher as a journalist, the variable sought to measure the extent to which the challenges were affecting their passion for the job. Fifty per cent agreed that they still had a passion for the profession whereas almost 45 per cent disagreed. These responses when aligned to Statement 18, where a good majority agreed that they would quit journalism if they had better job opportunities, clearly point to a significant problem in the profession.

Table 5.18

I will quit journalism if I find an opportunity for a better job or position outside the profession.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	62	30.4	30.4	30.4
Agree	61	29.9	29.9	60.3
Neutral	9	4.4	4.4	64.7
Disagree	42	20.6	20.6	85.3
Strongly Disagree	30	14.7	14.7	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

Only about a quarter of respondents disagreed with the statement, showing that they were willing to remain in journalism even if they had opportunities for better jobs. However, a larger majority of over 60 per cent agreed that they would opt out if they got better jobs. Since association is not necessarily correlation, could their stance be driven by a desire for better pay and improved living standard rather than a loss of passion for the journalism

profession? This is something which was investigated through the semi-structured interviews

undertaken in the research.

Table 5.19

The Nigeria Union of Journalists is doing a lot in fighting for the rights and well-being of journalists.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	30	14.7	14.7	14.7
Agree	50	24.5	24.5	39.2
Neutral	32	15.7	15.7	54.9
Disagree	51	25.0	25.0	79.9
Strongly Disagree	41	20.1	20.1	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

A majority of 45 per cent felt that the NUJ is not doing enough to fight for the welfare of

journalists. On the other hand, 40 per cent agreed with the statement. This could influence the

attitude of journalists to the code of ethics which is NUJ-prescribed. The variable was also

explored through the semi-structured interviews in which the respondents clarified their

positions.

Table 5.20

The regulatory bodies for journalism - the National Broadcasting Commission, the Nigerian Press Council - have been working to ensure professional standard in Nigeria.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Disagree	47	23.0	23.0	23.0
Disagree	57	27.9	27.9	51.0
Neutral	34	16.7	16.7	67.6

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Agree	35	17.2	17.2	84.8
Strongly Agree	31	15.2	15.2	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

Over half (51 per cent) disagreed with the statement that the regulatory bodies have been promoting professional standards. Viewed with the majority opinion in Statement 19 that the NUJ is not fighting for the rights and well-being of journalists, it suggests a dissatisfaction among journalists with the performance of their professional and regulatory bodies in Nigeria.

Table 5.21

Journalism is vibrant in Nigeria despite increasing difficulty by various news organizations to stay afloat.

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly Agree	86	42.2	42.2	42.2
Agree	84	41.2	41.2	83.3
Neutral	20	9.8	9.8	93.1
Disagree	9	4.4	4.4	97.5
Strongly Disagree	5	2.5	2.5	100.0
Total	204	100.0	100.0	

It was curious to find in literature that journalism in Nigeria is still described as vibrant despite identified challenges and shortcomings, hence this variable. Yet, the response to this statement showed that indeed over 80 percent of informants agreed that the challenges of the profession have not dampened its vibrancy.

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5.3   Conclusion

This chapter presented the data generated from the quantitative inquiry of this study. The results of the inquiry were analysed, question by question, to graphically illustrate how data responded to the objective of the research, which is to critique and understand how journalists' response to professional challenges is impacting professional practice in Nigeria. The results established that:

- There is a 70-30 male/female ratio of journalists in Nigeria.

- The level of education attainment is relatively high among journalists as over 86% have equivalent of a Bachelor's degree and above.

- Over 50% of the research sample agreed that access to internet and new technologies has enhanced their job performance.

- A majority of the sample agreed that revenue from advertisements has dropped where they work.

- Only about 43% of the sample receive regular salary.

- About 47% of the sample agreed that they collect 'gifts' in the course of duty.

- 70% of the sample affirm that there is no job security for journalists.

- Over 60% of the sample agreed that they would quit journalism if they got better jobs.

The results from the quantitative data constitute empirical evidence which is compared in Chapter Seven, with the qualitative data presented in the next chapter, to arrive at findings to answer the research questions for this study.

Chapter Six

Qualitative Data Presentation and Analysis

6.1   Chapter Overview

This chapter complements the previous chapter which presented findings of the Quantitative data by unveiling the results for the Qualitative aspect of this study. As explained in Chapter Four, the choice of a mixed methods which combines qualitative and qualitative research approaches is to enable this study to derive maximum benefit from the two approaches and thereby, reduce to the barest minimum, the disadvantages inherent in using either of them alone (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014; May, 2011). The quantitative data analyzed in Section 5.2, which was derived from a questionnaire administered to 300 journalists in Nigeria, and the qualitative data from semi-structured interviews with 30 participants, were designed together to complement each other to provide answers to the two research questions for the study. RQ1 sought to identify the contemporary developments in professional journalism practice in Nigeria while RQ2 interrogated how journalists are responding to the developments and challenges of practice and the implication for professional standards.

As also explained in Chapter Four, eleven questions were formulated as an interview schedule but in line with the semi-structured format, the sequence of the interview was dictated by the responses to questions. The recorded interviews were subsequently transcribed and made ready for analysis.

The researcher recognised that qualitative data analysis entailed making sense of social observations without converting data to a numerical format (Babbie, 2007). The data was broken down into smaller units "to reveal their characteristic elements and structure. It

involves description and interpretation to make for understanding and explanation" (Dey (1993, p.30)). The data analysis allowed the researcher to gain new insights into data as they are broken down into their constituent parts and connections made between concepts to provide a ground for new descriptions (May, 2011). Gray (2014) described qualitative data analysis as a circular process which moves from description to connecting and classifying concepts to gain new insight. The researcher followed this circular process, going back and forth, studying the data to gain understanding for description, connection and classification of concepts. The diagram below illustrates the process:
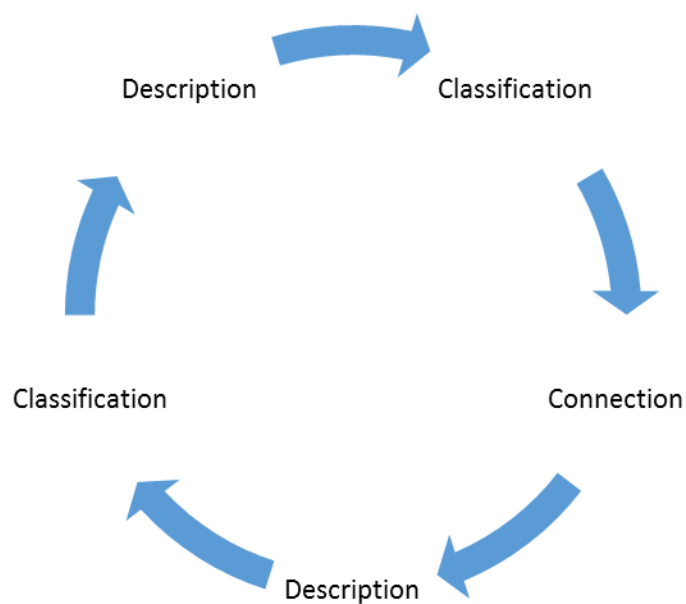
Figure 6.1   Qualitative Data Analysis: A Circular Process (Adapted from Gray, 2014, p.608)

After familiarizing with data through repeated reading, coding the data and identifying relevant concepts followed. A thematic analysis of the data was also done. Thematic analysis refers to the process of identifying themes relevant to the research questions from data and analyzing them (Braun & Clark, 2006; Fereday & Muir-Cochrane, 2006).

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The researcher followed the six phases of thematic data analysis prescribed by Braun and Clark (2006) cited in Gray (2014, p. 609) which involves:

(a) Reading and re-reading to get familiar with the data

(b) Systematic coding of striking features of the data using notes, markings or highlighting

(c) Searching for themes as from the codes and collating them into themes and sub-themes

(d) Cross-checking themes to ensure their validity, in relation to the evidence from data

(e) Defining and naming each theme in relation to the story to tell about the data

(f) Producing the report by selecting the vivid and significant portions of the data linking them to the research questions and the literature.

In line with the above, the data was coded, the names of the participants removed and replaced with identification codes JP (short for Journalist Participant) and numbered 1-30. Thus the first interviewee was coded JP1 while the last was coded JP30. The data was also coded and categorized into themes and labelled.

6.2 Thematic Analysis

As stated in Chapter One (p.4), this study is anchored on two research questions. The thematic analysis of the qualitative data commenced using the NVIVO Software for Text Search and Word Frequency queries. The Word Tree below generated from the data highlights words and phrases used by participants in answering questions related to journalism in Nigeria. As can be seen, words and phrases such as, 'my frustration', 'journalism in Nigeria has some challenges', 'information technology', 'society', 'challenges', 'community', 'severe condition', 'journalism has gained some sophistication', featured prominently.
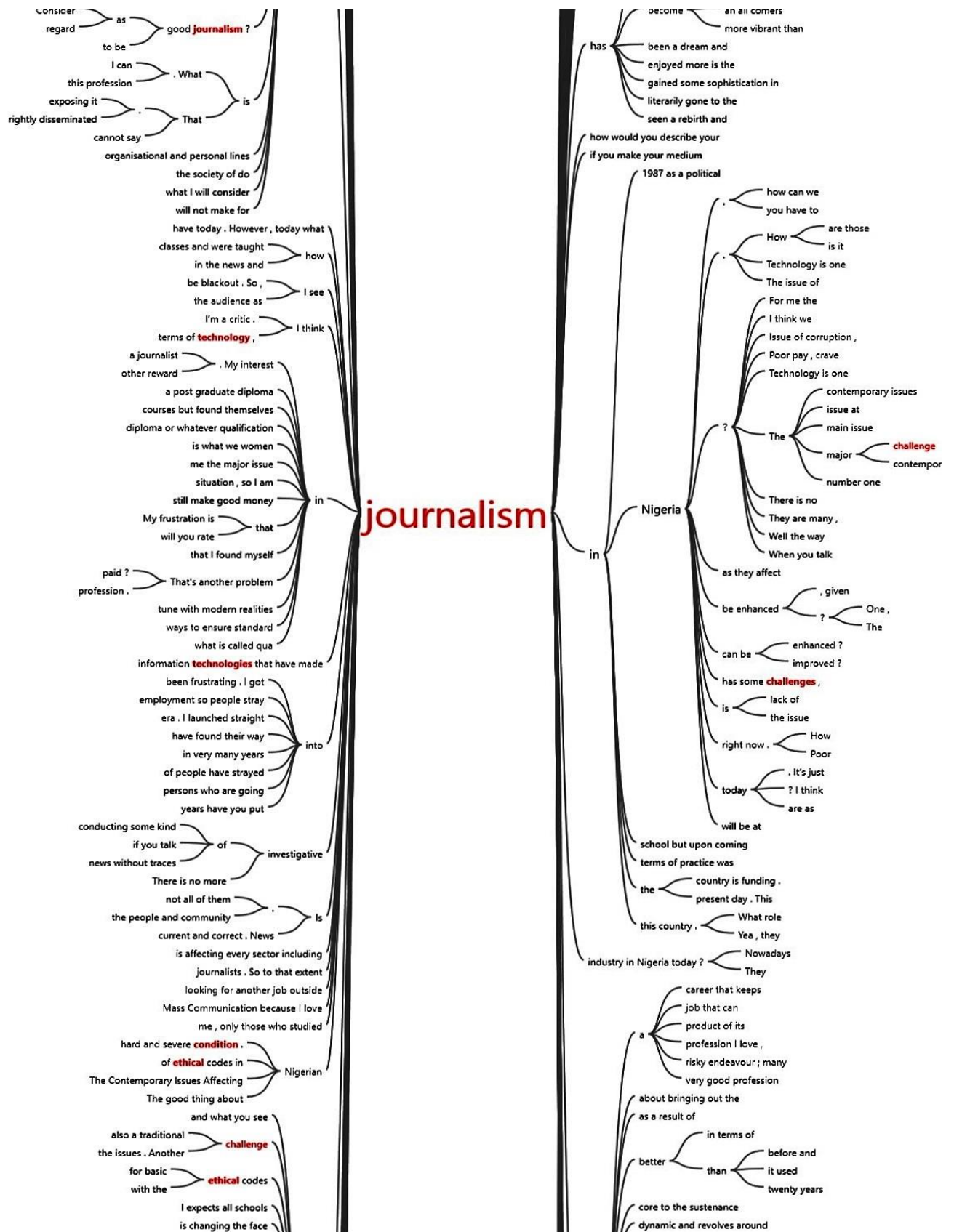
Figure 6.2   *Word Tree from NVIVO Text Search Query*

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The interview responses were grouped into ten broad themes for this analysis. Two of the themes relate to RQ1 (Research Question One) while eight relate to RQ2 (Research Question 2) as presented below. This reflects the complementary nature of the research questions. As explained above, RQ1 identified the contemporary developments in journalism practice in Nigeria. The response of journalists to the developments and how they impact the profession is critiqued by RQ2 and they both presented empirical backing for this research project. Thus, although the thematic grouping weighted in favour of RQ2, the themes combined well to achieve the goals of the thesis.

6.3   RQ1: What are the contemporary developments impacting professional journalism practice in Nigeria?

The research question interrogated various claims in literature on what drives journalism practice in Nigeria (see Abidde, 2012; Golwa, 2011; Ochogwu, 2011 & Pate, 2011). This was necessary because the dynamism in the journalism field and possible new developments make it imperative to ascertain what the current situation is. This was to ensure that the findings of this study were in tandem with the time. Questions Three and Four of the interview guide were specifically designed to elicit responses to the research questions while follow-up questions were thrown as necessary to invite participants to expand on initial responses. For instance, some of the respondents who cited poor salary and welfare conditions as challenges were taken up on how regularly they receive salary and if the identified challenges encourage ethical misconduct among journalists. Responses from the participants (JP1-30) to questions related to RQ1 are presented thematically.

6.3.1 Contemporary Developments/Challenges

The World Cloud in Figure 5.3 from NVIVO Word Search query featured key words found in the responses of participants to questions on the contemporary developments and

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challenges affecting their work as journalists. Key words such as control, organisations, hazards, professional, agents, instance, problem, politicians, need, issue, control, money, problem and many others which summarise the views of respondents can be found on the cloud.

Figure 6.3   Word Cloud on Contemporary Challenges Impacting Journalism

The journalists were unanimous in identifying poor pay, irregular salary and unfriendly working environment as major challenges and variously identified new technology, dwindling income for news organisations, invasion of the profession by those they called 'quacks', lack of independence, insecurity, casualisation, politics, poor infrastructure, limited access to information, the corrupting influence of the society, disrespect for ethics, ownership structure of news media organisations and proprietor influence as some of the challenges they face in the course of duty.

A majority of the participants agreed that new technologies and the Internet especially, have created the conditions for change in the profession such that journalists no longer have the monopoly of 'gatekeeping' the news. For instance, JP30 agreed that journalists no longer control the 'gates' to news as they often themselves learn of news breaks on different Internet platforms. His submission was repeated by other participants (for example, JP1, JP2, JP12, JP21 & JP24). Although majority agreed that new technologies have enhanced the productivity and versatility of journalists in many respects, they noted that it has also brought in laxity as some journalists now rely more on social media as sources instead of going out to investigate or verify stories. Others identified the birth of many online publications often disseminating falsehood and unverified information as a major challenge to professional journalism.

For instance, JP9 who has been a journalist for 38 years said 80 per cent of journalists in the state where he works are either not on salary or are paid irregularly. JP21 who said he was being owed 19 months' salary at the time of the interview corroborated this:

> Most times you have no money to work with because your salary is irregular and there is no special provision to take care of your movement. This pushes you to do what you don't like to do because you need to survive. Sometimes you cut ends to survive. In other words, you indulge in unethical practices, you compromise ethical standards to enable you survive one way or the other (Interview 21, 2015).

Also painting the situation, JP4 stated:

> Journalism is not given the right recognition that it ought to be given, in the sense that, much as journalism is core to the sustenance of democratic governance as a whole; the recognition given to the job is too minimal. There is poor work motivation for journalists in terms of pay and the safety of journalists while on assignments. Journalists sacrifice a lot but are paid little (Interview 4, 2015).

Many of the respondents who spoke on insecurity emphasised the lack of insurance cover for journalists which portends their families and relations being stranded if anything happens to them in the course of duty. JP16 for instance, cited the experience of widows of some journalists who died in the course of duty whom she said now depend on goodwill to survive.

JP2 mentioned what he called the recruitment of non-professionals which he said undermine ethical standards, a point also raised by JP8 who said "non-journalists, those not trained as journalists, have taken over the profession; anyone who can write calls himself or herself a journalist" (Interview 8, 2015). JP 25 viewed it as 'quackery', which he said "is assuming a dangerous dimension here in Nigeria, and it's very worrisome as people with evil intentions have infiltrated the industry with unethical practices to bastardise the noble profession' (Interview 25, 2015).

Some of the participants also identified what amounts to meddling from editors and proprietors or what a few others called lack of independence as a challenge influencing their work. They claimed that editors and proprietors often dictate the way stories should be written, a situation which forces them to toe a particular line in the treatment of stories. JP14 a television journalist, said he engages in self-censorship because his editors would not take any story that could offend government officials. He captured the situation thus:

> The number one challenge is lack of independence. Most of the time you cannot report issues the way you want because it will offend those in power. If you write a report critical of government or even not critical but which the powers that be may not like, your editor will refuse to use it. So we engage in self-censorship by writing only stories we know will be acceptable and we avoid those that might be considered controversial […] you cannot work according to your conscience or you'll lose your job (Interview 14, 2015).

JP14 was supported by a few others who said news media proprietors, managers and editors have politician and businessmen/women friends whose interest they protect, hence their 'meddling' in what can be published. JP 26 asserted that many proprietors and editors depend on politicians for advertisements and other patronage, noting that such news media can neither hold such politicians accountable nor allow journalists within their organisations to operate freely. According to JP5 "When you work in an organization where the publisher wants stories presented in a particular way, there is a limit to your creativity […]" (Interview 5, 2015).

An editor of a weekly newspaper (JP30), while supporting the view that proprietors influence what gets published said they (proprietors) are also often pressurised by 'outsiders' who are either their friends, business partners or other influential people, to 'intervene' when certain stories are about to be published. He buttressed his point with a story of how his publisher (proprietor) stopped him from publishing a story that had been promoted in a previous edition of his paper. According to him, following the promotion of an investigative story due for publication in the next edition, those concerned pressured the publisher to 'kill' the story. He simply got a call from the publisher to drop the story and when he sought an explanation, he was simply told to comply or be fired. "I had to comply, but I later learnt that it was due to pressure from some powerful people who he could not refuse. That is the situation" (Interview 30, 2015). This highlights the point that proprietors of news organisations interfere in editorial matters to protect certain interests (Idowu, 2014).

A number of the respondents identified the dwindling income of news media organisations as the cause of irregular salary payment or provision of necessary equipment for journalists to operate. Some of them listed loss of advertisement revenue to online platforms, a drastic drop in copy sales by newspapers and poor funding from proprietors as the causes. IP 12 described it as a fall out of the "global meltdown" which he said has hit businesses in developing

countries like Nigeria harder. A few others mentioned the migration of audiences to online platforms as cause of falling income to news organisations. These tend to support Phillip's (2015 p.1) contention that journalism as a profession continues to be "assailed by an almost continuous barrage of technical and economic shocks."

The corrupting influence of the society was also cited by many of the respondents as another challenge. McQuail (2013) had argued that the values of a society colour the product of journalism because journalists get influenced by happenings within the society in which they function. JP17 agreed with this and described the corrupting influence of the society as a big challenge. He stated:

> Most times when journalists go out […] they are offered brown envelopes and sometimes they are even expectant of those brown envelopes and once they receive them, they write what the 'givers' want instead of the truth (Interview 17, 2015).

Two female journalists introduced a gender perspective to the issue when they argued that the challenges of journalism practice were more for married female journalists because of family responsibilities. Their response prompted the researcher to raise the issue with other married female participants. All of them said combining daily journalism routine, which is already tasking, with family responsibilities of mothering and other tasks makes things tougher for them. A few said they enjoyed working as journalists while they were not married but that practising since they got married puts them under a lot of pressure. These responses from two of the female journalists capture their position:

> Men have homes but their job at home is not as much as that of the women. So it's more stressful on women because you need to be thinking; your brain needs to be working every minute. You are thinking of your children, your assignment, your husband, cooking, the home, everything […] it is tougher for women than for men because of family responsibilities (JP15).

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JP16 buttressed this:

> It's been both interesting and tough. Tough because the job is demanding and you have to combine that with another demanding responsibility of taking care of your family. So I would say you have to be a super woman to control the home front and your job at the same time and that is what we women in journalism are doing. Most times I get home tired after the day's job, but my children will want to have my attention and I have to cook. Sometimes, I go home with some reports that I have to work on but I must first attend to my children and other things needing my attention, get the children to bed and then work into the night. No matter how late I go to bed, I must be up early to prepare the children for school and that is the routine; so it's really tough being a married female journalist (Interview 16, 2015).

As the summary above shows, the participants in their responses to questions relating to contemporary challenges/developments impacting journalism practice in Nigeria identified various issues that would answer the research question. They provided insights into how 'the field' (Bourdieu, 1998; Phillips, 2015) and social factors (McQuail, 2013) influence professional journalists.

6.3.2 Impact of Developments/Challenges

Question 4, 'How are these issues affecting you as a professional?', and follow-up questions related to it were designed to get an assessment of the impact of the developments and challenges identified by the participants in the previous questions as presented in 6.3.1. The researcher believed that responses to questions tied to this theme would contribute to understanding how developments and challenges are impacting professional journalism practice in Nigeria as RQ1 interrogated. The NVIVO Text Search and Word Frequency Query by the researcher showed the words most used by the respondents in the Word Cloud below:

Figure 6.4   World Cloud on the Implications of Developments/Challenges

As the world cloud shows, words like ethics, work, profession, journalism, poor, objectivity, situation, professional standard, interest, time, truth, salary, owners, motivation, practice and many others, capture the key words used by the participants in their responses to the questions related to the theme. The details of their responses follow.

Most respondents touched on the impact of new technology, dwindling income of news media organisations, proprietor's interest, poor salary and unfriendly working environment which they had earlier identified as developments and challenges. They expressed how these factors are affecting them as individual journalists and the journalism profession as a whole.

For example, many of the participants acknowledged that new technology has made their work a lot easier with gadgets like iPad and other tablets, smart phones, digital technology and others now available. Many of them said they now carry out research with more ease

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through the internet while access to necessary information to work with had also improved considerably. Some of the participants observed new technology has made the job more challenging as they have to file instant or live reports during news breaks which keep them on their toes. However, a few others also noted that the easier access to information on the internet had made some journalists lazy, routinely visiting the Internet to pick information without proper investigation or research of their own.

JP1 captured the situation:

> Let me point out that the new technology that has come has brought a level of laziness into the profession. People want to sit in their offices, browse through the internet and tell you a story; you will be so surprised that an incident will happen and a journalist will not like to go there. He will wait for social media and pick it from there. Some just sit in the comfort of their room or offices and make up a story (Interview 1, 2015).

On irregular or poor salary, many of the participants said news media organisations were going through rough times, unable to generate enough income to break even. They observed that income from advertisement and other traditional sources have dropped drastically while the online platforms which many news organisations had created to complement their traditional titles had not been yielding much, resulting in financial difficulties. Some of them said that apart from being unable to pay salary regularly, many news organisations are also unable to buy necessary equipment for reporters or fund trips for the pursuit of stories. JP2, a television journalist, for instance, said he had been buying equipment, like a microphone, at his own expense just to ensure that he can undertake his job effectively.

A host of the participants who said they get paid fairly regularly noted that while their situation was better than those of their colleagues who do not receive salary regularly or get paid at all, the low salary package for journalists in Nigeria was making life tough. They said the salary they receive is inadequate to take care of their responsibilities. JP 19 who was in

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this group and who was unmarried, said he was considering quitting journalism, despite his love for it, for a better paying job before getting married. His position was supported by JP15 who said she had lost passion for the job because of the various challenges and the conduct they have engendered in the practitioners. According to her,

> A lot of things about the profession is not encouraging. The pay is poor and the conditions under which one practices is demeaning. People look down on journalists and treat them anyhow. I admit that some of our colleagues call for the poor treatment by the way they comport themselves. A lot of journalists are just after money and they go about it in such a brazen manner that I find embarrassing as a journalist myself. Things like this have made me to be tired of the profession and if I find something else to do I will surely quit (Interview 15, 2015).

Most of the participants equally submitted that the situation was causing low morale and diminished enthusiasm for the profession. They also said it was responsible for what they called the unethical conduct of many journalists who depend more on hand outs (monetary gifts) from those they cover. They admitted that professional standards were ebbing because many journalists now pursue 'survival' as JP2 captured it. He explained:

> […] survival in the sense that a journalist that is not well paid will go out to work but he has a family to take care of, he has his personal issues and he is not being paid. Definitely he will be unable to resist any offer of gratification […]. So, instead of doing your job and leaving, then the organizers will tell you, 'take this is for transportation, this and that'. It has its own challenges which affect the quality of stories or news being dished out and an overall negative effect on the profession (Interview 2, 2015).

Another participant (JP21) confided in the researcher that he sometimes has to do things he would ordinarily not do because of financial difficulties. He put it this way:

> Most times you have no money to work with because your salary is irregular and there is no special provision to take care of your movement. This pushes

you to do what you don't like to do because you need to survive. Sometimes you cut ends to survive. In other words, you indulge in unethical practices, you compromise ethical standards to enable you survive one way or the other. For instance, you see, it is very common for us correspondents to be advert canvassers for our papers in the areas where we operate. You must agree with me as a veteran yourself (referring to the researcher) that for as long as you go out in search of adverts and you also write stories, you will be forced to compromise one value or the other […] because you don't want to offend the advertisers (Interview 21, 2015).

A News Editor (JP7) expressed a similar view and added that poor remuneration and delayed salary lead to low morale, low productivity and indiscipline among staff. About half of the respondents said they do other things like freelancing for other news media, poultry keeping or other side businesses to make ends meet.

Some others also noted that many journalists in the quest for survival, brazenly associate with politicians whose interests they protect in their professional tasks, a practice Hallin and Mancini (2004) coined political parallelism. According to JP6,

Many journalists are now aligned to politicians and are doing their bidding which is damaging the integrity of the profession. Sometimes when you write your report and you file it, your editor doesn't want to use the report because he wants to favour a (political) party and he throws it away […]. We need to start working on ourselves by making sure we practice in accordance with the ethics of our profession. We are not supposed to be taking sides with politicians (Interview 6, 2015).

A few of the respondents also spoke of the psychological aspect of the challenges which affect their performance. While some of them said they were in perpetual fear of losing their jobs because of the financial difficulties facing their news establishments, others said they strive not to make any mistake so as not to be sacked. For example, JP18 who is an Editor said he is always conscious of his proprietor's interest in determining what should be

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published "so you find yourself in a situation where you weigh what you want to publish against the interest of the owner of your medium".

This section has summarised the responses of participants to the impact of the challenges they identified in the previous section on their professional duty. Together, the responses assist in shedding light on the effects of the developments/challenges on professional journalism practice in Nigeria and provide evidence to allow RQ1 to be answered as discussed in detail the next chapter of this thesis.

6.4 RQ2: How are journalists in Nigeria responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties and what are the implications of this?

This research question, as explained earlier, is crucial to achieving one of the major objectives of this research which is to identify the challenges facing journalists (RQ1) and interrogate how their response to the challenges is impacting the profession. As noted in Chapter One, while there have been studies on how journalists in Nigeria do their work and the factors responsible for this, little or nothing, to the best of the knowledge of this researcher, has been done in seeking an understanding of how the way journalists respond to the challenges they face influences the way they do their work. Ogunsiji (1989, p. 16) likens practicing journalism in Nigeria to "walking on a tight rope" while Phillips (2015) observes the need for researchers to focus more on the complexities of journalism practice and the pressures these exert on practitioners. Evidence from data indicated that while challenges faced by journalists are common or similar, personal values, orientation and convictions influence individual responses. The responses of participants to the various questions that touch on this research question have been grouped into eight themes which are presented in the following sections.

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6.4.1 Response to Challenges

This theme was primarily addressed by Question 5 and others outside the interview guide which the researcher raised during the interview. The questions sought from the participants how they were responding to the challenges confronting them as professionals. The Word Cloud derived from a Word Frequency Query on NVIVO below aggregates the key words used by the participants in their responses to various questions. The key words include profession, editor, challenges, career, standard, balance, observance, truth, interest which are examined contextually below.

Figure 6.5   Word Cloud on Response to Challenges

As seen from the responses presented in the previous sections, the challenges facing journalists in Nigeria in the course of their professional duties and the effects are similar in many respects and there is substantial agreement that they are having a negative effect on professional standard. However, the answers to questions related to this theme showed that

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journalists react differently to the challenges they face. While many tend, as literature suggests, (see Adeyemi, 2013; Idowu, 2014; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003; Omoera, 2010) to have 'surrendered' to the situation which they deem themselves helpless to resist and have devised strategies to cope, some others say they are still upholding the ethical principles and have not joined the 'bandwagon'. However, those in this category are a minority.

Many of the respondents said they were striving to survive despite irregular salary and unfavourable working conditions and admitted to collecting gifts in course of doing their work. A few of them said they do not make it a condition for doing their job but do not refuse when given. Many of those who admitted to collecting gifts said they were aware that it is against their professional ethics but said that was the only way to survive. One of them (JP20) painted the following picture:

> […] we are not well paid, so we struggle to pay our bills. I feel ashamed when we are openly handed envelopes at the end of assignments (coverages) like beggars, but what can one do? It has become like a norm and we need the money to survive. Your wife and children can never understand why you would go out to work in the morning, come back, usually late in the evening, and tell them that you cannot put breakfast on the table because you've not been paid or the salary is poor. So this is where the problem lies. I believe that a lot of us journalists are conscientious; we have self-worth and would not debase ourselves this way (collecting handouts) if the situation were otherwise (Interview 20, 2015)

Speaking on the same issue, JP9 stated:

> I must confess that the issue of irregular salary or poor pay is a major problem for the profession because it influences the conduct of journalists. It is very difficult to find journalists who are well paid and many like I said don't get paid at all. If you are not paid, you will find other ways to survive and this sometimes manifests in unethical behaviour. (Interview 9, 2015).

The few who said they do not receive gifts or behave unethically despite the challenges they face, shared their strategies for survival which ranged from receiving support from family members and friends, freelancing for other papers, engaging in other income-generating activities such as poultry-keeping, to just managing with what is available. JP11 for example, said he receives support from his wife to augment his poor salary while he also makes up for the equipment his employers cannot provide by buying his own. According to him,

> I have made efforts to get things like iPad, smart phones and others which my employer did not provide, because they enhance my job, but how many of us can afford to do that? I am lucky that my wife has a good job and she assists here and there, otherwise, it would have been tougher. So the challenges constitute limitations but one tries to get around them and get the job done (Interview 11, 2015).

Taking a different stance, JP17 said he would not collect gifts under any circumstance because he does not believe in it:

> […] the issue of upholding the ethics is a personal thing and I try my best to uphold them. I do not mind if I am the only journalist standing for the truth. You will not find me going for an event and hang around when the event is over waiting for a hand out. I leave immediately because I don't believe in that.

On his part, JP13 said the sense of rendering a service to society keeps him going despite the odds:

> I try not to allow the unfriendly environment to discourage me […] I am highly motivated by my passion for the job so I feel challenged to forge on and work to make society better through my reports. I believe that if we work to achieve a better society, things will also improve for journalism and the practice will become better (Interview 13, 2015).

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JP18 who is an editor said:

> […] we struggle on daily basis to see what we can get to do our work. When we get money to send reporters for coverage, we do so, but when there is no money, we find other ways of getting round it. It's tough but that is our society for you (Interview 18, 2015).

Also in the group of those who strive to uphold ethical standard despite the challenges are JP27 who said he allows his conscience to guide him, no matter the pressure, and JP29 who said he stands for upholding professional ethics and advances this cause in his writings. JP 27 stated:

> I only try to see how I can exhibit my passion for objectivity and work according to my conscience. If I file in a story or report the way I should and the editor insists that he does not like certain paragraphs and deletes them, at least I have done my bit by writing a balanced story […] My conscience is always clear that I have done my job the way I should. (Interview 27, 2015).

Although the above group constitute a minority, they help to confirm that not all journalists collect cash gifts as scholars and commentators (Abidde, 2012; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003) often suggest.

On proprietor influence, some of the participants who are either editors or managers said they try to maintain a balance between the interest of proprietors and satisfying the interest of the audience. They, however, admitted that they defer to what the proprietor wants to avoid losing their jobs. JP23 put it rather bluntly saying, "I can't bite the finger that feeds me."

The married female participants (JP15 & JP16) who identified combining their journalism duties with family responsibilities as a challenge said they would quit journalism for other jobs if they had the opportunity. JP16 captured their position thus:

> I have a husband who is understanding and helpful but the truth is that men are not naturally cut for certain responsibilities. They cannot take care of children

the way a woman would, so since I got married, combining journalism with the family responsibility has become burdensome. I always wish I had more time for my children and there is always this guilt that I am not giving them enough attention […] I am actually thinking of going into public relations practice if I get the opportunity because it will give me more time for my family.

The various positions of the participants as presented in this section have provided a picture of how they are responding to the challenges of professional practice which is valuable for taking this study further.

6.4.2 Career Motivation

This theme which Questions One and Two were designed to address, was based on the reasoning that what motivates a person in respect of his or her career influences the person's response to challenges. As the responses presented below show, the attitude of the participants to their professional challenges is somewhat related to the kind of motivation they have towards their job. The Word Tree derived from NVIVO summarises the most frequently used words by the respondents while a summary of the responses is presented thereafter.
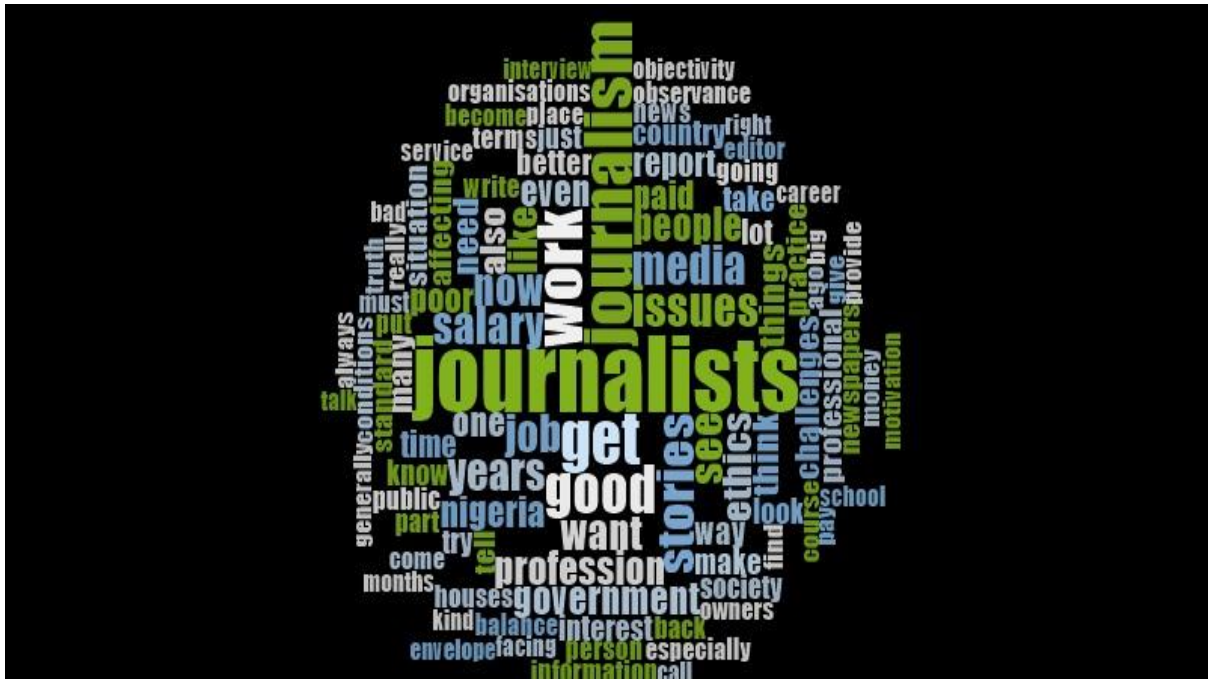
Figure 6.6   Word Cloud for Career Motivation

The World Cloud above showed that words such as challenges, professional, salary, poor, bad, service, situation, public, affecting, right, always, information were captured in participants' responses to questions bordering on career motivation. Participants gave different perspectives relative to their attitude to the questions. Whereas some said their passion for the journalism profession motivates them, others said the enormity of the challenges sometimes dampen their enthusiasm and makes them want to quit despite their love for journalism. Another group said they love journalism because it confers some status, gives journalists access to important people and places, as well as, opens doors, while a few others said the sense of rendering service to society or serving as a credible source of information to the people keeps them going.

JP15 for instance, narrated how some years ago, frustrated by the challenges of poor salary and unfriendly working conditions, he took his annual vacation to give him time to search for another job. He had just started the vacation when one morning, a neighbour knocked on his

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door seeking to clarify some information he saw on the internet. The neighbour said he was confident he would get the correct information from him (JP15) being a journalist. According to him, the experience made him change his mind about quitting journalism as it underscored how people valued the service journalists render to society. "I resolved to continue working as a journalist deriving satisfaction that many people silently valued their service to the society", he said. His perspective was shared by JP2 who said "I see journalism as a light to the society and it is an awesome responsibility; that is the way I see it and this motivates me."

To others, the impact of their job on society, the opportunity to contribute to making the society better, love for humanity, interest in public service and drive for the truth are their motivation. These quotations are a few of their responses:

> The motivation is that you enjoy reporting what is happening to the people. You serve as a link between the leaders and the citizens of the country from your beat. I see the fact that people depend on you as a source of credible information as an enormous responsibility (JP9).

> I love contributing to humanity. I told myself that, for as long as I breathe, money will not be a fundamental factor to my existence as a journalist. I want to contribute to the wellbeing of the human beings around me and to leave the people better than I met them through what I write. This is the fundamental motivation that pushes me to do what I am doing every day (JP11).

> Journalism has been a dream and passion since I was in my high school. I love seeing people get informed and enlightened on various issues that concerns them and their environment. My passion for writing on various subject matters made me to develop more enthusiasm for the profession […] I want to state that I didn't become a journalist by accident. I am into journalism because I have a burning passion for this noble profession of information dissemination (JP26).

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JP22 said he developed a flair for writing from the inspiration he got from reading newspaper columns as a college student which made him decide to study Mass Communication. To him the satisfaction or feeling of contributing to making the society better compensates for the frustrations in the journalism profession, which he views as a call to duty. For JP18 "nothing gives more inspiration than the positive commendations that accompany my work; it feels good to see the positive impact of your work on the society"

On the other hand, others like JP15 and JP19 say they are discouraged by the challenges and unfavourable working environment for journalism and would quit if they got a job with a better pay packet. According to JP19, "the pay check of the average journalist is very poor both in the public and private sectors […] if one cannot feed his family then he is at risk of being influenced negatively if he doesn't have a strong foundation."

As the summary of responses related to the theme - Career Motivation - presented above has shown, the participants had different perspectives on what motivates them as journalists. A majority stated that they have reasons to remain in the profession despite various challenges. However, the reasons given by those who said they would quit if they got a better job were also presented. The implications of the responses are discussed in the next chapter.

6.4.3 Welfare and Working Conditions

As the results presented for the themes presented so far have shown, many of the issues raised by the participants as the challenges affecting their professional duties touch on welfare and working conditions. Issues like low or irregular pay, motivation or a lack of it, among others are linked to this theme. The key words used by participants to questions related to this theme as can be seen in the Word Cloud below which was generated from an NVIVO Word Frequency Query, showed that words like envelope, motivation, situation,

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interview, practice, objectivity, bad, society, government, salary, need, interest, ethics and many others were used by participants.

Figure 6.7   Word Cloud on Journalists' Welfare and Working Conditions

The responses to questions relating to welfare or working conditions had virtual uniform answers with all participants agreeing that the conditions were poor. Many who work in private media organisations said they are owed several months' salary, some up to one year or more. Some of them described their salary as 'peanuts'. Most of those who work in government-owned news media said their salary is fairly regular as they get paid alongside other government workers. Only two participants said their salary was good but added that the working conditions could be better. One of them said they even get paid for the 13th month (Christmas bonus) at year's end. Yet, the few who said they are not owed salaries commented that what they receive is inadequate to meet their responsibilities. Many participants variously cited poor, irregular or non-existent salary, insecurity, lack of insurance cover and lack of working equipment.

One participant (JP2) said the television station for which he works provides needed equipment for staff. According to him, "In my own organization for instance, we are given equipment to work with but I have seen some other colleagues that don't have the kind of equipment that I have." Based on this response, it would therefore be wrong to generalise that all the news media organisations do not provide equipment for journalists to work with.

Most participants agreed that the low capital base and tough business environment made it difficult for news media organisations to pay well or provide good working conditions. Some pointed out that a number of proprietors make good money yet refuse to pay their staff well or regularly. For example, JP21 said there is a far from ideal working environment for journalists in Nigeria to function well:

> Most of them (news media) cannot fund most of the reportorial needs of the staff. Some of them cannot even pay salaries of the staff. So, it gets to a situation where what we are having today, the kind of practice we are having in most media houses in the country today is what I call nominal practice (Interview 21, 2015).

Many of the participants like JP13, who was a former top official of the NUJ, contended that poor salary and working conditions encourage unethical conduct among journalists as their 'poor' condition makes them vulnerable to temptation. He explained that "poor remuneration is responsible for unethical activities of journalists and because of these unethical acts, the profession is suffering." His position was supported by JP20 who said "poor pay and poor working conditions encourage many journalists to do unethical things which is giving the profession a bad reputation." JP9 was more categorical by admitting that some journalists in fact organise interviews or coverage just to raise money to survive;

> The only way of surviving is to go on assignments and that is why you see most journalists going to interview people. After interviewing you ought to leave but they want to stay back and collect something (money) at least for

their survival and this is the major means through which journalists are surviving.

A few like JP8 would rather blame the news media owners saying "many proprietors push their employees into unethical conduct through poor working conditions and irregular payment of salary."

JP30 who described the condition of journalists in Nigeria as 'pathetic' blamed the ownership structure of news media establishments for their poor financial situation. He explained:

> Most of them are sole proprietors who lack the strong capital outlay needed to run a successful news media. They merely list their friends, family members or relations as board members but in reality, they run the establishments alone. Media proprietorship is an influence thing and those who own news media establishments do not want to lose control over them through joint ownership. They prefer to run them alone to maintain their hold and this limits the amount of money available to run the organisations. We do not have media conglomerates here in Nigeria as in other parts of the world (Interview 30, 2015).

Many participants reported that poor welfare and working conditions had turned journalists to virtual beggars a situation which some elites exploit to get journalists to do their bidding. JP23 made this point when he said, "journalists are among the poorest paid in the country and many are not even on salary. This exposes them to corruption because people who know their condition would always exploit it by offering them money or other things." Also, JP17 described journalists as, in monetary terms, a 'poor bunch' while JP13 wondered if journalists owed several months' salary could be expected to operate ethically. On his part, JP29 painted a helpless picture on the issue of irregular salary stating "we endure till we see it (salary)."

A few others mentioned what they called 'casualisation' of journalists noting that many news organisations engage freelancers who they do not pay regularly. They argued that the

activities of such journalists were also creating ethical problems for the profession as some of them openly demand bribes in order to survive. JP28 explained:

> One of the syndromes today is freelance or contract staffing or whatever, which is very common in many media organizations. They just put people on temporary appointments and pay them stipends irregularly or do not pay at all. This encourages the 'brown envelope syndrome' that is often talked about, because when you don't pay someone, he finds other ways to survive (Interview 28, 2015).

The responses presented in this section suggest a preponderance of dissatisfaction among Nigerian journalists on their welfare and working conditions. A majority of the participants highlighted various perspectives that illustrate their positions while only a few had nice things to say about their working conditions. The responses have painted a picture on issues relating to the theme which contributes to achieving the ends of this study.

6.4.4 Observance of Ethics

Many of the respondents had in their responses to some of themes summarised in the preceding sections pointed to the ethical implications of a number of the issues they identified. Raising a specific question on the observance of ethics was therefore another way of gaining insight into the level of awareness of professional ethics and participants' attitude towards them. While not admitting guilt, participants' views on unethical conduct of some journalists enhanced a deeper understanding of the variable. This section presents responses to questions linked directly to participants' rating of the observance of ethics by Nigerian journalists. The key words used by them including interest, society, balance, issues, envelope, conditions, truth, standard, good, kind, challenges and money can be seen below on the NVIVO Word Cloud.

Figure 6.8   *World Cloud on Observance of Ethics*

The subjectivity of self-assessment was evident in participants' responses to questions which sought their rating of the level of observance of ethics among journalists as opinions were varied. Only a few rated the level of ethical observance low despite the suggestion in literature to the contrary (e.g. Abidde, 2008; Idowu, 2014 & Pate, 2003). Some of the participants gave percentage ratings of 50, 60 and 70 per cent while others used 'high', 'good', 'average', 'relatively poor' or 'very poor'. JP12 and JP15, for instance rated it as 'very poor' but blamed some of the challenges such as poor salary and lack of independence for the tendencies. Others who agreed that many journalists engage in unethical behaviour which give the profession a bad image, also linked it to poor welfare conditions. JP5 was one of them:

> Very poor […] for you to talk about abiding by codes, you should also look at the welfare of journalists; they go hand in hand. You are always told to refuse brown envelopes (gifts) and not to misdirect your readers but a hungry man is an angry man who is capable of bending any fact. The only way we can

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uphold the ethics is when the welfare of practicing journalists improves. All the unethical practices in today's journalism are as a result of poor remuneration. Journalists are the most poorly paid in the country and until the welfare of journalists improves, abiding by ethics will only exist in the books and not in practice (Interview 5, 2015).

JP7 who did not exonerate himself, captured it thus:

> The main hindrance is the problem of low wages and irregular salary. I can talk with you (researcher) confidently and honestly because you are one of us. People (journalists) actually look forward to hand-outs (financial gifts) when they go for a coverage. Many are not on salary and some of those on salary are not paid regularly. For those who get paid, the salary is poor and insufficient to take care of their responsibilities. So, even though we know it is unethical (to collect gifts), we have to survive (Interview 7, 2015).

On his part, JP23 argued that the unethical practices found in journalism were a reflection of the larger society. He stated:

> Journalists are products of the Nigerian society. If the country is facing corruption problem, expectedly, the profession is having its own share of this problem. In a situation where a reporter hasn't received salary for months and he is being offered some money to write an imbalanced story, he will do it to bring food on his table. What does objectivity, fairness, and other ethical codes mean to a reporter who is not paid or is not on a salary scale? (Interview 23, 2015)

The above views relate to what McQuail (2013) referred to as the practices and pressures which the work environment exerts on journalism output. Omoera (2010) and Pate (2011a) have also argued that poor conditions of service encourage unethical behaviour among journalists. A number of the participants also identified what they called 'junk' or 'gutter' journalism, unregulated online publications and alignment to politicians or political parallelism (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) as other ethical practices among journalists. JP13 who rated the observance of ethics as 'relative' added a selectivity dimension (McQuail, 2005)

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when he observed that some journalists tend to be objective on issues that do not touch on their interest but become biased on issues in which they have interest.

Almost all the participants agreed that unethical behaviours, especially the collection of cash gifts, were degrading and demeaning. For instance, JP24 said it amounts to "mortgaging one's, dignity" while PJ15 described it as "distasteful". To JP10, the non-remuneration of most freelance journalists in Nigeria encourages so-called quackery and other unethical behaviour, noting that many of them use lack of pay as an excuse to misbehave.

However, despite the widespread 'admission' among most participants on the prevalence of the "brown envelope syndrome" (envelope journalism), a few insist that they do not partake in it at all, while a handful of others said they still strive to be fair even when they collect gifts "like beggars" (JP20), but they do not feel good about it. JP17, for example, said he does not collect brown envelope no matter his financial condition:

> I don't believe in brown envelopes. In my career I haven't been tempted to receive brown envelope from anybody and I don't hope to because I like to say things the way they are. It's really painful to go out there and you say you are a journalist and people look at you as a liar because they believe all journalists are the same. But that many journalists in Nigeria are doing it (collecting gifts) doesn't mean that every journalist is doing it (Interview 17, 2015).

JP14 also said he strives to avoid anything unethical saying, "I try to abide by the ethics in my conduct and in my writing; one may not be perfect but one tries not to deliberately go against the ethics in doing one's work." This clearly shows that while many journalists are involved in the 'brown envelope syndrome' there are some of them who strive to remain ethical even though they are all exposed to the same or similar welfare conditions.

A few of the participants identified lack of editorial independence and the absence of sanctions for erring journalists as other causes of unethical behaviour among journalists. JP12 argued that some of what gets published for which journalists are blamed are actually dictated by proprietors. According to him, "journalists have to work in line with the interests of their owners and those who own the majority of media houses are either politicians or their (politicians') friends, or governments, federal or state; journalists are therefore constrained to reflect their owners' interests." On his part, JP11 argued that "if people (journalists) know that they cannot get away with unethical conduct, they are likely to be more careful." Giving another view, JP17 noted that many news organisations publish unverified information in their desire to boost sales or "increase clicks" on their online platforms.

From the various positions presented by the participants as captured in this section, their opinions on the level of observance of professional ethics among journalists in Nigeria are divided. There is, however, substantial agreement from the responses, that the observance of ethical codes is not as high as some of them rated it. As the findings show, most of them, including those who admitted that they collect 'gifts' agreed that unethical behaviour undermines professional standards. This suggests that they have an idea of what 'good journalism' entails. What then is the role of regulatory bodies in checking ethical abuses and ensuring 'good journalism'? The next two sections summarise the views of the participants on these.

6.4.5 The Role of Regulatory Bodies

Journalism in Nigeria, like other professional bodies, is regulated by statutory bodies. The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) for instance, regulates the broadcast sector while the Nigerian Press Organisation which is constituted by the Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), the Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria (BON), the

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Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) and the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), is supposed to regulate other news media. The claim in the literature that the standard of ethical observance among Nigerian journalists is low (see e.g. Adeyemi, 2013; Eke, 2014; Kayode, 2011; Omoera, 2010) stimulated the interest of this researcher to critique the regulatory practices of journalism in Nigeria.

Figure 6.9   Word Cloud on the Role of Regulatory Bodies

The NVIVO Word Frequency Query above generated a Word Cloud which exhibited the words and phrases most used by participants in their responses. They include media, government, interest, organisations, need, service, report, time, observance, course, owner, profession, stories, challenges, affecting and many others.

The responses showed that most of the participants perceive the regulatory bodies as ineffective. They think the bodies are not doing enough to maintain ethics. Many cite what they saw as the unchecked mushrooming of all manner of publications especially online, where, they allege, half-truths and outright falsehood are published in utter disregard for professional ethics. Some of them noted that the ineffectiveness of the regulatory bodies had created room for people with no or weak financial base to provide good salary and welfare for staff to establish sub-standard news media. They claimed that most cases of unethical conduct relating to envelope journalism are perpetrated by those employed by such proprietors. JP10, a former Deputy President of the NUJ confirmed the ineffectiveness of the regulatory bodies when he said: "To the best of my knowledge, every profession should have some form of regulation; there must be a form of enforcement or whatever structure to enforce standards in the practice of any profession […] the ones (regulatory bodies) we have are just there (ineffective)."

His position was corroborated by JP30 who explained the ineffectiveness of the regulatory bodies:

> The regulatory bodies are ineffective because the problems besetting the journalism profession are also affecting them. These include lack of independence either financially or politically. They are not well funded and most of the times, they depend on government officials, politicians or business organisations to fund their activities. I know, for example, that most meetings of the Nigerian Guild of Editors are hosted and wholly financed by some state governors; the NUJ also depends on federal or state governments for funds to run their affairs while the NBC is more or less like a government department used to deal with antagonistic broadcast stations. How then do you expect them to be efficient? (Interview 30, 2015).

JP16 who also shared this view, called on the regulatory bodies to "wake up" while JP11 believed that applying sanctions would discourage unethical conduct. JP7 urged the NUJ to

fight to improve the welfare of journalists and called for "minimum standard for investors who want to enter into publishing and broadcasting."

6.4.6 Good Journalism

Although journalism practice is generally said to differ in time and space (Hallin & Mancini, 2004) there is substantial evidence that there are still certain ideals which journalists share globally (McQuail, 2013; Voltmer, 2013). To ascertain the level of awareness of these 'norms' among journalists in Nigeria, participants were asked to define what they consider to be 'good journalism' (Question 8). This is in the belief that for a journalist to practice 'good journalism' s/he has to know what it is. The question was also aimed at gauging the role perception of journalists in relation to the contentions of Field Theory and the Social Theory of Journalism that how journalists see society and what they consider to be good standard of practice influence their work (Phillips, 2015; McQuail, 2013).

The most frequently used words by participants in answer to this question can be seen in the Word Cloud in Figure 5.9 which was derived from an NVIVO Word Frequency Query. They include, professional, interest, kind, objectivity, ethics, balance, service, society, truth, right, owners, challenges and others.

Figure 6.10   Word Cloud on Good Journalism

The participants, used words and phrases such as 'truth', 'objectivity', 'timely and balanced report of events', 'avoiding libel', 'giving voice to the voiceless and the less privileged', 'raising the frontiers of development', 'promoting good governance', 'protecting human rights and exposing corruption', 'compliance with professional ethics', 'journalism practice that complies with the universal ethics of journalism'.

According to JP10, "observing the dos and don'ts of journalism practice, which is more or less universal, is what makes a good professional or good journalism practice". JP22 saw it as "reflecting all shades of opinion affected by a story and balancing stories even where proprietary interests are affected". Some others like JP26 said journalism is supposed to drive democracy and set its agenda, while JP25 viewed it as the freedom to report objectively, without ethnic, religious or other biases. He said:

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> The (news) media would be adjudged as practising good journalism when they
> are not polarised along regional, religious, ethnic, organisational and personal
> lines. Good journalism is void of sentiments and allows reporters and editors
> to do their job, and also publish what is true, and this happens when the
> proprietor does not allow his personal perception or friendship with the
> person(s) involved to becloud him. I see good journalism as making
> painstaking investigation and information gathering that results in a balanced
> story (Interview 25, 2015).

JP29 put it this way: "good journalism is that which does the greatest good to the greatest
number of people in the country. It must satisfy the interest of the majority of Nigerians and I
must say that there is no journalism without ethics […]". To JP11, 'good journalism' works
for development. According to him,

> Through the practice of development journalism, you make your contribution
> by correcting certain things in the society, not just criticising but also,
> proffering solutions to problems […] by adopting developmental journalism,
> the young ones coming into the profession can learn from us so that they can
> contribute to helping our country to grow (Interview 11, 2015).

JP8 tied his own definition to welfare saying that good journalism is when news media
organisations pay attention to staff welfare. These were his words:

> Good journalism is having an organisation or medium that gives priority to
> staff welfare. Yes, the ethics are there to guide professional conduct, but the
> right environment must also be provided so that journalists are not tempted to
> cut corners or circumvent standards. Poor welfare and inadequate working
> tools can be great challenges capable of disposing journalists to unprofessional
> conduct and this will not make for good journalism (Interview 8, 2015).

It can be seen from the responses summarised above that different journalists have their
perspectives on what constitutes 'good journalism'. This illuminates how they perceive their
role in society and furthers the goal of this research in gaining an understanding of how
journalists' response to challenges impact their professional duties.

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6.4.7 Journalism Then and Now

Since the study concerns the contemporary developments and challenges of journalism practice in Nigeria, the researcher deemed it necessary to get a picture of the state of professional practice at different points in history from the perspectives of current practitioners. This is to provide a basis for comparison between the past and present of journalism in Nigeria. It is a fact that the global journalism landscape has been experiencing a lot of changes over the years, more especially since the advent of the Internet and improved technology (Alan, 2012; Archetti, 2010; Deuze, 2007; Fenton, 2012 & Phillips, 2015). Nigeria is not spared the influence of these developments. For example, the Internet was unknown in journalism in Nigeria 20 years ago but alongside other communication technologies, has changed the face of journalism in many respects. Adelabu (2008, pp. 368-369) observes "the redefinition of the role of the audience" who have changed from recipients of mass media messages to generators and distributors of information, as part of this transformation. Participants were asked to compare contemporary journalism with that of 20 years ago.

Figure 6.11   Word Cloud on Journalism 20 Years Ago and Now

The most frequently used words in answering the question as can be seen in the World Cloud above include objectivity, good, conditions, ethics, now, paid, interest, challenges, observance, issues, poor, professional, editor, different, among others. The responses vary and cover issues like technology, ethics, education and age.

Most of the participants agreed that technology has enhanced professional journalism practice. They said the Internet and other advanced technologies have improved capabilities and productivity. Many said it is easier to research issues or access information now than when there was no internet. They noted that live reports, streaming and the convergence of platforms which exist now were absent years ago. JP2 said:

> Technology has really taken over everything. Gone are the days when you will be sending stories through phone or fax; when you will be dictating stories on phone and you come up with a lot of quotes and you take several minutes if not hours; even if the line is bad, you have to wait. And if the connection is bad, there is the danger of inaccuracies in the story by the receiver. We developed into the era of computer whereby you type your stories now and

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send it immediately by email. Everything has become easier. That is in terms of sending the story. However, in terms of the quality of the job, it has become a rat-race now (Interview 2, 2015).

JP18 also believed that the Internet and new technologies have improved the quality of journalism practice saying journalism then and now cannot be compared. To him,

> Today, unlike 20 years ago when the social media was not there, journalists took the reading public for granted – in a manner of speaking. Whereas then, journalists could just scratch the surface of the news and present it the following day; today, events are reported on the spot and the reports go viral on hand held devices which were not there 20 years ago. Citizen journalism also demands that today's journalists would need to provide value much more than before. So in a nutshell, journalism has seen a rebirth and our audiences have become users who generate and contribute content. They can no longer be taken for a ride by lazy journalists because at the press of a button, they can crosscheck what you are giving (to) them (Interview 18, 2015).

However, some argued that ethics have dropped because improved technology have tended to make people lazy and less painstaking in investigating stories. As JP24 opined, "Journalists of 20 years ago were more mature and more dedicated and less materialistic." Quite a number accuse many of the online publications that have emerged as a result of the Internet, of publishing sensational and inaccurate stories, while the majority agreed that today's journalists are better educated than their older colleagues. They pointed out that most journalists now have a minimum of a bachelor's degree a fact corroborated by data as seen in Chapter Five.

A good number agreed that there were many more newspapers, radio and television stations and online publications than 20 years ago which have diversified the choices available to the audience. A few observed that today, there were more young people in the profession which has brought more vibrancy to the profession. A number of the older participants, some of

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whom had been journalists for over 20 years and news managers, while acknowledging the vibrancy that the younger generation had brought into the profession said they (the youth) were less patient and had less respect for ethics in pursuing or verifying stories. The younger generation is also blamed for what a few described as the 'get-rich-quick' mentality which result in unethical conduct. JP8 responded this way:

> I started practising over 30 years and so, can confidently state that journalism of 20 years ago was better. There was better professionalism then and the knack for objectivity. There was balance and credibility of news. Journalists of 20 years ago had challenges as we are having now, but they were more circumspect in their conduct. There was still a lot of respect for basic ethical codes of journalism than what we see today where journalism has become a kind or rat race. Objectivity has eroded while there's little regard for ethics in present day journalism. Because of the massive proliferation of the media, there's no longer balance, truthfulness and accuracy (Interview 8, 2015).

Some others like JP1, however, saw the situation as a function of the general loss of values in the society which had crept into journalism practice. According to him,

> Journalism is a product of its society and you cannot divorce journalists from the society in which they operate. Generally speaking, I think there has been a degeneration in the ethical values of the society and this is also affecting professionals like journalists. It is so bad that when you try to stick to certain principles, you are referred to as 'old school' (Interview 1, 2015).

Other respondents used phrases such as, "the quality of personnel 20 years ago was better", "journalism today is ICT driven", "journalism has gained some sophistication", "current proliferation of news media has lowered standard", "there is improvement in communication technology", "journalism has become more vibrant", "back then there were no iPads, smartphones or tablets to make the job easier" and "copy sales and adverts have dropped".

It can be seen from the different opinions that journalists were not agreed on whether the quality of professional practice is better now than 20 years ago. The majority, however, agreed that the Internet and new technologies have enhanced performance on the job. Given their divergent responses on this and other issues bordering on professional standard, in what ways do the participants feel the standard of professional practice could be enhanced to ensure a better future for journalism in Nigeria? This question is answered in the next section.

6.4.8 The Future of Journalism in Nigeria

Considering the developments/challenges in journalism practice identified by participants, their response and the impact on professional standard, the researcher asked respondents to suggest ways to improve professional standard of journalism in Nigeria. This is in the belief that their suggestions would contribute to enriching the recommendations of this thesis towards securing the future of effective journalism in Nigeria. The words most used by the participants in their responses are contained in the Word Cloud below derived from an NVIVO word frequency query. Words such as conditions, balance, practice, organisation, career, professional, train, ethics, government, challenges, media, standard, motivation and others, featured.

Figure 6.12   Word Cloud on the Future of Journalism

All the participants agreed that steps should be taken to improve professional journalism standard but their suggestions on what should be done vary. Most of the answers re-echoed previous points raised in answering some other questions which are related to the challenges of practice, welfare, security and their impact on professional standards. Other key words and phrases found in the responses were proper funding, regulatory framework for establishing a news medium, special salary structure for journalists, better welfare and improved work environment, editorial independence, training, retraining and so on.

For example, JP1 urged the NUJ to be more serious about securing improved welfare for its members, a position supported by JP4 who said 'hungry and needy' journalists would always be tempted to be unethical. A few others said the right environment should be provided for journalists to operate ethically. Many also believed that the level of unethical practices among journalists would reduce if culprits were sanctioned. A number of the participants suggested that the teaching of ethics in tertiary institutions should be improved. Some others suggested

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that news media organisations should organise orientation for newly employed journalists which would include sessions on ethics so that those who did not study Journalism or Mass Communication can become abreast of them. JP2 stated:

> Currently, we have a situation where anybody who can write good prose can become a journalist; so every writer is a journalist whereas there are basic professional tenets and ethics which those who study Journalism or Mass Communication are taught but which those who study other courses do not know. When you have those tenets at the back of your mind, they guide you […] (Interview 2, 2015).

A few of the participants had in answers to some other questions blamed those they termed 'untrained' (i.e. did not study journalism ethics in school) for unethical conduct. But evidence from this data showed that even 'trained' journalists engage in unethical behaviour as they admitted to collecting 'gifts'.

Many of them agreed that the regulatory bodies for the news media need to be more effective in the enforcement of ethics while others called for a law to regulate online publishing to check mushrooming and misuse. To address the problem of inadequate funding which lead to unpaid salaries and poor working conditions, some participants suggested that a minimum capital base should be set for those venturing into the news media business. JP9 submitted:

> […] proprietors of news organisations should be made to employ only the number of journalists they can pay. So, if for example, a newspaper house can employ just ten practising journalists, let them employ that number, pay them well and provide offices and other things for them to operate efficiently. The regulatory bodies should intervene to stop a situation where people just establish media organisations without a proper plan on how to fund the business. Some in an attempt to cut costs employ all manners of people, many untrained, as journalists and refuse to put them on salary. These are the kinds of people tarnishing the reputation of the profession. So standards must be specified and maintained by the regulatory bodies (Interview 9, 2015.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter presented the findings from the qualitative data gathered in the project. It analysed the responses from participants in the interview using ten broad themes related to the research questions. That many of the same points emerged across responses to different variables suggests strongly, consistency in responses and validity of the findings. For example, if a participant who agreed to the prevalence of gift collection among journalists in answer to a question, later rated the observance of ethics among journalists high, this might suggest inconsistency. Two of the themes relate specifically to RQ1 while the remaining eight relate to RQ2. As the data showed, opinions were generally varied on many of the themes while there were some areas of agreement.

The major findings as presented in the chapter include:

- Participants identified poor welfare conditions, irregular or poor salary, lack of working tools, the influence of the internet and new technologies which has given access to non-professionals to disseminate information, proprietor influence and the corrupting influence of the society, as some of the challenges they face.

- Journalists face basically the same challenges, but personal values, conviction and orientation dictate their responses. For example, while some participants admitted that they collect 'gifts' to augment their income in order 'to survive', some others say they do not collect 'gifts' despite their poor financial state because of personal conviction.

- Many participants are motivated to remain in the profession despite the discouraging conditions out of love for journalism.

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- A good number of participants are dissatisfied with the performance of the regulatory bodies on journalism and the level of ethical compliance among journalists.

- Many participants acknowledged that internet and new technologies have enhanced job performance despite some challenges.

Like the quantitative data results presented in Chapter Five, these results provide evidence to assist in answering the two research questions for this study. How then do the two data sets compare or relate in answering the research questions? The next chapter discusses the findings.

Chapter Seven

Triangulation of Quantitative and Qualitative Data

7.1 Chapter Overview

This chapter compares and relates the quantitative and qualitative data sets in line with the mixed methods research approach adopted for this study. The two data sets were obtained simultaneously in accordance with the convergent parallel mixed methods design (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014) towards answering the two research questions for this thesis. The questionnaire was administered and interviews conducted at one location by the researcher with a set of respondents/participants before moving to other locations. As indicated in Chapter Four, the mixed methods approach was considered best for this study to appropriate the benefits of both quantitative and qualitative approaches, as well as, eliminate or limit the disadvantages of using either alone (Creswell, 2014). Triangulating or relating data sets from the two methods also allows one method to compensate for the blind spots or weaknesses of the other (Gray, 2014).

The Importance of Triangulation

The central finding evidenced in this thesis is that, journalists' response to contemporary challenges impacts professional journalism standard in Nigeria. Also as explained in Chapter One, critiquing the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria was inspired by suggestions in literature, that professional journalism standards in Nigeria have weakened (Adeyemi, 2013; Omoera, 2010; Pate, 2011). Similarly, as mentioned earlier, although many studies on journalism in Nigeria identified the challenges facing journalism practice (Golwa, 2011;

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Ochogwu, 2011), little or nothing exists on how journalists' responses to professional challenges influence their work.

Having presented and explained the data sets in chapters four and five, this chapter explicates the level of convergence, corroboration or possible disagreement between the data sets in relation to the phenomenon being studied. The triangulation of both data sets shows the extent of convergence and complementarity between them. Bryman (2007) and Greene (2007) both stress the importance of a proper triangulation of data sets in mixed methods studies to show how they relate. They note that integration is hardly achieved in most mixed methods because researchers tend to emphasize one aspect over the other. This chapter strives to avoid this by concentrating on how this research benefits from the mixed methods design and presenting how the quantitative and qualitative data related to each other in a complementary manner to produce the findings from analysed data. The triangulated data are subsequently employed to answer the research questions in the next chapter (Chapter 8).

As seen in the diagram below, the two data sets were compared and related to generate the findings.
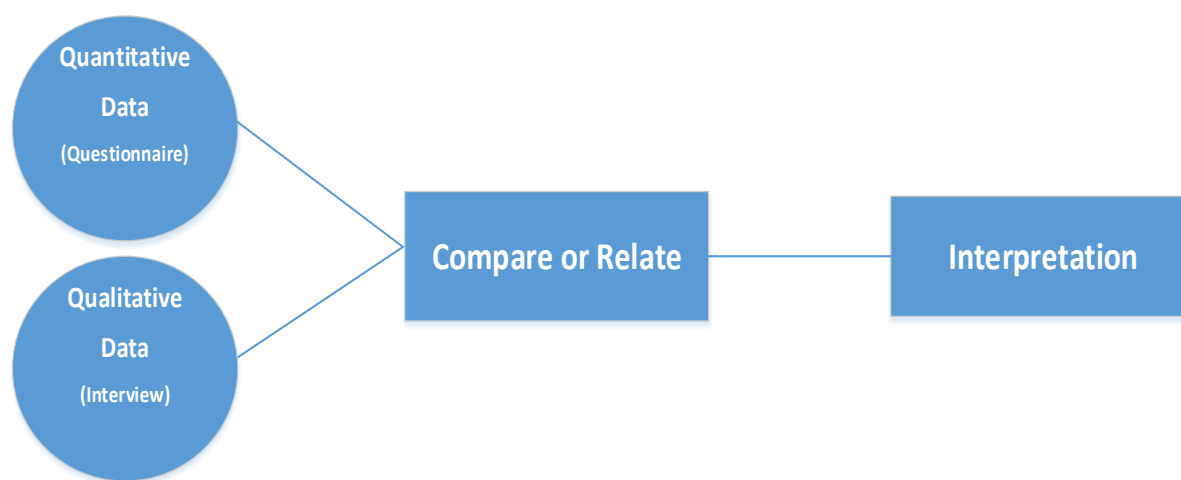

Figure 7.1   Convergent parallel mixed methods design showing Triangulation of Results. Adapted from Creswell, 2014, p. 220)

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7.2 Summary of Findings

Seven key findings emerged from critical analyses of the two data sets:

a. While increased access to the internet and new technologies have enhanced journalistic duties, they have thrown up challenges that require professional journalists to adopt new approaches and strategies to remain relevant.

b. The dwindling income of news media establishments makes it difficult to provide necessary equipment and welfare/motivation for members of staff, including journalists.

c. Irregular salary and poor welfare conditions undermine the observance of ethical codes among journalists. As a result, envelope journalism, more popular locally as 'brown envelope', is widespread.

d. Lack of editorial independence undermines professional standard.

e. Many journalists in Nigeria are struggling to balance between observance of professional ethics and 'survival'.

f. Despite exposure to the same basic professional challenges, the response of journalists varies.

g. The professional and regulatory bodies in Nigerian journalism are not doing enough to ensure effective professional standards.

7.2.1 **While increased access to the internet and new technologies have enhanced journalistic duties, they have thrown up challenges that require professional journalists to adopt new approaches strategies to remain relevant.**

This finding arose from the concurrence of both data sets on the issue. The two showed an agreement by participants that the internet and new technologies had improved performance

especially in communication, research and productivity. But they identified the challenge posed by the opening of access to information dissemination to non-professionals (for example, citizen journalists) which has resulted in uncontrolled circulation of inaccuracies, deliberate falsehoods and, in some cases, sensitive information capable of generating conflict, mostly via the internet, as a challenge. As noted in Chapter Two, this has taken away the 'gatekeeping' and the news-breaking role of journalists who now compete with other citizens who use their smart phones and other gadgets to circulate multi-media information (Fenton, 2012; Phillips, 2015).

In the quantitative data for example, almost 80% of the participants 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed that increased access to new media had allowed non-journalists to disseminate information like journalists. Only about 16% 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' with the statement, while just about 5% remained neutral. However, there was a variance in the response to a related statement on the dissemination of news breaks ahead of journalists by non-journalists as over half (53%) disagreed while 46% agreed. Thus whereas the respondents accepted that non-journalists now disseminate information on news events, they did not admit that such non-journalists beat them to news breaks. Perhaps they demurred because they felt that such an admission might be interpreted to mean incompetence, dereliction of duty or reduced influence of the profession. Hence this variance was not seen as negating the finding.

The result from the quantitative data on this issue was corroborated and complemented by the qualitative data in which participants acknowledged the impact of the internet and new technologies on journalism practice. As shown in Chapter Six, many participants also identified unregulated dissemination of information by non-journalists via the internet as a major challenge to professional journalism practice. JP14, for instance, agreed that although the availability of iPads and other tablets, smart phones, computers and other gadgets had

improved the way journalism is practiced, it had its negative side. He said: "The profession has been invaded by all manners of people […] so-called citizen journalists who peddle rumours on social media"

A number of responses in the qualitative data also complemented the picture presented by the quantitative results with some citing the mushrooming of online publications as another challenge. For instance, JP7 pointed out that because it is relatively cheap to start an online publication, all manners of people had become online 'publishers' circulating falsehood and inaccurate information. JP10 agreed:

> The social media and the so-called citizen journalists are a major headache because members of the public seem to be gullible […] many people seem to believe whatever they see on social media as the gospel truth. It's a big challenge to those of us in the traditional media […] (Interview 10, 2015).

Among those who did not agree that citizen journalists appear to be reducing the relevance of journalists as found in the quantitative data was JP2 who, in the qualitative data, said the situation had rather challenged journalists to be more creative and innovative:

> To me, the social media for example, have actually made journalists to be up and doing […] there are ways you as a journalist would put your report across that would confirm that it is more authentic than theirs (citizen journalists' reports) (Interview 2, 2015).

JP2's position and similar comments by other participants demonstrated that while a good number of journalists saw the uncontrolled dissemination of information on the internet as a negative development for journalism practice, there are those who view it from the positive side. This illustrated the point that journalists differed on the way they viewed challenges. But there was a substantial agreement in the qualitative data that journalists need to respond appropriately to the challenge posed by the new media. For example, JP18 said:

> Citizen journalism demands that today's journalists would need to provide value much more than before […] journalism has seen a rebirth and our audiences have become users who generate and contribute content. They can no longer be taken for a ride by lazy journalists because at the press of a button, they can crosscheck what you are giving them (Interview 18, 2015).

This emphasises the need for professional journalists to adopt new strategies to remain relevant and distinguish themselves. In addition, since the problem of regulating the internet and online publications without circumscribing freedom of expression is a global challenge to which solutions are still being sought, the way out seems to be for journalists to distinguish themselves as sources of credible information. JP10 who was a former deputy president of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) disclosed that professional journalists were being encouraged to go into blogging and online publishing based on the recommendation of the 2012 World Media Summit in Moscow, Russia. "We want to encourage professional journalists to move in and try to sanitize that very popular section of the media" (Interview 10, 2015).

In line with the rationale for using a mixed methods design, the qualitative data provided other perspectives on the issue thereby giving a 'fuller' picture (Gray, 2014) which would have been missing using the quantitative data alone. While the quantitative data which measured the disposition of respondents on a five-point scale established the impact of the internet and new technologies on journalism in quantifiable terms, the qualitative interview data gave a deeper contextual insight and both data sets combined to support the finding.

7.2.2 The dwindling income of news media establishments makes it difficult to provide necessary equipment and welfare/motivation for members of staff, including journalists.

As found in Chapter Two, although the problem of diminishing income for news media organisations is a global phenomenon (Donsbach, 2012), the effect is more pronounced in developing countries like Nigeria probably due to the poor economy and a weak ownership structure. As already pointed out, with no media conglomerates as found in the developed world, most news organisations, which are either owned by government or individuals, are largely underfunded. This coupled with a sharp drop in advertisement and other income (Danaan, 2016; Garba, 2016) makes meeting financial obligations difficult. Participants in this research confirmed that several news organisations have become extinct while most others are just struggling to survive. About five participants said they lost their former jobs following the closure of their news media as a result of financial problems. This difficult financial situation makes it difficult for many news media to provide necessary equipment, fund trips for investigative and other reportorial activities or pay staff salary regularly.

Statements 8, 17 and 18 on the questionnaire used for the quantitative data collection relate to issues concerning this finding. Statement 8 stated that "Income from advertisements has dropped in the organisation I work for", to which about 60% either 'strongly agreed' or 'agreed' while about 25% 'strongly disagreed' or 'disagreed'. This indicates that over a half of the participants were of the view that advert income had dropped in their places of work. That about a quarter of respondents indicated that income had not dropped where they work suggests that some news establishments still thrive from advert income despite the widespread financial challenge. The responses to Statement 8 when linked to Statement 17 that "My passion for journalism is still high despite the challenges in the profession", to which about 50% were in agreement, and Statement 18, "I will quit journalism if I find a

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better job or position outside the profession", which over 60% of the participants agreed to, were, however, contradictory.

If indeed, as data suggests, many news organisations are unable to meet their financial and administrative obligations as a result of dwindling income, this might dampen enthusiasm and passion for the job, which probably explains why about 45% indicated that their passion for the profession was no longer high. However, that just about 35% agreed that they would remain in the profession even if they got a better job, suggests that the desire for better pay and improved working conditions overrides passion for the profession. Otherwise, how realistic is it for the same people who claim to nurse high passion for the job despite various challenges, to be prepared to quit? This query was nonetheless resolved by the qualitative data which provided more detailed insight and clarification that led to the finding.

Here, only a few of the participants interviewed were satisfied with their working and welfare conditions as against a majority who were unhappy, a situation attributable to the financial difficulties facing their employers. The frustrations inherent in their emotional and reflective expressions complemented the gap in the quantitative data. As seen in Chapter Six, many of them cited poor or irregular pay, inadequate working equipment and the inability of their news organisations to fund trips and other needs for conducting investigative stories, as discouraging. JP28 for instance, noted:

> […] most organisations lack the necessary resources to run efficiently […] there are some kind of in-depth analysis you are expected to do as a journalist on a particular report or on an issue, but due to limited resources, you try to cut back on where you are supposed to get to or how in-depth your analysis is expected to be. Also, when your salary is poor or unpaid, it diminishes your enthusiasm for the job and sometimes you just carry on because there is no alternative. You are tempted to begin to consider looking for another job

outside journalism because the problem is almost the same in about 90 per cent or more of media organisations (Interview 28, 2015).

This situation was buttressed by JP18, an editor who said funds are often unavailable to send reporters out:

> […] the company (news medium) is unable to provide needed funding when income is dropping. There are times you want to send reporters to places to get stories or interviews and you are told there is no money for the trip […] we struggle on daily basis to see what we can get to do our work. When we get money to send reporters for coverage, we do so, but when there is no money, we find others ways of getting round it (Interview 18, 2015).

Thus, the qualitative data afforded a better understanding of what appeared as a contradiction in the research findings. If journalists cannot travel to investigate stories or cover events of interest to their audience due to lack of funds, they are likely to resort to devising ways of getting round the problem which might include relying on other news media or as another participant noted, conducting interviews via telephone. Such a situation is bound to dampen their enthusiasm and might explain the position of over 60% of the survey respondents that they would quit the profession if they had better alternatives. Both data sets, therefore, complemented each other substantially in relation to this finding.

7.2.3 Irregular salary and poor welfare conditions undermine the observance of ethical codes among journalists. As a result, envelope journalism, more popular locally as 'brown envelope', is widespread.

There was substantial correlation between the quantitative and qualitative data to support this finding. Recurrent in the qualitative data are the problems of poor or irregular salary, poor conditions of service and their impact on professional standards. Participants referred to these challenges repeatedly in responses to different questions, such that they featured in most of

the themes discussed in chapter four. The widespread nature of these challenges and their recurrence in both data sets support the view in literature that they are major issues in journalism practice in Nigeria (Golwa, 2011; Nwabueze & Ebeze, 2013). Some like Abidde (2012) and Idowu (2014) blame these challenges for the 'decay' in journalism practice in the country, a position underscored by the data findings of this research project.

For the quantitative data those related to Statements 13, 14 and 15 are relevant. Statement 13 which was, "my salary is paid regularly by my employer", was rejected by almost 43% of respondents as against 37% that accepted it. A significant just over 20% were neutral on the issue, raising the question whether they would not know if their salary was regular or not. It was reasoned that they were either 'freelancers' who are not on fixed salary or might have chosen not to admit irregularity of their salary for other reasons. Also, for Statement 15, "there is no job security for journalists in Nigeria", almost 70% accepted while a little over 20% disagreed. This indicated that a preponderance of respondents agreed that journalism jobs are not secure. Several factors might be responsible for this. It could be as a result of dwindling income discussed in the previous section which has resulted in the extinction of several news media establishments. When news organisations close down, the workers become jobless. Some other organisations which are struggling to survive might also lay off workers as a survival strategy while, in some cases, journalists might voluntarily quit after being denied salary for several months, to seek other sources of income or on ground of principle. This results in high job mobility.

The response to Statement 13, "I accept gifts (in cash or kind) in the course of my professional duties when given", where over 47% of respondents agreed that they accept gifts, to which 25% disagreed, is also instructive. Almost a half of the respondents admitted that they accept monetary and other gifts and almost 20% chose to be neutral. Members of the 'neutral' group either do not collect gifts at all, collect infrequently or probably also

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collect but did not want to admit it. The preponderance of those who collect gifts confirms the claim in literature of widespread corruption among journalists in Nigeria (Abidde, 2008; Idowu, 2014; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003). However, the 19% that claim not to accept gifts is also significant, making the point that it would be wrong to generalise that all journalists accept gifts.

As the responses to the three statements clearly showed, poor or irregular salary and inadequate welfare appear to influence the breach of professional ethics, especially the collection of gifts by journalists. They seem somewhat 'pressured' to accept or demand for the gifts to survive. The weighty statements made by participants in the qualitative data corroborated this observation from the quantitative data and thus affirmed the finding. Many of the participants made a strong connection between the poor working conditions of journalists and the breach of ethical codes. Some of them suggested that it was unrealistic to expect 'hungry' journalists to be ethical since to them, survival overrides ethical considerations. A majority of them said they did not receive salary regularly as against a few who said their salary was regularly paid.

For instance, JP7 identified low wages and irregular salary as hindrances to the observance of professional ethics:

> I'm owed six months' salary […] poor remuneration and delayed payment of salary obviously lead to low morale and indiscipline among workers and affect their productivity ultimately […] (Interview 7, 2015).

JP8 who shared the same view said poor welfare conditions disposed journalists to cutting corners and engaging in unethical conduct:

> […] many proprietors push their employees into unethical conduct through poor working conditions and irregular payment of salary (Interview 8, 2015).

As observed in Chapter Six, the issue of journalists' poor pay and irregular salary is often exploited by politicians and others who offer money and other gifts to journalists to do their bidding. Aware of their (journalists) financial condition, they 'tempt' and manipulate them and many are unable to resist because of the need to survive. JP13 explained:

> The salary is nothing to write home about (small), yet it is not paid as and when due. It's a very pathetic situation and this takes me back to the issue of ethics. How can poorly paid journalists or those not paid regularly be expected to respect ethics? They have to survive first before they can think of ethics and this explains why the 'brown envelope syndrome' (envelope journalism) is common here (Nigeria). I'm owed several months (salary) and if I meet someone who offers me a gift, do you think I will be able to reject it when I have a family to take care of? (Interview 13, 2015).

The above quotation and similar ones in the qualitative data reinforced the responses from the quantitative data discussed earlier. If journalists have to worry about family and other responsibilities because of poor or irregular salary, or cannot operate the way they should because of poor working and welfare conditions, their vulnerability to accepting money and other gifts might, as some of the participants submitted, be higher and they might engage in unethical conduct to survive. As some of the participants argued, even if they strive to be ethical by not demanding gifts, they would find it difficult to turn down a voluntary offer when in financial need. Just as some of the interview participants submitted, politicians, government officials, publicists and others who need journalists to give them positive coverage, exploit their (journalists') vulnerability. Being aware of the 'poor' condition of journalists, they offer them financial inducement unsolicited, in exchange for coverage and as many admitted, the temptation to collect is high. There was also evidence that in addition to financial inducements, journalists and news media also benefit from what is known as 'freebies' which refers to packages given to journalists free of charge by individuals and

organisations about who they report. This include paid trips or vacation. In addition, some respondents confirmed that their news organisations cover and publish news which is paid for by individuals and organisations. The individuals and organisations are charged specified amounts of money for the coverage of their events or activities categorised as 'commercial news' which the news media are obliged to publish. A news manager (JP1) in one of the television stations which charges, remarked that some reporters use this (commercialisation of news) as a justification for demanding to be rewarded when they cover events. It was also found that journalists and news media are 'encouraged' with advertisement placements to give positive coverage to individuals and organisations. Although some of the journalists claimed that they try not to be influenced by the 'gifts', 'freebies', advertisements, in their reportage, this is questionable in reality. Moreover, whether solicited or not, the code of ethics frowns on the collection of gifts in whatever form. This finding is therefore well supported by both the quantitative and qualitative data.

7.2.4 Lack of editorial independence promotes self-censorship and undermines professional standard.

Editorial independence is a key global yardstick for measuring how free the news media in any country are. Journalists in countries like the United States and the United Kingdom pride themselves as free and affirm editorial independence as a key code of ethics (McQuail, 2013). While editorial independence also feature prominently in the ethical codes for journalists in developing countries like Nigeria, data suggests that most journalists cannot report or write as they like. Rather, journalists have to contend with the influence of news media proprietors, governments or the top managers or editors. The two data sets also showed a variance in the level of editorial independence in different news establishments. Responses to the quantitative and qualitative data suggest an 'average level of observance of editorial independence in most news organisations as shown below. This supported the 2015 Freedom

House Report which reported that Nigeria has one of the most vibrant and varied media landscapes in Africa and rated it 'partly free' (freedomhouse.org).

Two statements (10 & 11) were used to generate responses on editorial independence for the quantitative data. Statement 10 on the survey stated: "Where I work, ownership influence is strong on what is published". As explained in Chapter Four, this was to ascertain the level of influence exerted by proprietors on editorial content of news media organisations. About 50% disagreed with the statement while 37% agreed. Almost 13% were neutral which could mean that they were in no position to say, since many journalists might not have direct dealing with their proprietors on editorial matters. A similar response was recorded for Statement 11 which said, "Lack of editorial independence negatively influences my ability to uphold the journalism code of ethics". About 53% disagreed with the statement compared to 31% that agreed. Over 16% were neutral.

As argued in Chapter Five, if a large number of news media in Nigeria, especially broadcast, are owned by the federal or state governments and literature supports the influence of their proprietors in running their affairs (Adeyemi, 2013; Daramola, 2006; Pate, 2011), how come a larger percentage of participants disagreed with both statements that sought to measure the level of editorial independence enjoyed by journalists than those who agreed? Could this have been influenced by the nature of the quantitative instrument which limited the respondents to choosing from prescribed scales with no provision to explain their choices?

However, the findings were different in the qualitative data where most of the participants agreed that ownership or editorial influence was high in their news organisations. Some of the participants were categorical on how editors and news managers would either reject stories or edit them thoroughly to avoid offending proprietary and other interests. A few of the participants said they had learnt to conform to their organisations' house style through the

avoidance of stories or news pegs capable of offending the management and their friends. This suggests a kind of self-censorship in the writing and choice of stories. In this group is JP17 who identified lack of editorial independence as one of the major challenges faced by journalists:

> An average journalist in Nigeria is mostly put in spots where he would have to compromise on ethics. They (journalists) do not really have the freedom to do their jobs properly; they do what the media owners want (Interview 17, 2015).

JP14 who works for a state government-owned medium also noted:

> […] you cannot work according to your conscience or you'll lose your job. Our editors are so afraid of losing their jobs that they will not take any story that might offend government; so we are just like a government megaphone, to report only what they (government) like. The only critical stories we carry are those on opposition political parties. That is the situation and it affects and influences the journalism we practice (Interview 14, 2015).

Some of the participants who work in private news media also spoke about the interest of proprietors and their political or business friends which are known to the editors and other top editorial staff. They explained that those concerned ensure that nothing capable of offending proprietary interest gets published with a few recalling how some editors or news managers got demoted or fired for allowing 'offending' stories to be published. This clearly, is against the principle of editorial independence which is the first of the 15 ethical codes of the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ). It was evident from responses to this issue that the 'surrender' of editorial independence (Voltmer, 2013) is dictated by the desire to keep their jobs.

The story narrated by an editor (JP30, cited in Chapter Six), who was forced to drop an investigative story that had been promoted in a previous edition illustrates further how editorial interference plays out. Asked why he complied despite his conviction that it was a good story, he explained that he would have been fired if he defied the publisher, an option

he could not contemplate since getting another job would not have been easy. This presents a picture of how journalists are having to take editorial decisions that are against what they consider to be professionally sound or right for fear of losing their jobs or positions. This tends to suggest that the disagreement of about half of the respondents in the quantitative data with statements on editorial independence could well be related to this 'fear'.

A situation where journalists have to 'navigate' the practising field to avoid 'mines' that could offend their editors or proprietors or to engage in self-censorship just to keep their jobs does not augur well for good professional standards. It suggests that editorial decisions are not based on strict journalistic yardsticks but are largely influenced from 'outside' the profession as McQuail, (2013) and Bourdieu (1998) have independently postulated. Both the quantitative and qualitative data of the research complemented each other, with one elaborating on the other, to validate the finding.

7.2.5 Many journalists in Nigeria are struggling to balance between observance of professional ethics and 'survival'.

This builds on the findings concerning poor welfare conditions and other challenges facing journalists. It also captures the response of journalists to the various challenges they face in the course of their professional duties. This is a key finding because it relates centrally to one of the research questions for this study which is, 'How are journalists in Nigeria responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties and what are the implications of this?' Although various statements in the questionnaire and questions raised in the semi-structured interview were designed to generate data to answer this crucial question, some specific questions and statements were formulated to address it directly.

Statement 16 on the questionnaire which stated that "As a professional journalist, I try to strike a balance between upholding ethical standards and making ends meet" is one of them.

The statement produced a 'curious' result that did not correlate well with the responses to related questions and the qualitative data. Over 45% of respondents disagreed with the statement as against 43% which agreed, while over 10% were neutral. Flowing from responses to statements 8,10, 11, 14 and 17 (discussed earlier) which addressed issues of poor welfare, job insecurity, irregular salary and especially collection of gifts to which over 47% admitted, one would have expected a substantial agreement to statement 16 from the respondents, but this proved not to be the case.

When compared to the qualitative data, where a majority of respondents discussed their 'survival strategies' amid the challenges in the field (Phillips, 2015), it was surprising that less than a half of the respondents to the quantitative instrument agreed with the statement. It was therefore curious that a larger percentage of participants identified challenges such as poor welfare conditions and poor or irregular pay, as affecting them yet they did not accept that they were struggling to 'balance' between being ethical and surviving. Could this be an example of standard bias arising from the inclination of human beings to underestimate their negative qualities and overestimate the positive ones (Merrigan & Huston, 2009)? Or could it also be a manifestation of their reluctance to express their thoughts and feelings as they actually are (Creswell, 2014)? Reluctance to admit involvement in envelope journalism could also be a confirmation of the 'awareness' by the respondents that unethical conduct was unacceptable.

The qualitative data in which many of the participants admitted that they were in what this study has coined as a 'survival struggle', trying to 'exist' through the collection of gifts to meet pressing needs and responsibilities even though aware that is unethical to accept them, presented a clearer picture. For instance, JP17 said he feels ashamed to be collecting gifts but is helpless because he needs them. This was buttressed by similar assertions by JP 15 and JP16 while answering questions that touched on professional challenges.

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They (journalists) are using what they have to get what they need. People want their stories to be published, so they are ready to give journalists tips to enhance this and journalists succumb to the offers or sometimes even demand for them when not given voluntarily. If you frown at their conduct, many of them will tell you they had not been paid salary for months and have family responsibilities […] the ethics are there but people don't abide by them because of the hardship they are facing. They just want to survive (Interview 15, 2015)

JP16 also stated:

[…] I think it's a miracle how journalists are surviving with a meagre or no salary and this, as far as I'm concerned, is the greatest problem of the profession today. It is this situation that has moved many journalists to what we call 'brown envelope journalism', collecting money to do their jobs. This is clearly a breach professional ethics but in a situation where you don't receive salary regularly and the salary is poor and unable to take care of you and your responsibilities, you are pushed to do things that are unethical (Interview 16, 2015)

As seen above, the views expressed in the qualitative data which were more detailed and contextual, provided a closer insight into the situation. The passion and tone of their expressions noted by the researcher during the interviews, unveiled what appeared to be a 'helplessness' about the situation they faced. Many of them could be described as 'reluctant sinners' who engage in unethical behaviour not because they are unaware that it is wrong, but are compelled by the need to survive. This was attested to by responses to questions on the level of observance of ethics and what they considered to be 'good' journalism. The data evidenced that Nigerian journalists are conversant with what 'good' journalism is and what right ethical conduct should be but are constrained by their operating environment to 'compromise' these standards.

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These variables (good journalism and right ethics) were presented in both the quantitative and qualitative instruments and the participants showed a good grasp of the concepts. This suggests that with a better operating environment devoid of the challenges that dispose them to unethical behaviour, Nigerian journalists might fare better on the scale of ethical observance and maintenance of professional standards. JP20 underscored this when he said, "I believe that a lot of us journalists are conscientious; we have self-worth and would not debase ourselves this way (collecting envelopes) if the situation were otherwise." On the other hand, as some of the participants observed, it will be unrealistic to expect journalists faced with low or irregular wages or who are overwhelmed by the quest to meet their basic needs to behave ethically. Some of them spoke of adopting 'survival strategies' when asked how they were responding to the challenge of poor or irregular salary. The assertion by some of them that they accept gifts if given, but they do not demand, is likely to be part of these strategies. An official of the NUJ who participated in this research, admitted that the awareness of these challenges weakens the capacity of the union to enforce the code of ethics for journalists. According to him,

> […] you close your eyes to certain things because you know the situation. If you (union) ask members to withdraw their services over non-payment of salary, the media organisations, many of which are struggling to exist, might close down completely, throwing your members off their jobs. So it's dicey. We try to encourage members to be ethical, but we also try to understand their situation by not being too hard when we see some of these breaches especially relating to collection of envelopes (Interview 20, 2015).

It is probably this seeming condoning of unethical conduct that has made some scholars cite a weak regulatory framework as one of the problems undermining ethical conduct among journalists in Nigeria (Pate, 2011; Omoera, 2010). However, that a few of the participants said they do not collect gifts at all, also indicated that not every journalist is involved in the

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'brown envelope syndrome'. It demonstrated that there are those who abide by journalism ethics despite their difficult circumstances. This group might also have adopted other strategies to make ends meet. A few disclosed that they get financial support from their spouses, siblings, friends or engage in other income-generating activities like poultry keeping.

Given this scenario, how effective or ethical can a journalist who is concerned with meeting basic responsibilities be in carrying out his or her duties when faced with poor work and welfare conditions? In the words of JP7, "it is a survival battle; you have to survive first before you talk about what is right or wrong (ethics)". Both data sets thus corroborate and complement each other in the making of this important finding of the research.

7.2.6 Despite exposure to the same basic professional challenges, the response of journalists varies.

This finding is also related to Research Question Two which interrogates how journalists are responding to professional challenges. Although one of the findings already discussed had explicated how journalists are struggling between 'survival' and being ethical, this finding makes the point that the response of journalists to challenges are not uniform. As seen in some other findings already presented, statements 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17 and 18 which touched on issues such as the challenges of practice, salary and welfare conditions, career motivation and observance of ethics, recorded varying levels of agreement and disagreement from participants. The fact that there was no unanimity on any statement from respondents to the variables attested to this.

For instance, as pointed out earlier, over 60% of participants said they would quit journalism if they got a better job as against 35% who said they would remain in the job despite the challenges. Similarly, the statement on striking a balance between making ends meet and

upholding ethical standards recorded an almost equal percentage response with over 43% agreeing as against 45% that disagreed. The same pattern was seen in the qualitative data where participants differed in answers to questions touching on the mentioned variables.

JP6 is one of those who strive to uphold journalism ethics:

> I try to conduct myself well and to operate in accordance with the ethics of the profession. If we would all commit ourselves to respecting journalistic ethics and shun the tendency to act as if we don't have ethics, I think it would do the profession a lot of good (Interview 6, 2015).

His position aligned with that of JP17 who said he did not believe in envelope journalism: "I do not mind if I am the only journalist standing for the truth". This positive stance was taken by JP29 on the issue of motivation as he said passion for journalism keeps him going. He said that although poor salary and inability to pursue the kinds of stories he would have loved to work on, either for lack of funds or editorial interest, was discouraging, "[…] I am always strengthened by the fact that I love what I do (journalism)". His positive disposition contrasts with those of JP15 and JP30 who are ready to quit the profession if they got a better opportunity. Another positive outlook was seen in JP2 and JP8 who unlike a majority of participants who cited lack of equipment to work with as a major challenge, said they spend personal resources to acquire minor equipment where their employers do not provide them. JP8 said, "I spend my meagre resources to purchase some of the gadgets to ensure that nothing disturbs my duties." However, data showed that most of those who claimed to purchase needed equipment at their own expense belong to the above 40 age group and have practised for more 15 years. A majority of those who said they have remained on the job out of interest also belong to this age group, suggesting that maturity and experience might have

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influenced them on both positions. This might be worth further exploration for future research.

The two data sets as seen above, supported the finding that journalists' response to professional challenges differs. Although a majority of respondents for both the quantitative and the qualitative instruments tended to toe the line of 'surrender' to professional challenges (Koliska & Eckert, 2015; Voltmer, 2013) by pursuing 'survival' or convenience (Idowu, 2014; Pate, 2011), it was instructive that a good number chose not to join the bandwagon of 'brown envelope' collection or other unethical conduct despite the challenges. This clearly demonstrates that there are journalists who remain conscientious and committed to upholding professional ethics.

It would therefore be wrong to assume that all journalists in Nigeria engage in unethical conduct just because many have been found to do so. However, it could also be argued that if a majority are found engaging in unethical conduct, the tendency to generalise would be high. Evidence from the data suggests that although many journalists engage in unethical practice, there are some who abide by the ethical code, and paints a more factual picture of the situation in Nigeria. As data also showed, those abiding by ethical practices are doing so in 'pain' which raises the question on how long they can continue to bear the 'hardship' imposed by the journalism 'field' (Phillips, 2015) and if this would not eventually force them to quit the profession if they got a better job. Should this happen, it would tend to support the argument in literature that journalism is losing a lot of professionals to public relations and other fields (Abidde, 2012; Adeyemi, 2013). A 'conscientious' journalist who does not want to compromise professional ethics but is struggling to make ends meet, might consider getting a better job where he or she would not have to struggle between survival and ethics, if the opportunity came.

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Thus there was substantial agreement between the two data sets as regards the variation of responses to challenges. The pattern already established whereby the qualitative data sheds light on or clarifies issues by providing a deeper contextual perspective to those from the quantitative data was again established, demonstrating complementarity between both data sets.

7.2.7 The professional and regulatory bodies are not doing enough to ensure The maintenance of effective professional standards.

Most professions are guided by ethics and regulatory bodies exist to enforce them and apply sanctions for any breach. As discussed in Chapter Three, the journalism profession in Nigeria has the NUJ as the professional association to which every practising journalist belongs. Members register with the union and affirm their commitment to the code of ethics in carrying out their professional duties. Other statutory bodies like the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and the Nigeria Press Organisation (NPO) exist to regulate journalism practice in Nigeria. Since literature on Nigerian journalism has tended to suggest a fall in ethical standard (Adeyemi, 2013; Daramola, 2006; Kruger, 2016), it became necessary to critique the effectiveness of the NUJ and other regulatory bodies in ensuring the observance of ethics among journalists.

Two statements were formulated in the quantitative instrument while questions related to this were asked in the semi-structured interviews that generated qualitative data. The two data sets' findings were in agreement on the inefficiency of the regulatory bodies. In the quantitative data, a majority totalling over 45% of respondents disagreed with the statement that "The Nigeria Union of Journalists is doing a lot in fighting for the rights and wellbeing of journalists", as against about 40% that agreed. This showed clearly that many members did not believe that the union was doing enough to protect their interest. A similar response

emerged from Statement 20 in which about 51% rated the NBC and the NPO as ineffective in their regulatory responsibilities. A smaller 32% agreed that they were effective.

The perception was reinforced by the qualitative data in which many participants in responses to questions on ethics, conditions of service and related issues, attributed some of the problems facing the journalism profession to the ineffectiveness of the regulatory bodies. An instance was JP15 who said; "they are not efficient. If they were, the situation would not be this bad". Some others mentioned problems such as the mushrooming of online publications and poor work conditions within the profession as proof of the inefficiency of the regulatory bodies. They argued that the situation would not have degenerated to its present level if they were effective. A few also believed that journalists would be deterred from unethical conduct if they saw examples of colleagues sanctioned for misconduct. To some others, the problems of poor and irregular payment of salary, lack of equipment, recruitment of 'quack' journalists to cut costs and other problems linked to news organisations, would reduce drastically if the regulatory bodies set and enforced clear guidelines for establishing news media.

JP26 and JP20 suggested that a minimum financial requirement should be set for those wishing to establish news media to reduce the financial difficulties faced because of inadequate funding by proprietors. They argued that irregular salary payment and other problems facing the news media industry would reduce if news organisations were well funded:

> Media ownership should be reviewed to make sure that the necessary things required to make news media succeed as a business are put in place while setting them up […] only those who have the wherewithal to fund such establishments well should be allowed to operate and minimum conditions of service should be prescribed to avoid the present exploitation of journalists by employers (Interview 20, 2015).

> The National Assembly should pass a law to regulate the news media industry to ensure that anyone setting up a news medium has enough resources to finance its operations to guarantee regular payment of salary and providing resources and tools for those they employ to do their work. What we have right now where majority of news establishments in the country are struggling to pay salaries is not good and setting up minimum standards is the only way to solve the problem (Interview 26, 2015).

As both data sets have shown, most journalists perceive the regulatory bodies as ineffective. The NUJ which is expected to fight for the welfare of members was viewed by some as lacking the capacity or will to protect the interest of members. Some of the participants argued that the challenges of poor welfare and other conditions of service facing journalists would reduce if the union became more effective. JP1, for example said "I think the leadership of the NUJ should wake up to its responsibilities […] I know they have made some efforts but they should put in more efforts". While this argument might carry some weight, the extent to which the NUJ can go in to fight for its members' welfare in news organisations that are financially unhealthy is a point to ponder. As another of the findings of this research has established, dwindling income from advertisement and other sources have put many news organisations in a dire financial situation which has forced them either to fold up, reduce staff or scale down their operations. The NUJ is thus caught between insisting on the welfare of members, which the organisations cannot afford, or 'condoning' the situation, knowing that interventions might result in more job losses for her members. As already noted, this finding is verified by both the quantitative and qualitative data.

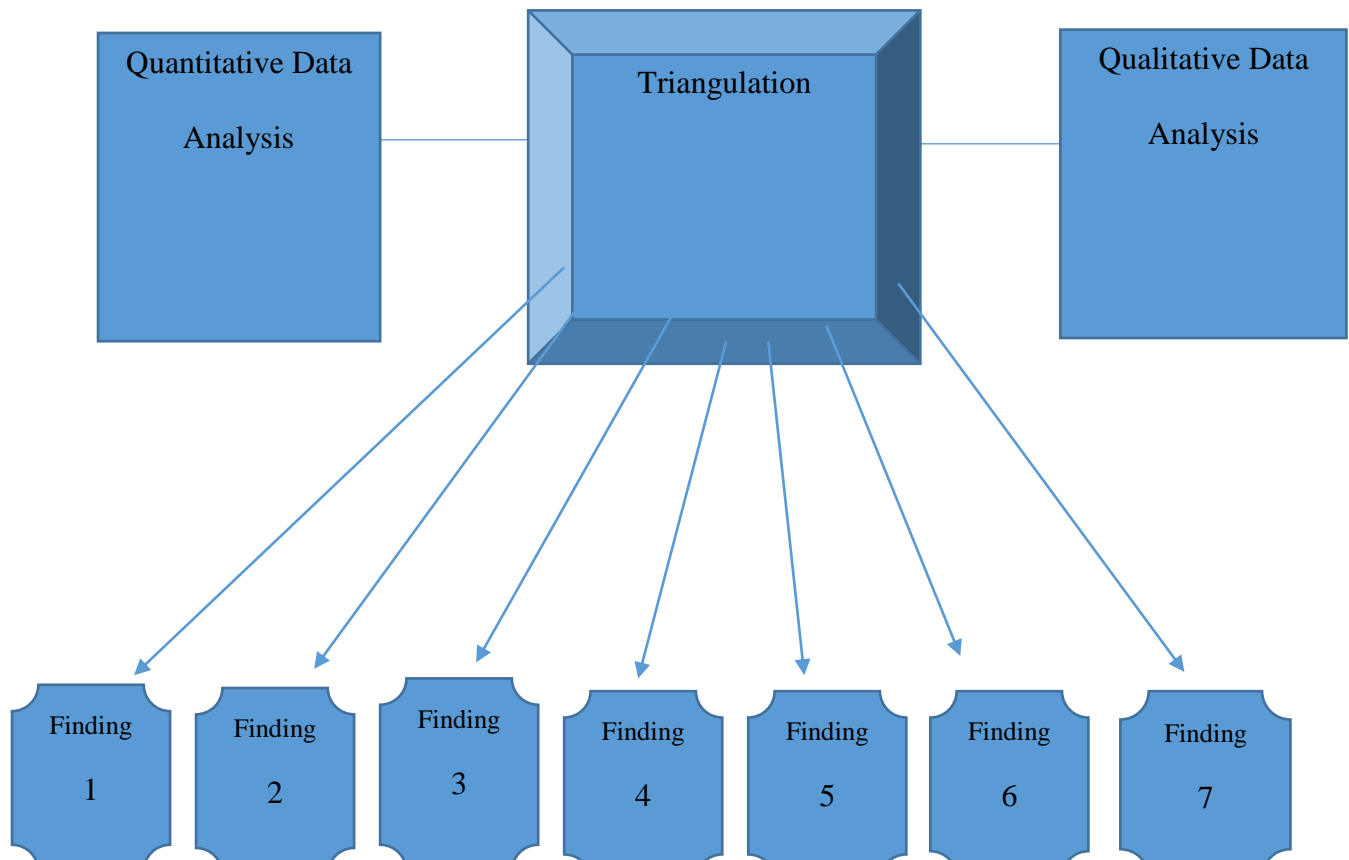How both data sets combined to produce the findings is illustrated below:

Figure 7.2   *The triangulation process and findings.*   *Source: The researcher.*

7.3 Conclusion

This chapter serves as the high point of the mixed methods approach employed for this research by integrating the two data sets to emerge with the findings through a process of triangulation. The triangulation involved bringing together the qualitative and qualitative data, comparing and relating them to see how well they correlate or diverge in seeking answers to the research questions for this study. The triangulation process which produced seven key findings established that there was significant correlation between them. In most cases, the qualitative data complemented the quantitative data to provide a deeper

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understanding of the variables, thereby justifying the use of the convergent parallel mixed methods approach. The chapter thus demonstrates how the research benefits from using the mixed methods by appropriating the advantages of either of the qualitative or quantitative method and reducing or eliminating possible disadvantages. How the findings answer the research questions are discussed in the next chapter.

Chapter Eight

Implications of Findings: A Framework for Understanding Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria

8.1   Chapter Overview

This chapter highlights the relationship between the findings presented in Chapter Six and the research questions for this thesis. It explains how the data provided evidence to answer the research questions to achieve the research objectives. The research objectives as stated in Chapter One comprise:

- To critique how contemporary developments in journalism are affecting professional practice in Nigeria.

- To establish and evaluate critically how journalists in Nigeria are responding to the challenges in executing their professional duties.

- To develop a conceptual framework for understanding the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria.

- To provide a series of policy recommendations aimed at securing professional standards of journalism practice in Nigeria.

Evidence from data established how contemporary developments in journalism practice, some of which are global, combine with peculiar local factors to influence journalism practice in Nigeria. As Christian, Glasser, McQuail, Nordenstreng & White (2009, p.242) argue, "there have already been significant changes in the media and the context of their operation, with several consequences […]". As the findings of this research show, these changes manifest in different ways and combine to impact journalism practice in Nigeria.

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This chapter also utilises the initial explanatory framework developed from the literature review (Chapter Two) to understand the evidence unearthed in the research and, in the process, to address the project's two core research questions. The explanatory framework comprises The Social Theory of Journalism by Dennis McQuail (2013) and Field Theory by Pierre Bourdieu (1998, 2005). The chapter also compares this study with previous research and identifies the gap in knowledge closed by this research project. From the initial analytical framework the chapter proposes a revised explanatory model for understanding the current state of journalism practice in Nigeria. The chapter concludes with a discussion of directions for future research based on the platform generated in this research project.

8.2   Research Questions and Findings

The two research questions for this study, as stated earlier, are:

- What are the contemporary developments impacting professional journalism practice in Nigeria?
- How are journalists in Nigeria responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties and what are the implications of this?

The research findings emerged from the triangulation of the quantitative and qualitative data. Two of the six findings presented in Chapter Seven (a&c) simultaneously provide answers to the two research questions, three (d.e.&f) relate to RQ2 alone, while two others (b&g) relate to RQ1. All the findings combine to provide an empirical backing for this thesis.

8.2.1   Explanation of Finding 'a'

Finding 'a' which was, 'While increased access to the internet and new technologies have enhanced journalistic duties, they have thrown up challenges that require professional

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journalists to adapt new strategies to remain relevant', responded to RQ1 as a contemporary development and as an implication (RQ2) for journalism practice. As established by the quantitative data in Chapter Five and corroborated by the qualitative data in Chapter Six, research participants agreed that the Internet and new technologies have enhanced their journalistic duties. Many of them, for instance, acknowledged that conducting research or verifying evidence had become easier via the internet. They also acknowledged the ease of transmitting information across platforms via the Internet and other sophisticated technology. This vindicated the position in literature that the Internet and new technologies have transformed the media landscape (Adesoji, 2006; Fenton, 2012; McQuail, 2013).

Adesoji (2006) observes that the knowledge of ICT has greatly revolutionised media practice. McQuail (2013. p. xii) concurs stating, "the whole structure and practice of professional journalism has come under great strain as a result of changing technology and market conditions". In addition, data confirmed the claim in literature that the exclusive control or the gatekeeping role of journalists in determining what information the public gets, have been broken (Christians, et al., 2009; Hachten, 2012). Many individuals (citizen journalists) now gather and disseminate information, (including news breaks) with their smart phones and other gadgets. Data findings equally supported that some journalists and news media get hints of news breaks from citizen journalists. JP24 for instance, observed the increasing dependence of many journalists and news organisations on information from blogs and other platforms run by non-journalists. This corroborated the claim by Koliska & Eckert (2015, p. 751) that, "the rise of the internet has created many opportunities for journalists but also has dealt serious blows to journalists […]" This development which McQuail (2013, p. 18) described as the "desacrilisation" of journalism has resulted in journalists and news media competing with non-journalists for the control of the 'gate' of news dissemination to the public.

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Faced with this stark reality, journalists in Nigeria, data showed, are devising new approaches and strategies for performing their journalistic duties. For example, some of the participants asserted that they now dig deeper to get the news behind the news or conduct in-depth treatment of issues than hitherto, to offer something unique and more credible to their audience. "I take stories from various online platforms, but I do not just pick and use them. I not only verify the facts, I also do additional research to add context and perspectives to the issues. That way, I avoid publishing inaccuracies while at the same time, I offer my audience something different" (JP30, Interview 30, 2015). While some of them saw the 'invasion' of journalism by non-professionals as negative, others viewed it as a positive development on the ground that it has challenged professional journalists to be more innovative and creative as pointed out above by JP30. This exemplifies how journalists are responding to 'pressures' from the competitive field as postulated by Field Theory (Bourdieu, 2005) and an example of how they are striving to discharge their normative duties to society by responding to developments in the profession as Social Theory of Journalism prescribes (McQuail, 2013).

The finding responded to the two research questions by demonstrating that the 'democratisation' of information dissemination made possible by access to the Internet and new technologies (Koliska & Eckert, 2015) continues to impact professional journalism practice thus responding to RQ1. It has also generated the finding which challenged journalists to become more innovative to assert their professionalism, which relates to RQ2.

8.2.2 *Explanation of Finding 'b'*

Finding 'b' which was, 'The dwindling income of news media establishments makes it difficult to provide necessary equipment and welfare/motivation for members of staff, including journalists' provides a basis for one of the recommendations of this thesis (see Section 9.3). As noted at the beginning of this chapter, the findings of the research correlate

and combine to produce an original conceptual framework – the Survival Struggle - for understanding contemporary journalism practice in Nigeria. The impact of irregular salary and poor working condition on professional standards is presented in Section 7.2.3.

Data and literature concurred that the incomes of news media have plummeted as a result of various factors, among them, the impact of the Internet, to where many advertisers have migrated (Donsbach, 2012; McQuail, 2013). Vu (2014) in a study on the economic difficulties facing journalism cited a Pew Project for Excellence in Journalism Report (2012), which reported that advert and circulation revenue for newspapers in the United States had fallen by 43% in 2011 compared to 2000. Data confirmed that many news organisations in Nigeria are barely surviving because of dropping income. Many of them are unable to provide necessary equipment or fund journalistic activities like the conduct of investigative stories.

Some of the participants confirmed that they often have to abandon investigative stories due to lack of funds to pursue them. For example, JP 1, who is a news manager in a radio station disclosed that he often discourages reporters from pursuing stories that would require spending beyond a particular limit "because I cannot spend my entire allocation for a month on just one story. A lot of times, we even rely on those we are covering to convey us to assignment (coverage) venues" (Interview 1, 2015). Situations where journalists rely on organisations or influential individuals to fund trips to undertake for coverage, as data confirmed, compromise the integrity of journalists and their ability to conduct independent investigations. Two participants, for instance, recounted how they were dropped from subsequent trips by a government department for writing independent reports on a previous 'sponsored' coverage which the 'patron' found unpalatable. JP 11 who works in an independent radio station and JP13 a newspaper correspondent, both covered the same beat at a time and they made reference to the incident in separate interview sessions with the

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researcher. Only a few independent news media are breaking even but are not buoyant enough to spend hugely on intensive investigative stories like their counterparts in the West.

As had been pointed out, the absence of media conglomerates in Nigeria limits the capacity of the news media to provide necessary tools and equipment to facilitate journalistic investigations or to send reporters on capital intensive news gathering projects as those in some other parts of the world do. Carpenter, Boehmer and Fico (2016, p. 602) examined journalists' role enactments and reported that "resources restrict reporters' ability to cover stories". The inability of news organisations to fund journalistic activities not only kills initiative but dampens the morale and enthusiasm of journalists. Some of the quotations in Chapter Six where editors confirmed their inability to follow up on some stories because of financial constraint corroborate this. The above represent what Bourdieu (1998) refers to as pressures from within and outside in Field Theory and what McQuail (2013) sees as the influence of the work place, and the society.

As Phillips (2015, p. 77) points out, journalism cannot play its expected role of rendering service to democracy if it lacks the resources to pay reasonable wages and allow journalists to enjoy a good level of editorial autonomy. Journalists who rely on those they write about to fund their trips or who are despondent over lack of resources to follow up on their ideas cannot be effective. They would be susceptible to manipulation since those who 'sponsor' or pay for their trips would expect positive coverage irrespective of the true situation to be found. This is why Phillips (2015, p. 80) notes that "[…] if journalists are to be able to operate with a level of autonomy from the market as the state, they will continue to need frameworks that are specifically aimed at protecting them."

The financial difficulty facing many news media organisations in Nigeria which makes them unable to fund journalistic activities undermines their creativity and compromises their

independence. Reliance on interests outside the news organisations to sponsor trips or news coverage, as data showed, is inimical to professional standards' maintenance.

8.2.3 Explanation of Finding 'c'

Finding 'c', "Irregular salary and poor welfare conditions undermine the observance of ethical codes among journalists. As a result, envelope journalism, more popularly known as 'brown envelope', is widespread', also responded to the two research questions for this study. Whereas the first part of the finding answered RQ1, the second part relates to RQ2. As data showed, in Chapters Five and Six, the remuneration and working condition of journalists in Nigeria are poor. Apart from a poor package overall, payment is, in many instances, irregular, basic equipment to carry out duties is inadequate or unavailable in many news organisations while many journalists are over-stressed due to under-staffing in their organisations.

Literature on the news media in Nigeria (Adeyemi, 2013; Eke, 2014; Golwa, 2011; Pate & Dauda, 2013) identifies irregular salary and poor welfare conditions occasioned by poor funding or dwindling income as among the factors disposing journalists to unethical behaviours. Pate and Dauda (2013, p. 13), for instance, observe that many government-owned news media are underfunded: "Under the guise of commercialization, many governments shy away from funding their media houses […] Consequently, many of them are left to the vagaries of market forces in a poverty stricken environment […]"

As research data generated in this project confirmed, a large percentage of journalists in Nigeria do not receive salary regularly. Many are owed several months' salary while many who are engaged as 'freelancers' are not on a fixed remuneration. At best, they are paid stipends per published stories. Many respondents admitted that they find it difficult to pay their bills such as house rent, children's school fees and other demands, as a result of the situation. A few whose salary is regular also reported that it is inadequate to take care of their

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responsibilities. Such a situation disposes journalists to unprofessional conduct because survival considerations override those of ethics (Golwa, 2011).

As some of the participants, noted, it is unrealistic to expect a 'hungry' journalist to be ethical. The collection of gifts (brown envelope) to which a majority of participants admitted, was evidence of this. As the data also showed, many users and beneficiaries of journalistic activities such as politicians, publicists and others, exploit journalists' financial vulnerability by offering them 'bribes' and other enticements for positive publicity. This compounds the ethical dilemma facing journalists. A financially pressed journalist with some ethical compunction or self-respect might not demand a 'bribe' but might lack the willpower to resist one, if offered. This was attested to by some participants who said they would not demand a 'bribe', but do not refuse when offered. JP 16, for example stated:

> I do not demand for money or any other thing to do my job, but if anyone voluntarily offers me anything, I accept it. The truth is that I need the money because some of us live in rented apartments and pay rent; you have children and you have to take care of them from the meagre amount you receive as salary (Interview 16, 2015).

The practicality of the claim by some of them that the bribes do not influence their journalistic duties was questioned earlier, in Chapter Six.

This situation is a practical reflection of the impact of the 'field' (Bourdieu, 1989) on journalists and journalism and how society influences the way in which journalists do their jobs (McQuail, 2013). The 'pressures' exerted on journalists through 'gifts' could be viewed as part of what Bourdieu (1989) referred to as attempts by social and political groups within society to control the 'symbolic power' of society, of which journalism is an important component. Phillips (2015, p.7) explains:

> Journalists and journalism organizations are always at the centre of battle for 'symbolic power' and therefore subject to attempts by more or less powerful organizations to win their attention and approval.

McQuail (2013, p.21) extends the argument to the organisational level where the news media, governments and patrons enter into mutually beneficial relationships. He submits:

> As a matter of course, well established press organisations pay attention to the wishes of government, if only out of self-interest. At times a symbiotic relationship of mutual assistance develops between the 'makers' and 'merchants' of news.

Data produced in this research supported the influence of governments and others who patronise the news media for favourable publicity. Some respondents disclosed that news stories are often rejected or edited to satisfy certain interests (e.g. JP 20 & JP 29). As pointed out in Chapter Six, this makes journalists engage in self-censorship by avoiding stories likely to be 'killed' or edited heavily by their editors or news organisations. The implication of this for ethics is that a reporter who already knows that a story on a particular individual or organisation would not be taken by his or her news organisation, could capitalise on this to engage in unethical conduct.

However, as had been pointed out, most previous studies tend to ignore the existence of the few journalists who refuse to accept 'bribes' as found in the data uncovered in this research. As Chapters Five and Six showed, some of the participants said they did not believe in 'brown envelope' or any form of 'bribe', which points to the fact that the response to challenges by participants is not negative unanimously.

This thesis therefore argues that it would be misleading to suggest that every journalist in Nigeria engages in professional misconduct (Abidde, 2008; Kayode, 2011; Idowu, 2014). Evidence suggests that despite widespread unethical behaviour among journalists, manifest in

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the collection of a 'bribe', a significant percentage of journalists still strive to uphold professional ethics. The relatively small percentage of this category of journalists, when compared to the percentage of those who admitted to collecting 'brown envelope', might make the tendency to generalize found in literature understandable, if inaccurate.

The first part of the finding on irregular salary and poor welfare conditions constitutes a development impacting journalism practice by undermining the observance of professional ethics (RQ1). The second part which identified widespread acceptance of 'gifts' by journalists, which data established, is a 'survival' strategy, a response to the irregular salary and poor welfare conditions, which gives a negative portrayal of the profession. The finding illustrates the postulations of Field Theory that occupational fields create their own pressures on journalism and that journalism reproduces itself based on pressures from within and outside the profession (Bourdieu, 2005).

8.2.4 *Explanation of Finding 'd'*

'Lack of editorial independence promotes self-censorship and undermines professional standards', which is the fourth finding, emerged from evidence of interference in editorial issues by proprietors, editors, advertisers, politicians and other patrons. JP 14 who works in a government news medium identified lack of editorial independence as the number one challenge facing journalists in Nigeria. "Our editors are so afraid of losing their positions that they will not take any story that might offend government, so we are just like a government megaphone, to report only what they like" (Interview 14, 2015). The finding is thus related to RQ2, being a response to, and an implication of, an identified challenge and also corroborates the argument of Field Theory that individual journalists are subject to the power structures within and outside their organisations over which they have little control (Bourdieu, 1998).

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Journalists have to contend with different interests who mount subtle or direct pressure on them to take a particular line. As shown in Chapter Seven, most news organisations in Nigeria, especially television and radio stations, are government-owned and are therefore controlled by the political party in power at the federal level or in the different states. The privately-owned news media are also either owned by politicians, their friends or business partners while news media not aligned to political parties project and protect the business and other interests of their proprietors or those of advertisers who they depend on to survive.

Data from this research suggested that some of the participants in this research are in a kind of 'surrender' (Voltmer, 2013), refusing to assert their professional right to independence for fear of losing their jobs. Many journalists know the consequence of crossing specified 'lines' and as JP14 noted "you cannot work according to your conscience or you'll lose your job." JP4 and JP13 also claimed to have witnessed how their colleagues were sacked for trying to be independent in their editorial duties. The fear of losing their jobs at a time when the unemployment rate is increasing, eliminates or weakens their capacity to be independent. This buttresses Bourdieu's (2005) position that the fear of becoming unemployed makes journalists conform to prescribed conduct rather than risk losing their jobs, a situation he argues does not augur well for true independence.

Phillips (2015) also notes that editorial interference makes it impossible for journalists to make ethical judgements in their work. "An editor with an extremely conservative worldview will ensure stories are framed in a way that is consistent with his worldview" (Phillips, 2015, p. 23). The arguments of this author were supported by data from this research project where many participants claim that they pursue only stories that would be taken by their media organisations and avoid those unlikely to be taken because it would amount to a waste of time. JP27 captured this:

> You don't bother to investigate or write some stories because you already
> know that your editor would not accept them. Even the ones you write are
> subjected to serious editing. I work in a state-controlled media and it's the
> party that controls the government that also controls you as a media
> professional, so you cannot report stories the way you want […] (Interview 27,
> 2015).

As pointed out earlier, self-censorship by journalists hamstrings sound professional decisions and compromises professional standards. Shoemaker and Reese (2014) posit that the conduct and behaviours of journalists are constrained and shaped by organisation contexts. Carpenter, et al. (2016, p. 588) agree that "the degree to which an organization supports reporters' roles likely affects their ability to enact roles in content". Data from this project show that where organisational policies or routines impede the editorial independence of journalists, it is bound to reflect on professional standard.

8.2.5 *Explanation of Finding 'e'*

This finding which relates to RQ2 states: 'Many journalists in Nigeria are struggling to balance between observance of professional ethics and 'survival''. It explains the response of journalists to the challenges they face as professionals and how this impacts professional standard. The finding manifests as a consequence of the cultural environment in which journalists in Nigeria operate. Many studies on journalism practice in Nigeria, as argued in Chapter Five, tend to portray journalists as people who choose how they react to professional challenges (Abidde, 2008; Adeyemi, 2013; Omoera, 2010; Ogunyemi, 2014). The tendency to gloss over the challenges and circumstances of journalists, which previous studies identify, are often presented as no justification for unethical behaviour. While this might be true in some respects, the approach downplays the psychological influence of the quest to meet basic survival needs and be seen as successful (Maslow, 1943). Viewing journalists as 'super' human beings capable of controlling their circumstance and who choose how to react to

professional challenges and ethical dilemmas does not promote a full understanding of their situation.

This marks a major difference between this thesis and some other studies on journalism practice in Nigeria. This thesis critically examined how professional challenges and circumstances constrain the response of journalists. However, it provides an explanation, not a justification for the response of journalists to the professional challenges they face. It argues that journalists do not choose or decide how to respond to challenges, but are often 'pushed' by overwhelming circumstances, such as the need to make ends meet and meet family responsibilities. It contends that such 'compelling' circumstances give little room for rational ethical consideration, and that the less journalists are exposed to such circumstances, the better they would be to taking rational decisions to enhance professional standards.

Evidence from data gathered illustrated that many journalists consider the collection of 'brown envelope' (gifts) as unethical and demeaning but they accept it because poor or irregular salary makes it difficult to resist such offers. The various challenges which pressurise or dispose journalists to unethical conduct perhaps, constitute what Bourdieu (1998) referred to as invisible structures and mechanisms on the journalistic field which influence the actions and thoughts of individuals.

Journalists tend, in line with Maslow's (1943) theory on Hierarchy of Needs, to strive to meet their basic needs, as well as aspire to higher rungs of the success ladder. Since journalists as professionals would not want to be seen as 'failures' by not living up to their financial and other responsibilities, they devise ways of meeting their needs and as literature (Adeyemi, 2013; Omoera, 2010; Ogunyemi, 2014) suggests, the 'brown envelope' appears to be a steady source of income. Eke (2014, p. 150) described the 'brown envelope syndrome' in journalism practice in Nigeria as,

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[…] fast assuming a conventional status, as most journalists now demand and take bribe monies and other forms of bribery as a prerequisite for performing their traditional duties of providing information, education and entertainment to the society […].

This finding is thus an explanation, not a justification of unethical behaviour which undermines professional standards in journalism. Like Weiner's (1972) Attribution Theory, it sought to explain the world (of journalism in Nigeria) and why people (journalists) behave in a particular way. The finding thus answers and establishes empirically, the second leg of RQ2 which queried the implication of journalists' response to professional challenges.

8.2.6 *Explanation of Finding 'f'*

The sixth finding which was 'Despite exposure to the same basic professional challenges, the response of journalists varies', also addresses RQ2. An examination of the 'response' of journalists to professional challenges which answering RQ2 required, showed that there was no unanimous response from participants. Even where there was correlation of response, the participants had divergent reasons for their positions. For example, while some accepted that they collect 'gifts' because of poor or irregular salary, some said they accept **if given** but do not demand. They saw nothing wrong in accepting a gift given voluntarily. This suggested that among those who collect gifts, some acknowledge it as unethical but said they are constrained by circumstances, while there are those who rationalise it as the usual African hospitality which they did not deem unethical. The implication of this is that whereas those who view 'gift' collection as unethical might stop collecting if the circumstance they claim 'pushed' them into it changed, those who did not see acceptance of 'voluntary' gift as unethical might continue even if their circumstance improved.

McQuail (2013) posits that the different attitude of sets of journalists to the challenges they face might also be dictated by societal and personal values which are difficult to conceal or

completely exclude from how they do their work. Perhaps this was why some of the participants claimed that no circumstance would push them into professional misconduct such as 'gift' collection. Thus, they differ from the other group which cited irregular or poor salary and welfare conditions as reasons for collecting 'gifts'. This provides more evidence of different responses to the same variable and attests to the point that it would be misleading to generalise that all journalists in Nigeria engage in unethical behaviour. While the percentage of those who refuse to compromise on ethics might be low, it is nonetheless significant.

The finding also stresses the importance of paying more attention to factors capable of disposing journalists to professional misconduct. Although professional ethics and standards provide a benchmark of what journalism should be, it "does little to assist individual journalists who find that commercial constraints make it difficult to live up to those standards' (Phillips, 2015, p. 78).

8.2.7 *Explanation for Finding 'g'*

The last finding which states that, 'The professional and regulatory bodies are not doing enough to ensure standards' provided evidence which answered RQ1 in part. The quantitative and qualitative data sets supported the finding as a majority of participants viewed the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), which is the professional association of practising journalists, the Nigerian Press Organisation (NPO) constituted by proprietors, editors and managers of news media and the NUJ, and the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) which regulates the broadcast sector, all as ineffective in executing their responsibilities.

If, as literature claims (Eke, 2014; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbene, 2003; Kayode, 2011), many journalists in Nigeria engage in professional misconduct which is impacting professional standard negatively, it is expected that the regulatory bodies would step in by imposing prescribed sanctions and other measures to check the trend, but his had not been the case.

Data gathered in this research showed that the NUJ hardly acts on reported cases of misconduct and many participants blamed this for the widespread unethical conduct of some journalists. They felt that prompt and appropriate sanctions from the regulatory bodies would reduce brazen misconduct by some journalists.

Data also showed that many journalists held that the NUJ, for instance, was not doing enough to advance the welfare and working conditions of members. Some of them felt that the union should push for better remuneration for members, as well as, sanction unprofessional conduct. However, as explained in Chapter Six, the NUJ appears to be treading softly knowing that many of the news media organisations cannot afford to pay higher wages. If many of them are facing dwindling income and finding it difficult to pay the extant salary package, would it be realistic to push for increased wages for journalists without endangering the survival of the news media?

In addition, a situation where as data revealed, the regulatory bodies, for example, the Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) and Nigerian Press Organisation (NPO), which are members of the Nigerian Press Council (NPC) are not well structured or are not functional because of personality clashes among members, is bound to undermine their effectiveness. A participant, (JP10) who represented NUJ on the NPO, disclosed that the body had not met for several years because members could not agree on the sharing of positions or responsibilities. His response corroborates Ekpu (2000, p. 71) who describes the NPO as a "toothless bulldog". How then can the body perform its duty of regulating the news media?

Similarly, the NBC which was established by government to regulate the broadcast sector is perceived by some people as a tool in the hand of the political party or government in power

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to get at 'opposition' radio or television stations. Credibility suffers where a regulatory body is seen to be guided by government and efficiency is bound to suffer in such a situation.

Effective regulatory bodies that move against erring journalists or news organisations would restore audience confidence in the news media. Adeyemi (2013, p. 215) described the confidence of the audience in the news media in Nigeria as "today at an all-time low […] integrity in the journalism profession can only be achieved when media ethics are entrenched in the profession by media practitioners."

This thesis concurs, because ethics and regulations cannot serve their purpose if they are not enforced by the regulatory bodies given the responsibility to ensure this. Since deterrence is one of the key functions of regulations or laws (Ewelukwa, 2004), invoking the regulatory framework through sanctions for professional misconduct would go a long way to boost professional standards.

As explained in Chapter Four (4.10.1, page 118), the population for this research is constituted by practicing journalists working in print and electronic media either government or private owned. Data did not evidence any differences in the challenges they face or in the manner in which they respond or cope with the challenges based on these parameters. Probably because journalists operate within the same 'field' and the same social environment, data evidenced that they face basically the same challenges irrespective of whether they work for private or government owned news media or whether they are electronic or print. For example, just as some respondents working in government owned news media (print and electronic) said they receive their salary regularly and enjoy good conditions of service, others from private owned news media (print and electronic) made similar claims. Conversely, those who complained of poor and irregular salary and conditions of service are made up of those working in print and electronic media either government or private owned.

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However, a comparative study on the specific challenges facing journalists in print, broadcast, government or private owned news media might yield a clearer picture and presents a potential for future research.

8.3 Comparison with Other Studies

As has been pointed out at different points in this thesis, journalists in different parts of the world face some common challenges despite divergent cultural and professional circumstances (Malaolu, 2014). The common challenges include, declining audience for news, increasing influence of market forces on editorial decisions, the declining reputation of journalism among the audience and the loss of professional identity (Donsbach, 2012; Kennedy, 2016).

Several studies exist on journalism practice in different parts of the world, Africa and Nigeria (Carpenter, et al. 2016; Donsbach, 2012; Hachten, 2012; Kayode, 2011; Kruger, 2016; Nwabueze, 2010; Ogola, 2015; Shaw, 2011; Wasserman, 2014). While some of them explicate issues similar to the concern of this thesis which is, interrogating how journalists' response to contemporary developments and challenges are impacting professional standards in Nigeria, there are areas of departure.

For example, Hachten (2012) provides a critical analysis of what he described as the 'troubles of journalism' noting that journalists now are less concerned about the erosion of the fundamental values of the profession. The study reported that there was growing public unease with the news media in the United States of America (USA) occasioned by widespread distrust and suspicion of the news media among different groups and interests. Although many of the observations of the study relate to the news media in America and other Western countries, some of them are applicable to the news media in other parts of the

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globe. Among these are concerns about credibility and bias, the expanding and controversial role of cable news channels and the growing impact of news and comments on the internet, which have also featured in studies on journalism in Africa and Nigeria (Kruger, 2015; Nwabueze, 2010; Ogola, 2015).

Hachten's study shared the concern of this thesis in interrogating the contemporary challenges of journalism practice, but while he focusses on the United States, this thesis concentrated on Nigeria. However, other studies exist on journalism and the news media in Nigeria where findings similar to those of this thesis emerged.

Eke (2014) in a study on the 'brown envelope syndrome' (collection of 'gifts' by journalists) in Nigeria reported that 'gift' taking had become "an evil militating against credible journalism practice" (p. 150). Eke's study identified the causes of the 'brown envelope syndrome' to include poor remuneration, the influence of advertisers, personal greed and the laxity of regulatory bodies, some of which are similar to what this thesis found. Unlike this thesis, Eke's study was limited to identifying the causes of the 'brown envelope syndrome' but did not interrogate how the response of journalists to these challenges impacts professional standards.

In another study on journalism practice in Nigeria, Nwabueze (2010, p. 497) reported that journalists in Nigeria face the ethical dilemma of accepting gifts and other gratifications because they are "operating in a depressed economy". The study which dwelt on how journalists perceived the 'brown envelope syndrome' found that many journalists did not see the collection of gifts as unethical. This partially concurs with the finding of this thesis that while some participants viewed gift collection as unethical, some saw nothing wrong with it. However, unlike this thesis which found that a majority of participants who admitted to collecting gifts were uncomfortable with their dependence on gifts because it is unethical,

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71% of participants in Nwabueze's study viewed the 'brown envelope' as a kind gesture and not a bribe.

This thesis is unique from the other studies because it not only identified the challenges facing the journalism profession in Nigeria, it interrogated how the response of journalists to the challenges impacts the profession. Rather than concentrate on just the 'brown envelope syndrome', a symptom of the 'decay' in journalism practice in Nigeria as the cited studies and others did, it explicated how the 'field' (Bourdieu, 2005) and other social factors (McQuail, 2013) influence the journalism profession in Nigeria. Significantly, this thesis developed a conceptual framework for understanding contemporary Nigerian journalism coined the 'survival struggle model' which explains how various factors inter-relate to influence the nature of journalism practice in Nigeria. This is presented in the next section.

8.4   An Explanatory Framework – the 'Survival Struggle Model'

A critical analysis of the findings of this thesis motivated the researcher to come up with an explanatory framework, the 'survival struggle model', a framework developed to illustrate the current nature of journalism practice in Nigeria. The framework developed from evidence from data shows how the interaction of the two theories guiding this study – Field Theory and Social Theory of Journalism – plays out practically, in journalism practice in Nigeria. While Field Theory views issues from a micro viewpoint (the journalism field), Social Theory uses a macro lens (how various aspects of society impacts journalism). For example, Field Theory argues that journalists operate within a competitive field and describes how pressures from within and outside the journalism field influence journalism practice. As established by data, the 'pressures' faced by Nigerian journalists based on the postulations of Field Theory include those from within (e.g. proprietor influence, career development concerns, personal interest of journalists), from outside (e.g. commercial interests such as competition for

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adverts and sales, political influence and regulatory issues). Similarly, evidence showed different features of the concerns of Social Theory of Journalism such as, how well journalism is delivering on its normative obligations to society (e.g. promotion of democracy, providing information, education and entertainment, working for the good of the society), upholding journalism core values (e.g. objectivity, accuracy, integrity) and the standards that should apply to the practice of journalism (e.g. respect for ethics and effectiveness of regulatory framework). Data provided evidence that journalists in Nigeria are facing an ethical dilemma. Confronted by the challenges of practice linked to the postulations of the two theories, they are struggling between abiding by professional ethics and survival. The challenges generate a response - the 'survival struggle'- which produces the current state of professional journalism practice in Nigeria (see diagram below).

A significant finding of this thesis was that whereas many of the participants were unhappy with the poor welfare and other working conditions, they have remained in the profession either because of their passion or for lack of alternatives. The bad economy in the country have reduced available job opportunities and the fear of losing their jobs make them diffident to assert their independence.

In addition, while many are aware of the ethics of the profession, especially as it relates to upholding the journalism core values of truth, objectivity, impartiality and non-collection of 'inducement' or 'gift' in whatever guise, they are 'constrained' to flout these values (despite awareness that they are unethical) by circumstances beyond their control. One of these 'circumstances' is the need to survive, hence the coinage, 'survival struggle'. The model shows how journalists interact with developments and professional challenges, on one hand, and journalism's core values and ethics, on the other, in a 'survival struggle' which produces the current nature of professional journalism standards in Nigeria.

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The model neither excuses nor justifies professional misconduct but, rather, provides an explanatory framework of current professional journalism practice in Nigeria. It does not claim to be a model for all time, since situations and circumstances change. It merely seeks to contribute to the body of knowledge by shedding light on the factors that drive professional journalism practice in Nigeria currently, upon which other researchers could build.

As explained above, the model below shows how C's (Journalists and Journalism) interaction with A (Features of Field Theory) and B (Features of Social Theory of Journalism) produces D (Survival Struggle) which influences E (Nature of Journalism).
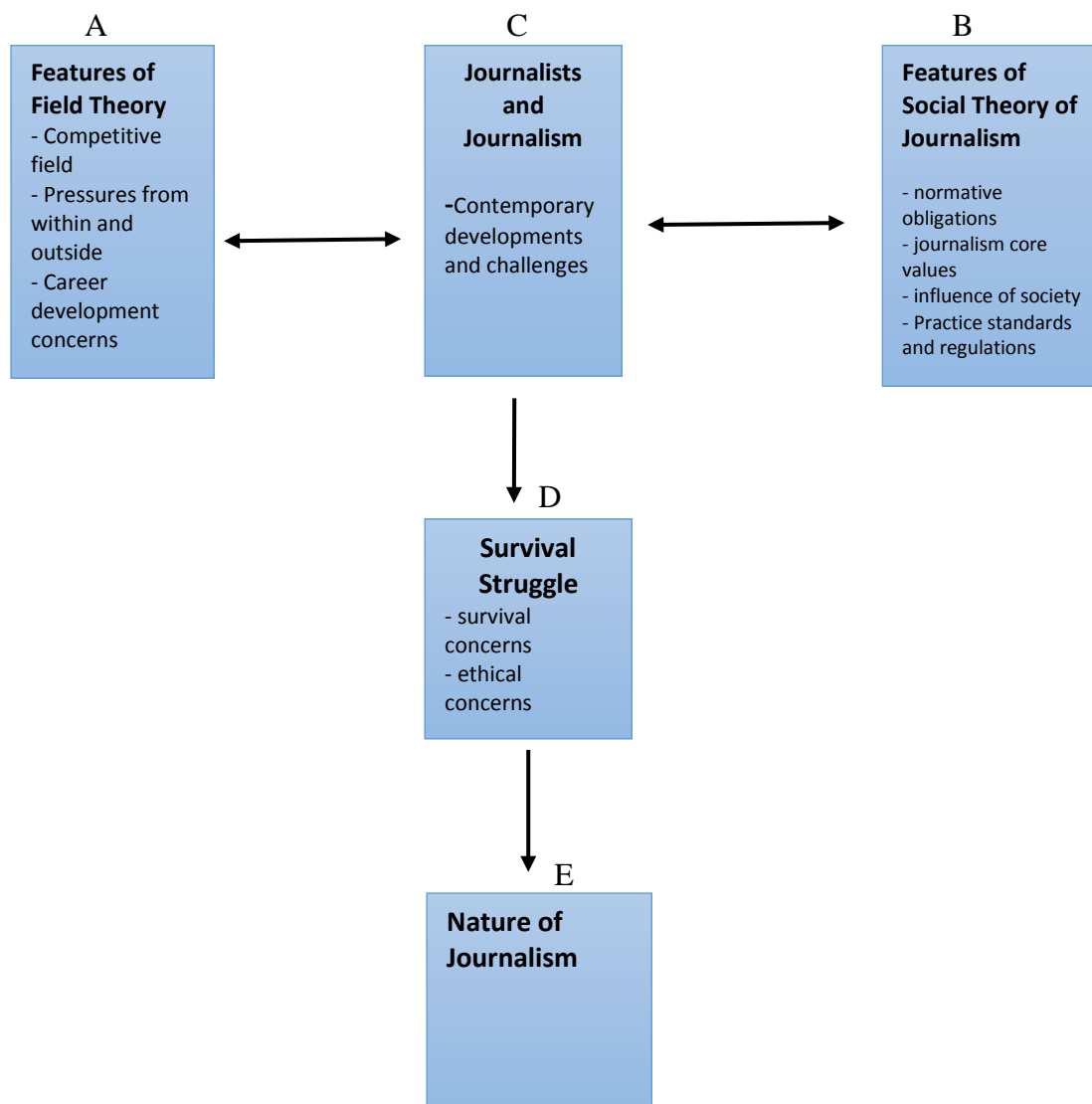

Figure 8.1   The Survival Struggle Model   Source: The Researcher

8.5 Directions for Future Research

This thesis sought to illuminate empirically, how the response of journalists in Nigeria to contemporary developments and challenges is shaping professional standard. Employing two research questions, it identified and critiques the developments and challenges and how journalists' response impacts the profession. Following evidence from data on how journalists are torn between upholding professional ethics and making ends meet, it came up with the 'survival struggle' model, a framework which explains how various factors interact to produce the current state of professional journalism in Nigeria.

While the thesis contributes to the body of knowledge by proffering a framework for understanding the nature of professional journalism practice in Nigeria, the findings are envisaged to ginger further research. More empirical studies focussing on different aspects of journalism practice in Nigeria would help to advance knowledge further and enrich literature on journalism studies. The rapidly changing internet and technology-driven media landscape also calls for constant research into different aspects to evaluate empirically, the state of the news media at different points in history.

This thesis therefore calls for more research to take further some of its findings. Since data provided evidence that many of the challenges facing journalists and journalism in Nigeria are linked to finance, research into new ways the news media can generate income to run efficiently amid shifting paradigms and an unstable global economy would be worthwhile. Research into how to make the regulatory bodies overcome identified challenges and become more efficient in securing professional standard is also desirable.

It is possible that journalists in different countries in the global South and especially in Africa might be facing similar challenges as their counterparts in Nigeria and might have developed

same or other survival strategies. Further or different studies to compare the situation in different countries would be helpful to establish this empirically.

8.6   Conclusion

This chapter unveiled the major contribution of this research project to knowledge which is, an explanatory framework – the Survival Struggle Model – for understanding the current nature of journalism practice in Nigeria. The model demonstrated how the two theories underpinning this study, Field Theory and Social Theory of Journalism can be brought together to produce a framework to understand better the practice of journalism in Nigeria. The chapter also discussed the relationship between the research questions and the findings derived from the quantitative and qualitative data presented in Chapters Five and Six. It explicated how the findings answered the research questions for the study. It also related the finding to those in the literature and the theoretical framework which guided the study. It also examined how this thesis compared with related studies and suggested directions for future research. The next chapter which concludes the thesis, makes recommendations on how to address some of the findings of this study.

Chapter Nine

Conclusions: Securing Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria

9.1   Chapter Overview

The previous chapter presented the explanatory framework, the Survival Struggle Model, developed by this study, which is its major contribution to knowledge. This chapter builds on this by making some practical recommendations to address the key findings of the study. The chapter begins with an overview of the entire work, the research questions and how the quantitative and qualitative data responded to them. It highlights the contributions of the thesis and proceeds to discuss the future of professional journalism in Nigeria. It ends with a set of detailed recommendations on how to secure effective standards of professional journalism in Nigeria.

9.2   Summary of Research

As stated in Chapter One, the broad aim of the study is to evaluate critically, understand better and provide a frame of reference on how, Nigerian journalists are responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties. The thesis critiqued contemporary developments and challenges in professional journalism in Nigeria and how journalists' response to them is impacting professional standards. It adopted the mixed methods research approach which involved gathering both quantitative and qualitative data to interrogate the two research questions. The data were gathered simultaneously in line with the convergent parallel mixed methods strategy. The two research questions for the study were:

- What are the contemporary developments impacting professional journalism practice in Nigeria?

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- How are journalists in Nigeria responding to contemporary challenges in executing their professional duties and what are the implications of this?

The thesis demonstrated in Chapter Seven that the quantitative and qualitative data sets produced a detailed and comprehensive understanding of the concepts and variables than would have been the case if either had been used alone (Gray, 2014). The data sets substantially complemented and corroborated each other and vindicated the use of the convergent parallel research strategy which is one of those commonly employed for mixed methods research (Creswell, 2014). A critical analysis and triangulation of the data produced seven key findings which were discussed in Chapter Seven. A conceptual framework – the survival struggle model- which depicts the current state of professional journalism in Nigeria emerged from a critical analysis of the data. Based on the findings and in line with the Pragmatic Philosophy which is a new paradigm guiding mixed methods research (Babbie, 2007; Creswell, 2014), the thesis now makes recommendations for future research and policy recommendations on securing the future of professional journalism in Nigeria. The thesis interrogated 'what' the challenges are and 'how' they impact journalism practice, to present an empirical view of current state of professional journalism in Nigeria in accordance with the Pragmatic Philosophy (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2010).

9.3 Contributions

As stated in Chapter One, the three complementary areas of contribution to knowledge of this research are:

- New empirical evidence on the state of journalism practice in Nigeria from the perspective of the journalist.

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- An explanatory model of Nigerian journalism practice – the Survival
  Struggle model.

- Recommendations with a view to delivering more effective journalism
  practice in Nigeria.

The development of an original conceptual framework for understanding the current state of professional journalism in Nigeria is its major contribution. The framework is based on a key finding of this thesis that journalism practice in Nigeria is a 'survival struggle' where journalists, caught between the situation on the journalism field as postulated by Bourdieu's (1998) Field Theory and the normative and other obligations of journalism prescribed by McQuail (2013) in Social Theory of Journalism, 'struggle' between respecting professional ethics and the challenges of the journalism 'field' and Nigerian society more broadly. The finding inspired the 'survival struggle model' presented in Chapter Eight. This study evidenced that journalists in Nigeria are caught in a kind of struggle to operate ethically on the one hand, and to cope with the constraints of survival imposed by poor welfare and work conditions, among other pressures, on the other. As explained in Chapter Eight, based on the postulations of Field Theory, journalists face pressures from within which include proprietor influence, career development concerns, personal interest of journalist and from outside such as commercial interests such as competition for adverts and sales, political influence and regulatory issues (Bourdieu, 2005). They are also contending with features of the concerns of Social Theory of Journalism such as, how well journalism is delivering on its normative obligations to society including, promotion of democracy, providing information, education and entertainment, working for the good of the society and upholding journalism core values like objectivity, accuracy and integrity, as well as, the standards that should apply to the practice of journalism such as respect for ethics and effectiveness of regulatory framework (McQuail, 2013).

Going by the assessment of participants on what is 'good journalism' it was evident that they knew how a true professional should conduct him or herself but they are 'constrained' by the pressure to survive in a kind of struggle. The data also showed that survival instinct can make an otherwise ethically-inclined journalist to compromise in order to survive or make ends meet. As stated earlier, the thesis drew from McQuail's Social Theory of Journalism (2013) and Bourdieu's Field Theory (1998) supported by data to offer a framework capable of prompting further research into professional journalism practice in Nigeria and elsewhere.

9.4   The Future of Professional Journalism in Nigeria

This thesis takes forward previous studies on journalism practice in Nigeria by offering an understanding of how the response of journalists to developments and challenges is impacting the profession. The table below summarises what, based on the data collected, journalists identified as major developments/challenges of practice and how they are responding to them:

Table 9.1   *Summary of identified challenges and journalists' response*

Contemporary Developments/Challenges	Response of Journalists
Poor remuneration	Collects 'gifts' (Majority) Declines 'gifts' (Minority)
Irregular salary	Collects 'gifts' (Majority) Declines 'gifts'), gets support from family, friends (Minority)
Proprietor influence	Defers to proprietor to keep job Tries to balance between proprietor's interest and audience expectation
Unfriendly working environment	Striving to cope
Lack of independence	Avoids stories that would not be published Self-censorship Asserts independence within permissible limits
Internet and new technology	Employing it for improved productivity

Citizen journalism	Strives to respond to challenge posed by them
Insecurity	Tries to keep safe and security conscious
Politics	Abides by political disposition of employer (State or politician owned media)
	Tries to balance among political parties and politicians (Independent owned media)
Poor infrastructure/tools	Buys own tools
	Manages with what is available
Corrupting influence of society	Tries to be ethical (Minority)
	Survival considerations dictate response (Majority)
Job insecurity	Tries to abide by rules of organisation
	Self-censorship to avoid offending superiors
Demotivation	Tries to remain positive despite discouraging circumstance

Unlike previous studies which tend to blame journalists for professional misconduct and the diminishing professional standard, this thesis critiqued the situation from the perspective of journalists themselves, not to justify or excuse professional misconduct, but to gain an understanding of the situation that would enrich the body of knowledge on professional journalism practice in Nigeria.

As explained earlier, in interrogating how the response of journalists impacts their professional duties, data showed that contrary to the impression that journalists 'wilfully' decide to or not to abide by professional ethics, many of them are 'reluctant' 'wrong doers', who are 'pushed' by circumstances beyond their control. Therefore, this thesis argues that the response of journalists to professional ethics and standards might be more positive if the 'compelling' factors linked to survival instinct changed. Based on the responses of journalists in the table above, the attitude of journalists to professional standards might differ if some of the identified challenges or situations improved.

To address some of the findings and secure the future of journalism in Nigeria, this thesis makes the following recommendations which are derived from the findings of this research.

They are considered as capable of contributing to addressing some of the concerns from data but may not necessarily be solutions to them and, in fact, have their downsides. They constitute potential areas for further research.

- A critical review of the existing regulatory framework guiding professional journalism practice in Nigeria should be undertaken by the regulatory bodies such as the Nigerian Press Organisation, (NPO), National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE) and the Nigerian Press Council (NPC) to make them more effective. For example, as Ekpu (2000, pp. 71-72) notes, under the extant framework, membership of the NPO whose members constitute the NPC is voluntary while "its regulatory functions lack the force of law". As explained earlier (section 3.6.2, p. 74), the NPC stablished by the Federal Government of Nigeria via Decree No. 85 of 1992 and amended by Act No. 60 of 1999, to operate like similar journalism self-regulatory bodies in different countries, the absence of enforcement prescriptions appears to be contributing to its ineffectiveness. However, the introduction of a 'stiffer' regulatory framework could be interpreted as an attempt by government to limit the freedom of the media.

- Stakeholders in the news media industry should explore the possibility of mergers or acquisitions of news media, as has been the case in other parts of the globe such as the United States, to pool resources and boost their financial base. The current widespread sole ownership or state ownership of news media in Nigeria limits available funds and their capacity to improve welfare and working conditions for journalists. Bigger news organisations would be able to pay better wages and welfare package which would curb or reduce substantially, survival-driven professional misconduct. It is acknowledged that mergers could concentrate media

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ownership in a few 'powerful' hands as had been witnessed in some countries, thereby limiting the pluralism needed for a free and independent news media.

- Exploration of avenues to provide steady funding for news media establishments, especially those government owned, as is the case in some Western countries. In the United Kingdom for example, the British Broadcasting Corporation is funded through the television licence fee paid by the public (Hallin & Mancini, 2012). This ensures that the corporation is not dependent on government funding and can operate with little inference. In particular, introducing alternative sources of funding outside government allocation for state-owned news media would not only address the problem of underfunding that most of them currently face, but would make them more independent. This recommendation can only apply to public news media and not those independently owned.

- The Nigerian Press Organisation which is made up of proprietors and managers of news media, should make regular training and updating of skills a priority for professional journalists to improve capacity and keep abreast of trends in the industry. A training fund for journalists to which news media establishments would contribute, to pool resources for training should be established. Since technology and other trends in the industry change rapidly, regular, sustained training would sharpen the capacity of journalists to respond to developments and improve efficiency. Depending on available resources, journalists could be sponsored for further studies in educational institutions or to seminars and conferences related to their profession. Again, this recommendation is feasible only if the news media are doing well financially. A news medium struggling to 'survive' might not view contribution to a training fund for members of staff being owed salary expedient.

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9.5   Conclusion

As already pointed out, the 'survival struggle' explanatory framework developed by this research project stands as an empirical frame of reference for understanding the current state of professional journalism practice in Nigeria. The framework was developed by relating the postulations of Pierre Bourdieu in Field Theory and Dennis McQuail's Social Theory of Journalism, which served as the theoretical compass, to the findings of this study. While Field Theory highlights how the 'journalism field' impacts professional journalism practice, the Social Theory of journalism argues that different factors such as the news organisation, the society and the personal attributes of journalists impact the nature of journalism in a given society. The qualitative and quantitative data critiqued how journalists' response to professional challenges in impacting professional journalism standards in Nigeria. As explained earlier, the data gathered were interrogated with the postulations of the two theories to produce the findings which influenced the development of the 'survival struggle' model. Data established the influence of the 'field' in Bourdieu's theory and the factors identified in McQuail's theory in determining the current nature of journalism in Nigeria (See Model in Chapter 8).

The explanatory framework depicts how journalists in Nigeria strive between economic survival and ethical considerations. However, as noted earlier (see Section 8.5), the model needs to be further explored as a framework by other researchers through additional empirical analysis of various aspects of journalism practice in Nigeria to broaden the body of knowledge available on the area.

In conclusion, this research project has established empirically, that the challenges of practice, the operating environment and how journalists respond to them, when applied to the postulations of Field Theory and the Social Theory of Journalism, combine to produce the

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current state of journalism in Nigeria, which is explicated by the explanatory framework – the Survival Struggle in Professional Journalism Practice in Nigeria (Survival Struggle Model) – developed by the study.

APPENDIX I

University of Salford MANCHESTER

Research Centres Team
G.03 Joule House
Acton Square
The Crescent
Salford
M5 4WT
Tel: 0161 295 7012
AMC-Research@salford.ac.uk

26 October 2015

Cosmas Taye Obateru
University of Salford

Dear Taye

**Re: <u>Ethical Approval Application – The Changing Media Landscape and the
Contemporary Challenges of Journalism Practice in Nigernia</u>**

I am pleased to inform you that based on the information provided, the Research Ethics
Panel have no objections on ethical grounds to your project.

Yours sincerely

Julie Connett

Julie Connett
On Behalf of the Research Ethics Panel

QUESTIONNAIRE

SECTION A - DEMOGRAPHICS

INSTRUCTION: The information in this section is to assist the researcher in the analysis of data and not for purpose of identification. Please tick as appropriate. Thank you.

1. My gender is:
   1( )Female 2( )Male

2. I am in the following age bracket:
   1( )20-25 years 2( )26-30years 3( )31-35 years 4( )36-40 years 5( )Above 40 years

3. Education:
   1(   ) Completed secondary school 2( )OND/NCE 3( )BA/BSC 4( )Post Graduate

4. I have practiced journalism in Nigeria for:
   1( )1-5 years 2( )6-10 years 3( )11-15 years 4( )16-20 years 5( )Above 20 years

SECTION B

INSTRUCTION: Please tick the option that represents your disposition to each of the following statements. **Kindly pay attention to the way the options are presented.**

5 Access to the internet and new technologies like iPad, smart phones, etc. have enhanced my performance as a journalist.

   1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

6 Increasing access to new (social) media among Nigerians gives non-journalists opportunity to disseminate information on news events and happenings as journalists do.

   1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

7 Reports on news breaks in my beat are sometimes disseminated ahead of me by non-journalists through their mobile phones and other gadgets.

   1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

8 Income from advertisements has dropped in the organization I work for.
   1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3(   ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

9 Income generation is accorded much importance such that it can affect what gets published or not published where I work.

   1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

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10 Where I work, ownership influence is strong on what is published.
1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

11 Lack of editorial independence negatively influences my ability to uphold journalism code of ethics.

1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

12 The standard of journalism practice in Nigeria is improving.
1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

13 My salary is paid regularly by my employer.
1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

14 I accept gifts (in cash or kind) in the course of my professional duties when given.
1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

15 There is no job security for journalists in Nigeria.
1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

16 As a professional journalist, I try to strike a balance between upholding ethical standards and making ends meet.

1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

17 My passion for journalism is still high despite the challenges in the profession.
1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

18 I will quit journalism if I find an opportunity for a better job or position outside the profession.
1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

19 The Nigeria Union of Journalists is doing a lot in fighting for the rights and well-being of journalists.
1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

20 The regulatory bodies for journalism - the National Broadcasting Commission, the Nigerian Press Council - have been working to ensure professional standard in Nigeria.
1( ) Strongly disagree 2( ) Disagree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Agree 5( ) Strongly Agree

21 Journalism is vibrant in Nigeria despite increasing difficulty by various news organisations to stay afloat.
1( ) Strongly Agree 2( ) Agree 3( ) Neutral 4( ) Disagree 5( ) Strongly Disagree

GUIDE FOR SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW

1. How do you spend your typical day as a journalist?

2. Please tell us about your career and motivation as a journalist.

3. What would you say are the contemporary issues influencing journalism in Nigeria?

4. How are those issues affecting you as a professional?

5. How are you responding to them?

6. What do you consider to be good journalism?

7. How would you compare journalism of 20 years ago to today's?

8. How would you rate the level of observance of ethical codes such as objectivity, accuracy, truthfulness, fairness and balance among journalists in Nigeria?

9. Would you say that journalists are well paid in Nigeria?

10. What is your view on the working condition of journalists in Nigeria?

11. How can the standard of journalism in Nigeria be enhanced?

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APPENDIX IV

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM FOR PH.D RESEARCH BY TAYE OBATERU

I, the undersigned, hereby confirm that:

1. I have read and understood the information about the research as provided in the information sheet, and that it is an academic work conducted by Taye Obateru, a PhD student of the University of Salford, Manchester.

2. I volunteer to part of this research as one of the participants to, be interviewed/complete a questionnaire.

3. I understand that I can withdraw at any time without giving any reason.

4. I understand that my confidentiality will remain secure as the researcher will not reveal my personal details in way.

5. I understand that my words may be quoted in the research output.

6. The use of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

7. I agree with the researcher to sign and date this consent form

8. I am keeping a copy of this consent form.

....
Name of Participant   Signature   Date

....
Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

University of Salford MANCHESTER

INVITATION LETTER I

Dear Respondent,

I humbly request you to be part of my project which is a Ph.D research into understanding contemporary challenges of journalism practice in Nigeria, by filling the attached questionnaire. The researcher hopes that getting first hand responses from practicing journalists like you would assist in gaining an understanding of what drives journalism practice in Nigeria. This understanding is expected to foster an appreciation of the peculiarities of professional journalism practice in Nigeria and serve as a reliable contribution to knowledge in discourses on journalism in Nigeria, Africa and the world at large.

The questionnaire is in two parts. The first part seeks your bio-data information for the purpose of the demographic analysis of the data. The second part which is thematic, seeks to get your disposition to statements formulated from issues related to journalism practice in Nigeria.

The research is purely academic and the data collected will be used for no other purpose. The anonymity of respondents is also assured.

Thank you for your prompt attention to this questionnaire.

Yours faithfully,

Taye Obateru.
Email: t.c.obateru@edu.salford.ac.uk
Phone: +447448680218

University of Salford MANCHESTER

INVITATION LETTER II

Dear Respondent,

I humbly request you to be part of my project which is a Ph.D research into understanding contemporary challenges of journalism practice in Nigeria by granting me audience for an interview. The researcher hopes that getting first hand responses from practicing journalists like you would assist in gaining an understanding of what drives journalism practice in Nigeria. This understanding is expected to foster an appreciation of the peculiarities of professional journalism practice in Nigeria and serve as a reliable contribution to knowledge in discourses on journalism in Nigeria, Africa and the world at large.

The semi-structured interview will commence with prepared questions but can touch on other issues considered relevant to the discourse. Subject to your approval, the interview will be recorded and transcribed for accuracy and protection of the data.

The research is purely academic and the data collected will be used for no other purpose. The anonymity of respondents is also assured.

Thank you for your anticipated participation.

Yours faithfully,

Taye Obateru.

Email: t.c.obateru@edu.salford.ac.uk
Phone: +447448680218

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