

NEW MEDIA AND THE STRUGGLE TOWARDS PROFESSIONALISING JOURNALISM PRACTICE IN NIGERIA: WHAT HOPES AND HURDLES ABOUND?

Tordue Simon Targema*, Ampandi Rahab Timothy**, Dorcas Agabison***

*Department of Mass Communication, Taraba State University Jalingo

**Department of Mass Communication, Taraba State Polytechnic Suntai

***Department of English and Literary Studies, Federal University Wukari

Abstract

Professionalising journalism has remained a major concern of stakeholders in the media industry over the years. Concerns over entry requirements, certification, regulation and ethical conduct have preoccupied discourse on the way forward for the media profession the world over. The Nigerian situation is a peculiar one, as the media industry predates the Nigerian state, and started at a time when there was no regulatory framework in place to enforce professional standards. Consequently, journalism practice in the country has remained an every-man affair from its inception to date. The advent of new media platforms that has thrown wide open, the gates of journalism practice to everyone equipped with a mobile cell phone and network service has introduced new complications in discourse on professionalising journalism in the country. In this study, a review of the major concerns over professionalism is undertaken. Hinged on the Social Responsibility Theory, the study argues that the quality of journalism obtainable in every clime depends largely on the extent to which the industry is professionalised. Yet, as the industry accepts the whole gamut of the new media in its day-to-day practice, the seeming convergence between conventional and citizen journalism has blurred the lines dividing professionals from amateurs, and heightened concerns over professionalism. As long as the fusion between the new media and conventional journalism lasts, the study argues that the quest to truly professionalise the media industry in the country remains a difficult one to accomplish, and the industry must adjust to the current realities introduced by the new media, and optimise the platforms to serve the audience optimally.

Keywords: new media, conventional media, professionalism, citizen journalism, journalism practice.

Declaration of conflicting interests: The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

1. INTRODUCTION

Our media ecology is a chaotic landscape evolving at a furious pace. Professional journalists share the journalistic sphere with tweeters, bloggers, citizen journalists, and social media users. Amid every revolution, new possibilities emerge while old practices are threatened. Today is no exception. The economics of professional journalism struggles as audiences migrate online (Ward, 2022, para. 3-4). The advent of

the new media has raised several questions pertaining to contemporary journalism practice. One of these pressing questions is the age-long question of professionalism which has assumed a new status given the strides- and perhaps, reforms- that the new media have introduced on board, the practice of journalism (Deuze, 2005). Professionalism in journalism practice has remained a highly contested issue at all times (Kur & Essien, 2014), and is heightened by the emergence of

digital media applications and platforms which have turned journalism into every-man business. Today, equipped with an android cell phone and internet access, every citizen is a journalist reporting from the remotest destinations with the audio-visual evidence, speed and immediacy that are almost unmatched by conventional journalism.

This practice, perceived to have revolutionised journalism practice the world over (Obalanlege, 2015), has on the other hand contributed significantly to complications that arise in the bid to professionalise journalism practice (Kur & Essien, 2014). As the dividing line between citizens and journalists gets increasingly blurred by technology, more questions arise that seek to define a pathway for professional journalism, and how best to draw the distinction between professional and citizen journalism. Questions such as: who is a journalist? What practices constitute good journalism? How does professionalism apply to the context of new media journalism? What challenges are professional journalists contending with in the face of new media dominance etc. are among the plethora of questions that beg for answers as the new media continue to exert their influence on the process of communication.

In this study, attempt is made to address some of these questions in the light of contemporary practices and realities of the Nigerian journalism landscape. Structured into three main parts, the first section of the study lays the background and defines concepts that are at the heart of the study- journalism, the new media and professionalism. The second part looks at the struggle for professionalising journalism practice in Nigeria while the last section gives a perspective on new concerns of media journalism professionalization in the new media age and charts the way forward for journalism profession in the country.

2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This section gives an overview of the key concepts around which arguments in the study revolve. These concepts are: journalism, the new media and professionalism.

Defining Journalism

Journalism is one of the most important activities that take place in the media industry. Without journalism, the media industry cannot boast of the relevance it commands in the society. Udoakah (2016, p. 24) defines it as “the totality of efforts at gathering, processing, evaluating and disseminating facts about current events, ideas and occurrences under the guidance of editors or producers, through the media of

mass communication.” Against this background, Udoakah describes journalism as the “software” of the media industry, that is, the bye-product that gives the media industry its *locus standi* in society. He notes further that:

In truth, journalism is what makes the mass media popular. Although the mass media do engage in other businesses of a commercial nature, it is doubtful if they could survive without journalism. In other words, take away journalism from the mass media and they would be standing on sinking sand (Udoakah, 2016, p. 33).

In contemporary society, journalism manifests and is expressed in three main forms- broadcast, print and online or web-based journalism. Broadcast journalism utilises the broadcast media of communication- radio and television to disseminate information to the audience. Print journalism on the other hand is expressed via printed platforms such as newspapers, magazines, books, pamphlets, leaflets, billboards and journals etc. (Nwabueze, 2014 and Sambe, 2008); while online journalism is an emerging form of journalism that utilises the internet and its various platforms- weblogs, the social media and other internet-based avenues to reach out to the audience. It is instructive to note that online journalism today provides a converging point for the other strands of journalism- broadcast and print; and has, in fact, blurred the lines between the two hitherto distinctive forms of journalism. What this entails is that journalism today is in its transformative phase. As the dividing line between the various forms gets blurred, media convergence on the internet has emerged as a dominant trend that portends far-reaching implications on the media industry.

The New Media

The new media have emerged as cutting-age innovations in the media industry. Although the term has been used since the 19th Century to describe the advent of modern media platforms- newspapers, magazines, radio and television, its usage in this study describes basically new information and communication technologies such as personal computers, mobile cell phones, digital cameras and other modern gadgets that facilitate the gathering, processing and sharing of information at a massive scale. In its classical usage, the new media describes a brand of journalism characterised by a liberalised

information space where all individuals in the society are active stakeholders in the gathering, dissemination and consumption of information. McQuail (2010) describes the new media in the following terms:

They are multi-directional, not one-directional. They encourage, even require response...they are highly diverse in form and content, and of their essence multimedial and multimodal. They observe no clear line between private and public. They allow access to all and they seem to evade structures of control. They evade institutionalization but, as this implies, they offer no coherent model of a system of public communication, only endless possibilities (p. 452). These features define the new media and highlight their key strength on one hand, and the complications that they have introduced to the media industry, specifically with regards to media engagement and usage pattern by the audience. Put more precisely, McQuail (2010, p. 118) identifies the following as the factors that define the new media:

1. They enable many-to-many conversations;
2. They enable the simultaneous reception, alteration and redistribution of messages;
3. They dislocate communicative action from the posts of the nation, from the territorialised spatial relations of modernity;
4. They provide instantaneous global contact; and
5. They insert the modern/late modern subject into a machine apparatus that is networked.

Accordingly, the new media have come to be identified with the key defining attributes of **immediacy, interactivity, affordability, ubiquity, multimodality, flexibility** and **accessibility**. Notably, apart from providing the distinction between the two media genres, these features also portend far reaching implications on the process of theorising, researching and practicing contemporary communication, as old practices are increasingly redefined and new modes of engagement with the media emerge on a daily basis, making the study and practice of communications in the new media age not only an evolving, but also an engaging one as well.

Perspectives on Professionalism

Professionalism is a widely discussed concept that attracts varied conceptions and conceptualisations. Most of the conceptualisations, however, subscribe to, and modify in some part, the Merriam Webster online dictionary's definition which describes the concept as: "the conduct, aims, or qualities that characterize or mark a profession or a

professional person." This basic definition focuses on the expected conduct-practice, the motives and basic attributes that guide individuals that belong to a certain profession. It emphasises the defining features that marks one out as a professional or otherwise. Notwithstanding this emphasis, however, the definitions did not specifically state what these attributes are, and what precisely should be expected from professionals. A basic question that preoccupies the conceptualisation of professionalism, however, is the precise definition of the term "profession" which, according to Taylor, Grey & Checkland (2017) refers to:

A well-defined group of individuals who had undergone **formal training** to gain a body of **specialised knowledge** in order to carry out a particular form of work, over which they had **monopoly** and **self-regulation**, in return for placing the interests of others before themselves (p.3).

These key terms itemised above set the tone for the intellectual discussion of what a profession is. For instance, members of a professional body are expected- by this definition- to undergo formal training in their chosen profession, acquire specialised skills that are unique to the profession and not generally known to everyone- which in turn amounts to a sort of *monopoly* over the profession, and adhering strictly to laid down rules by way of self-regulation, or professional regulations binding on all members. Indeed, the presence of professional regulatory bodies and councils help to ensure that members of the various professions adhere to these rules or codes guiding the practice of the profession. Andreassen & Natland (2022, p.2) emphasise that at the heart of conceptualisations of professionalism are the concerns over such issues as "expert knowledge; the autonomy to employ specialised knowledge in individual cases; and a normative service orientation and code of ethics."

Calls for professionalism, historically, increased when quarks infiltrated almost every profession and were offering the services that were supposed to be offered basically by professionals. The concomitant abuses that characterise this trend across professions led to heightened concerns over who a professional is, what is a profession and how best professionalism could be attained. This led to what literature on professionalism describe as professional consciousness, and professional bodies emerged to set professional standards across the various professions such as medical practice, dental practice, legal practice etc. (Taylor, Grey & Checkland, 2017; Evans, 2008).

As the trend of professionalism swept through

the various professions, complications arise in truly professionalising certain fields of human endeavour. Journalism is one of these fields, and this birthed one of the age-long questions of whether journalism is a profession or a vocation. The Hutchins Commission in the 1940s emerged to address some of these early concerns over professionalism (see Blanchard, 1977). Concerns over professionalism were borne out of the difficulty to effectively implement the defining features of a profession- expert training, specialised knowledge, monopoly and regulation- into journalism practice, especially in developing societies. The following section takes a closer look on the struggle to professionalise journalism and the concomitant concerns that characterise the process.

Theoretical Framework

This study is hinged on the **Social Responsibility Theory**. The theory provides the basis for anchoring discussions on media professionalism. According to Sambe (2008), the theory is the offshoot of the Hutchins Commission on Freedom of the Press and Practitioner's Media in 1947. This theory draws the attention of journalists to the fact that they have freedom attached with responsibility to the society. Coming at a time the press had just attained freedom from the shackles of authoritarian rulers in Europe and America, such a call would not have been necessary but for the fact that journalists were already abusing the freedom occasioned by libertarianism (Baran & Davis, 2010). Yellow journalism and sensational journalism flourished during this era. Having fought and won the fight for press freedom, reverting back to authoritarianism was not the issue as such, but how to manage the freedom through self-moderation and ethical practice. Social responsibility theory, thus, emerged as a solution, proffered by the Hutchins Commission which was convened to look into the issues of abuses and allegations of unprofessional conduct levelled against the press (refer to Bitner, 1989, Sambe, 2008, Nwabueze, 2014 and Littlejohn and Foss, 2009).

Central to the theory is the fact that the press has the right to criticize government and institutions, but also has certain basic responsibilities to perform in order to maintain the stability of society. Nurturing this theory was the rise of professional associations associated with journalism practice and the media industry globally; such as the American Society of Newspaper Editors, the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Nigerian Guild of Editors etc., and the evolution of codes of conduct/ethics that encourage responsible action by their members. Bitner, (1989:348-349) captures the thrust of the theory thus: "within the

framework of open and free press criticism, codes of ethics or government regulation, and guidelines for responsible action by members of the press lies the social responsibility theory". McQuail (2010, p.147) itemises the core tenets of the theory as follows:

1. The media have obligations to society, and media ownership is a public trust;
2. News media should be truthful, accurate, fair, objective and relevant;
3. The media should be free, but self-regulated;
4. The media should follow agreed codes of ethics and professional conduct;
5. Under some circumstances, government may need to intervene to safeguard the public interest

These tenets seek to professionalize journalism practice with the view to riding it of the abuses it came to be associated with at the turn of the 20th Century when the technology of communication was significantly improved upon and "mass communication" became a reality. It is against this background that this study considers the theory a suitable framework to anchor discussions of the new media and the struggle towards professionalizing journalism practice in Nigeria.

Professionalism and Journalism Practice: the Nigerian Experience

Professionalising journalism practice has not been an easy task or experience. Deuze (2005, p.3) notes that communication scholars over the years have described journalism professionalization process as: "a distinctly ideological development, as the emerging ideology served to continuously refine and reproduce a consensus about who was a 'real' journalist, and what (parts of) news media at any time would be considered examples of 'real' journalism." Deuze notes the complications that arise among scholars over the years to precisely define what journalism professionalization entails, and interrogates how ideological issues- such as "emerging sociocultural and socioeconomic issues stand to transform ways of thinking about and doing journalism" (Deuze, 2005, p. 2). These ideological concepts have introduced complications on how journalism profession is understood- and indeed, practiced in different sociocultural settings across the globe. Ruggiero, Karadimitriou, Lo, Núñez-Mussa, Bomba, & Sallusti (2022) note that:

Throughout the last quarter of the twentieth century, journalism has had a solid tradition of professional values,

which have survived against a backdrop of transformations within the media field. These values compose an “enduring professional ethos”, incorporating the notion of a public service mission with notions of objectivity, accuracy, and fairness, reflecting core standards connected to journalists’ need to behave professionally (p. 309).

The import of this position impresses on journalists, their professional mandate of responsibility to the audience, which places premium on ethical practice, conscious of the core values that have remained dear to journalism profession over the decades. To attain these, training and regulation are required, and serve as key indicators of the degree to which journalism practice is professionalized in any society. Yet, regulating entry into the profession remains one of the greatest contentions. For instance, unlike other professions that place strict premium on training and certification for admission into the fold, journalism profession has had to contend- over the years- with an influx of practitioners derived from other fields of study who lay claim to *passion* and possession of the *requisite* skills to be journalists (Baran & Davis, 2010). Indeed, the practical nature of the profession breeds this complication, as media entrepreneurs are more inclined to hire people, they can afford to pay instead of people with the right skill set and academic certifications. But what becomes of the ethical standards expected of practitioners? Do these new entrants who possess the right skills and competencies without the requisite certifications understand the ethical demand of the profession and abide by it strictly in the course of their operations?

The Nigerian situation is uniquely peculiar to note. First and foremost, Nigerian journalism predates the country’s independence (Shehu, 2017). Coming at a time when the legal framework governing journalism practice was not in place, journalists in the geographical enclaves that were later collapsed into the contemporary Nigerian state were largely at liberty to define the profession in their own personal terms at the beginning, in the words of Shehu (2017, p.3): “there was none (regulatory framework) in place to define the requirement, composition and operations of the players in the industry. [Thus] Nigerian journalism was dominated, from the beginning by people drawn from several pools.” Typically, people who had very little- or no background of journalism at all- set the pace for journalism practice in the country. Agbaje, cited in Shehu (2017, p.3) notes that these comprised basically

of artisans and “commercially frustrated local elites driven out of business by unfair competition from European monopolists, the unemployed, those sacked from jobs in ailing European firms, dropouts from other professions, etc.”

With this initial orientation, it is obvious that journalism profession in Nigeria was, from the beginning, destined to suffer for a very long time from infiltration of outsiders (Ude-Akpe & Ukwella, 2017). It took over a century of journalism practice in Nigeria before the first department of journalism offering undergraduate degree was introduced at the University of Nigeria, Nsukka. All these contributed to the initial challenges of professionalizing journalism practice in the country. Today, the Nigerian media industry has come of age with several legislations, statutory bodies, regulatory bodies and professional associations saddled with the responsibility of setting, enforcing and maintaining standards. Such bodies as the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Newspapers Proprietors Association of Nigeria, Broadcasting Organisation of Nigeria, the Nigerian Press Council, and the Nigerian Guild of Editors among a host of other professional and statutory bodies set and enforce standards of journalism practice in the country.

The question begging for answers are, however, the extent to which provisions of such professional and statutory bodies explicitly define borders and standards governing the profession, and most importantly, how these are adhered to in the strictest of terms like obtained in other professions, how sanctions are meted on defaulters and what mechanisms are in place for enforcing these provisions in the interest of professionalism. These concerns are effectively documented in academic literature (see Fab-Ukozor, 2011; Onyebuchi, Obayi, Udorah & Onwukwaluonye, 2019; Shehu, 2017).

Towards Professionalizing Journalism Practice in Nigeria: The Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists

Documented records indicate that efforts towards professionalising journalism profession in Nigeria dates back to the 1970s with the emergence of professional bodies in the field. The Nigerian Union Press Council (NUJ), for instance, enacted a code of ethics in 1979 to ensure professional conduct of journalists. Subsequently, relevant professional bodies in the media industry such as the Nigerian Union of Journalists and the Nigerian Guild of Editors among others endorsed and reviewed the code of ethics to reflect all the germane issues that are crucial towards ensuring professional conduct of journalists (see Momoh, 2003, Nwabueze, 2009, Nwabueze, 2012 and Nwabueze, 2014). The code recognizes that “truth is

the cornerstone of journalism and every journalist should strive diligently to ascertain the truth of every event.” The code, which is supposed to be binding on all journalists operating in the country states categorically in the preamble that:

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. Truth is the cornerstone of journalism and every journalist should strive diligently to ascertain the truth of every event. Conscious of the responsibilities and duties of journalists as purveyors of information, we, Nigerian journalist, give to ourselves this Code of Ethics. It is the duty of every journalist to observe its provisions (*see Code of Ethics for Nigerian Journalists 1998:1*).

Consequently, a comprehensive rundown of the various issues that would make journalism practice in the country truly professionalised is contained in the code as follows:

1. Editorial independence
2. Accuracy and fairness
3. Privacy
4. Privilege / non-disclosure
5. Decency
6. Discrimination
7. Reward and gratification
8. Violence
9. Children and minors
10. Access of information
11. Public interest
12. Social responsibility
13. Plagiarism
14. Copyright
15. Press freedom and responsibility

Customarily, this code is expected to serve as a guide to journalists in the discharge of their duties and responsibilities. The various professional and statutory bodies that endorse the code are expected to use their internal mechanisms of decorum and enforce it on journalists in the country. Similarly, journalists in the country are expected to, on their own, adhere to the

code in their day-to-day operations. How well they do so is a different issue all-together, as Gambo (2013:105) laments that: “the challenge remains whether journalists, proprietors and managers of media organizations are adequately educated and willing to adhere to these principles within the on-going democratic experiment.” Another major weakness of the code is its inability to define precisely who a journalist is, and what basic criteria in terms of training and skillset an individual must possess to become one. Ude-Akpeh & Ukwella (2017) amplify this concern, thus:

The Nigerian media cannot be fully referred to as a profession. Although, the Nigeria Union of Journalists parades a code of Conduct in which it refers to the union as a professional body as well as a trade union...the code fails to state or identify the body of knowledge to be imbibed by its members. Again, the membership provision is so loose that anybody that has anything to do with media organization can call him/herself a journalist. The provision provides for public relations Officers/Practitioners, those who are employed as editorial staff, those who had completed a probationary period of 12 months, etc. to be called journalists without stating any minimum qualifications (p. 13).

These deficits render the profession porous to intruders who have very scant or no regard at all to the code (Ibbi, 2016). And as I will show in the next section, the advent of new media platforms has complicated this challenge and increased its enormity. Notwithstanding these deficiencies, however, this code of ethics provides a stepping stone towards professionalising journalism in the country. Its endorsement by several professional associations and statutory bodies such as the NUJ, NAWOJ, and NPO etc. is an indication of the its perceived potentials to ensure ethical practice among practitioners. More to this, however, it is instructive to note that other professional bodies within the media industry such as NIPR and APCON have also evolved ethical codes to ensure a healthy atmosphere for the practice of journalism in the country (Agbanu, 2011). All these could be described as efforts towards professionalising journalism practice in the country. But the basic question which this study seeks to address is: to what extent has the advent of the new media complicated the struggle towards professionalising journalism practice in Nigeria?

The New Media, Journalism Practice and Professionalism in Nigeria

The new media phenomenon is 21st Century's gift to humanity that has, almost completely, transformed the process of information gathering, acquisition, processing, treatment, dissemination and consumption (Suntai & Targema, 2017). Courtesy of digital technologies, the information world today is liberalised, the gap between information producers and consumers has become so narrow that communication scholars have invented the term "prosumers" to describe a communication scenario where the producers and consumers of information constantly swap roles. Fisher (2015, p.125) acknowledges that "recent developments in digital technology, particularly the internet and Web 2.0, have led to a new mode of production which blurs the longstanding distinction between producers and consumers, authors and readers, speakers and audience."

Citizen journalism has emerged as one of the major communication trends of the 21st Century, courtesy of this digital revolution. Armed with a mobile cell phone and internet connection today, every citizen is a journalist within their domain, breaking serious news stories that sometimes occupy the front page of newspapers for weeks. The #EndSARS protest for instance that became one of the major news events in Nigeria 2020 started with amateur videos that trended on social media, thereby sparking the kind of protest that has never been witnessed before in the country's recent history (Moses, Targema & Ishaku, 2022). The power of the new media to enable for audio-visual reportage of events from the remotest settings has conferred on every citizen, the status of a journalist.

The various attributes of the platforms- immediacy, interactivity, affordability, ubiquity, multimodality, flexibility and accessibility- (McQualil, 2010) enable them to anchor a kind of journalism practice that is highly participatory, evidence-based and impactful. Convergence which is another phenomenon of 201st Century technology-facilitated journalism leverages the new media avenues that melt all communication endeavours unto the various digital platform. Obviously, the scope of journalism today is beyond what was initially understood, as technology continues to open the doors of many into the field, discharging the roles and responsibilities that were, hitherto, exclusively reserved for professional journalists. Obalanlege (2015, p. 70) observes that "judging from the manner in which news today is conceptualised, gathered, produced and consumed by audiences, it is increasingly necessary to investigate how the use of Smartphone, internet and email

technologies are imparting on daily journalistic practices."

Journalism as a profession has embraced these developments and has continued to evolve beyond the confines of the newsroom, and reaching a larger and more specialised audience. Documented evidence indicates that journalists and newsrooms have embraced the whole gamut of the new media in the business of news gathering, processing and dissemination. According to Obalange (2015, p. 76), "today's interactive era is one where Smartphones, personal computers, and tablets have dominated journalism operations and in turn this has improved the quality of newsgathering, and by extension, the news content in Nigeria." The seaming marriage between citizen journalism and conventional journalism further extends the impact of the new media on the media industry.

However, as this trend continues to sweep through the media industry, fresh concerns over professionalism have emerged and have heightened the age-long struggle of professionalising the industry. Academic literature interrogates if journalism has become an every-man affair, and what the implications of this development are. The proliferation of citizen journalists and their overbearing influence on the information space has complicated the task of entrenching professionalism. Most amateur citizen journalists have scant or no regard for ethical conduct. This is an issue that the media industry is contending with ever since the trend of citizen journalism started exerting domineering influence on the field. In a fragile multi-ethnic and diverse setting like Nigeria, the overheated nature of the online platforms which are already replete with false and misleading information, hate and dangerous speeches and contents that eschew all norms and cherished values of conventional journalism portend grave dangers to the industry. The new media have increased the complications of the struggle towards professionalising journalism practice as more people get admitted into the industry courtesy of liberalised technological avenues. Kur & Essien (2014) aver that:

The extreme freedom associated with the new media renders many people, without any formal journalistic training, journalists. With this, very many cases of unethical practices are the case. Similarly, the nature of new media makes it extremely difficult to regulate its usage. All these are in opposition to a number of general criteria of professionalism. With these overwhelming evidences, the position

of the paper is that, at present, the new media work against journalistic professionalism than for it (p.1).

What this portends is that although the new media revolutionize journalism practice today and introduced innovations that have far-reaching impacts on the industry and its mission of information dissemination and consumption, it has also created more complications in the struggle to effectively professionalise the industry to enable it serve the audience optimally. This is a reality that the industry has come to acknowledge and live within the enduring courtship of technology and latest trends.

3. CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

The struggle to professionalise journalism has come a long way. As this study unravels, early concerns over professionalism emerged as soon as the modern mass media acquired their pride of place as important social institutions in the society, and were to be sooner or later, subject to intensive abuses occasioned by non-professional conduct. However, nearly a Century into the struggle, journalism is far from being professionalised as earlier envisaged. Concerns over training, certification, membership and regulation have not been satisfactorily addressed, especially in developed settings like Nigeria. Socioeconomic and political realities as well as historical antecedents contribute largely to this logjam. Yet, as the media industry strives hard to navigate the logjam and emerge strong as a true profession, the advent of the new media is exerting a serious toll on efforts to attain this long-sought professionalism.

Notably, the new media present very unique opportunities to the media industry. The opportunities they have introduced in the industry are unprecedented. This fact is acknowledged even by ICT sceptics. Yet, within the confines of discourse on professionalism, communication scholarship is unanimous in the conclusion that the new media have introduced more complications than solutions. As long as the industry imbibes the whole gamut of the new media into its fold, the struggle for true professionalism remains a mirage, as the dividing lines between professionals in the field and amateur citizen journalists continue to blur by the day, paving the way for more concretised courtships that have become the new normal in the industry today.

Acknowledgements: the authors acknowledge the insightful perspectives of Professor Nkereuwem Udoakah and Dr Nsikan Senam which contributed enormously toward developing this article.

References

1. Agbanu, V. (2011). Ethical and legal issues in public relations practice. In V. Agbanu & C. Nwabueze (Eds.), *Readings in Mass Communication: Global Perspectives on Communication issues* (pp. 328-341). Owerri: Topshelve Publishers.
2. Andreassen, T.A. & Natland, S. (2022) The meaning of professionalism in activation work: frontline managers' perspectives, *European Journal of Social Work*, 25(4), 630-642, DOI: 10.1080/13691457.2020.1783212
3. Baran, S., Davis, K. (2010). *Mass communication theory: Foundations, ferment, and future*, (6th ed.). Boston: Wadsworth Cengage Learning.
4. Bitner, J. (1987). *Mass communication: An introduction*. 5thEd. Prentice Hall: New Jersey.
5. Blanchard, M.A. (1977). The Hutchins Commission, the press and the responsibility concept. *Journalism Monographs*, 49, 1-64.
6. *Code of ethics for Nigerian journalists* (1998). Retrieved online from <http://Code-of-ethics-for-Nigerian-journalists-pdf>. Accessed, 06-04-2017
7. Deuze, M. (2005). What is journalism? Professional identity and ideology of journalists reconsidered. *Journalism Theory Practice & Criticism*, 6(4), 442-464. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884905056815>
8. Fab-Ukozor, N. (2011). Ethical responsibility and professionalism in journalism practice. In V. Agbanu & C. Nwabueze (Eds.), *Readings in Mass Communication: Global Perspectives on Communication Issues* (pp. 291-299). Owerri: Topshelve Publishers.
9. Fisher, E. (2015). The dialectics of prosumption in the digital age. In O. Frayssé & M. O'Neil (Eds.), *Digital Labour and Prosumer Capitalism: The US Matrix* (125-144). Houndmills: Palgrave Macmillan.
10. Gambo, D. (2013). Media ethics, professionalism and reportage of the electoral reform process in Nigeria. In U. Pate, C. Nwabueze & N. Idiong (Eds.), *Politics, Culture and the Media in Nigeria* (pp. 101-122). Ibadan: Stirling Horden Publishers Ltd.

11. Ibbi, A.A. (2016). The battle for professionalism in journalism in Nigeria amidst unethical practices. *Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism* 6: 301. doi:10.4172/2165-7912.1000301
12. Littlejohn, S.W., Foss, K.A. (2009). *Encyclopedia of communication theory*. SAGE: New Delhi
13. Kur, J.T. & Essien, C. (2014). Do New Media Make the Practice of Journalism More or Less a Profession? *New Media and Mass Communication*, 21, 56-63.
14. McQuail, D. (2010). *McQuail's mass communication theory*. London: SAGE
15. Merriam Webster Online Dictionary: *professionalism*. Retrieved from <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/professionalism> . Accessed on 13th November, 2022.
16. Momoh, P.T. (2003). Codes of conduct for Nigerian journalists: appraising the old and the new codes. In R. Akinfelaye, & I. Okoye, (Eds), *Issues in Nigerian media history 1900-2000* (pp. 141-152). Lagos: Malthouse publishers limited.
17. Moses, M.J., Targema, T.S. & Ishaku, J. (2022). Tale of an ill-fated scapegoat: National security and the struggle for state-regulation of social media in Nigeria. *Journal of Digital Media & Policy*, article first, https://doi.org/10.1386/jdmp_00100_1
18. Nwabueze, C (2014). *Introduction to mass communication: media ecology in the global village*. Owerri: Topshelve Publishers.
19. Obalanlege, A. (2015). Journalism practice and new media in Nigeria: An exploratory analysis of journalism culture and practice in Nigeria. *New Media and Mass Communication*, 41, 67-78.
20. Onyebuchi, C.A., Obayi, P.M., Udorah, C.M. & Onwukwaluonye, B. (2019). Evaluation of adherence of journalists to the codes of journalism practice in Enugu State. *African Journal of Social Sciences*, 9(1), 13-37
21. Ruggiero, C., Karadimitriou, A., Lo, W. H., Núñez-Mussa, E., Bomba, M., & Sallusti, S. (2022). The professionalisation of journalism: Global trends and the challenges of training and job insecurity. In J. Trappel, & T. Tomaz (Eds.), *Success and failure in news media performance: Comparative analysis in the Media for Democracy Monitor 2021* (pp. 309-335). Nordicom, University of Gothenburg. <https://doi.org/10.48335/9789188855589-15>
22. Sambe, J. (2008). *Introduction to mass communication practices in Nigeria*. Ibadan: Spectrum Books
23. Shehu, A.O. (2017). Professionalism and journalism in Nigeria: Emerging issues and challenges. *Ilorin Journal of Humanities*, 10(15), 1-15.
24. Suntai, D.I., Targema, T.S. (2017). New media and democracy in Nigeria: An appraisal of the opportunities and threats in the terrain. *Brazilian Journal of African Studies*, 2(4), 198-209.
25. Taylor, C., Grey, N., & Checkland, K. (2017). Professionalism... it depends where you're standing. *British Dental Journal*, 222, 889 - 892. <https://doi.org/10.1038/sj.bdj.2017.502>
26. Ude-Akpeh, C.E. & Ukwella, C.O. (2017). Professionalization of Media Practice in Nigeria: An Analytical Survey. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science*, 22(6), 8-18.
27. Udoakah, N. (2016). *The political economy of Nigerian journalism*. 56th Inaugural Lecture, University of Uyo. Uyo: University of Uyo Press Ltd.
28. Ward, S.J.A. (2022). Digital Media Ethics. Retrieved from <https://ethics.journalism.wisc.edu/resources/digital-media-ethics/> Accessed on 21st October, 2022.

UNDERGRADUATES AND MEDIA REPORTING OF WAR: EDO STATE UNIVERSITY STUDENTS' PERCEPTION OF RUSSIA-UKRAINIAN WAR

Peter Eshioke Egielewa*, Elfreda Jesuseme Oratokhai*, Mary Chiamaka Ijita*,
Omegie Glory Balogun*, Uche David Chiwuzo*, Faith Aisosa Ikponmwosa*

*Department of Mass Communication, Edo State University Uzairue, Edo State, Nigeria

Abstract

The paper interrogates the extent to which 120 randomly selected students of Edo State University Uzairue, Nigeria perceives the Russian-Ukrainian war. Using the quantitative approach and based on the conflict perception theories, the results show that most Nigerian Undergraduates do not follow the Russian-Ukrainian war. Results also show Nigerian Undergraduates who follow the war do so via the social media platforms of Instagram and Twitter and they get their information on the war from social media because they trust information such information. The study concludes that Nigerian Undergraduates are not interested in the Russian-Ukraine war because it is a proxy war between Russia and the West and do not want to get themselves entangled in what is not their business. The study recommends that Nigerian undergraduates should be interested in the war because it has wider implications that have consequences for the entire globe.

Keywords: Undergraduates, war, students, Russia, Ukraine, Nigeria

Declaration of conflicting interests: The Authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

INTRODUCTION

Tensions between Russia and Crimea have existed since early 2000. This escalated in early 2014 with the annexation of Crimea by Russia and pro-Russian separatists. On 14th February 2022, Russia invaded Ukraine in what has been termed the “Russian-Ukraine” war. Since the invasion, there have been varied reactions and perceptions from people around the globe, including in Nigeria (Adeoye, 2022; Muller, 2022).

Around the world, there have been divergent views about the war. In Russia, for instance, where the media is tightly controlled, polls suggest that Russians have 65% to 71% support for the invasion (Echosec Systems, 2022). In many Russia-based media, including mainstream and social media, the term 'war' is not used

to represent the invasion. Instead appealing terms like “special military operation”, “military action” and “peacekeeping mission” are used. Similarly, the heavy destruction of cities, casualties, heavy weaponry, civilian evacuations, or Russian losses are not shown on Russian media and US and NATO members are blamed for inciting the conflict and posing a great threat to Russia to which Russia is responding by invading Ukraine to “liberate” Ukrainians from the “Nazis” in what Putin has labelled the “special military operation” (Echosec Systems, 2022; Dixon, 2022; Muller (2022).

The Russian-Ukraine war has been covered by thousands of journalists and hundreds of media organisations including freelancers on mainstream media and social media such as Twitter, Telegram, and

Ukrainians generally relied on the internet and specifically on the social media Facebook, Instagram and Twitter which was the reason why Russian soldiers immediately after the capture of any Ukrainian city proceeded to shut down both cellular networks and the internet forcing Ukrainian citizens to get information only from Moscow-controlled and censored news outlet. This is because controlling the perception of the war was an important strategy for the warring nations (Cherkaoui, 2022; Flanagan, 2022). However, Flanagan (2022) posits that there are not a lot of verification issues with the use of social media as it can be difficult ascertaining where the information is coming from (Egielewa, 2021b). The reliance on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter appears to negate findings by Egielewa (2021a) and Egielewa et al (2021c) which showed that Nigerian undergraduates consumed Whatsapp social media platform the most.

Volkov and Kolesnikov (2022) in a sociological study of Russians between February and August 2022 in four regions of Russia found out an overwhelming percentage of Russians trusted information on the Russian-Ukraine war from television because they saw it as a credible source of “official information.” Many of the Russians felt the Western media were anti-Russia and so trusted majorly Russian Television channels and even believed that internet sources were generally influenced by Western ideologies and were not objectives and could also be classified as anti-Russia. These data have shown that “information about what is happening in Ukraine today is being received and interpreted within the echo chambers of respondents’ long-held ideas about Russia and about broader processes that have been taking place across the former Soviet Union, Europe, and the world” (Volkov & Kolesnikov, 2022, p. 11). The import of this is that people already have ideological convictions about geopolitical conflicts and these affect their reliance on any media coming from certain regions or countries. However, Volkov and Kolesnikov (2022) also found that trust in television and internet sources was declining steadily.

Adeoye (2022) opines that many Africans have decided not to get themselves entangled in the war as they perceive the war as being a proxy war between Russia and the West. Generally, however, Africans believe that the war shouldn’t have happened in the first place.

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on conflict theory and the theory of perception.

Theory of Conflict

The theory of conflict seeks to explain in a scientific way the general contours of conflicts in society including how they start and vary and the effects they bring. In other words, it tries to decipher the dynamics that create social and economic inequality in different contexts. In general, the theory of conflict concerns itself with the issues of the unequal distribution of scarce resources which have been generally accepted to be those Weber classified into three, namely: class, status, and power, with power being the most intriguing feature of society and most dominating of the three. Power, in itself, isn't necessarily bad, it is the interplay of its deployment relating to poverty, inequalities, revolutions and war that determines how it is perceived, whether positive or negative (Dahrendorf & Collins, 2006; Oberschall, 1978).

Conflict theory has been traced to Chinese Philosopher Han Fei Tzu who argued that men were intrinsically weak and lazy and can only be controlled by the punishment which the ruling class executes. Their resistance to that control often leads to conflict right from the earliest times (Inyundele, n.d). In the modern era, the German philosopher Karl Marx is often referred to as the father of conflict theory in the 19th century in which he posited that competition over limited resources was an inherent part of every society. In explaining the capitalist society, Marx avers that the society is divided into two classes, a ruling bourgeoisie and an oppressed proletariat (aka working class) in which the ruling class tries to maintain social order through the domination and exploitation of the working class (Dahrendorf & Collins, 2006; Oberschall, 1978; Hayes, 2022).

Theory of Perception

The theory of perception refers to the process of acquiring and processing information (Démuth, 2013). Many scholars posit that the world is made up mainly of perceptions, images or ideas. Two schools of interest that are of particular interest to perception theorists depend on the direction of information flow. In the first school, the bottom-up perception theories, perception starts at the lowest sensory levels or most distant levels of cognitive apparatus and then gradually leads to more complicated and complex processes and a more global and abstract thought pattern. In the second school, the top-down perception theories, perception starts from “feeling” sensory data on receptors, but the processing in terms of the influence of higher cognitive contents declines. In order words, in

Tiktok, in which the devastating impacts of the war have been documented for the global audience, including the wider political, social and economic impacts (Eddy & Fletcher, 2022).

In a survey of 1000 respondents from 5 countries, Brazil, Germany, Poland, the UK, and the US, to gauge the perception of citizens about the war in April 2022, data showed that citizens overwhelmingly followed the war and were interested in issues around the war and citizens of the selected countries followed the event of the war predominantly via the television (39.6%) followed by online site of major news organisations (17.6%), social media (12%) and radio (6.2%) in descending order. Print media (2.6%) was the least patronised (Eddy & Fletcher, 2022). In terms of the citizens' perception of the performance of the media in the coverage of the war, most citizens believe the media coverage was good as shown in Figure 1 below.

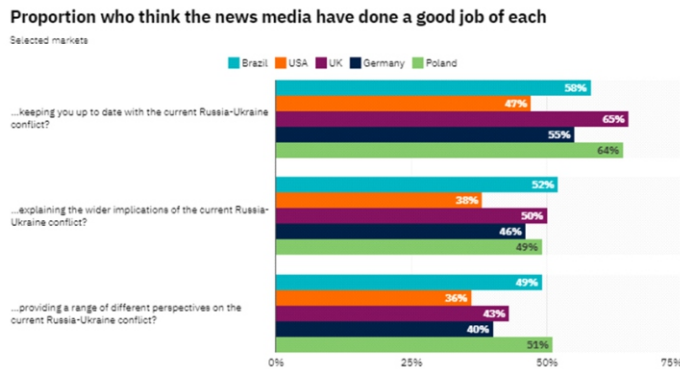


Figure 1: Perception of citizens of Brazil, Germany, Poland, UK, and US on the performance of the media in the coverage of the Russian-Ukraine war.

Source: Khatsenkova & Holroyd, 2022

In Russia, media outlets such as the pro-Kremlin Channel One report on the negative implications of the war on many western citizens due to the sanctions they imposed on Russia and the destructions in Ukraine are hardly shown. Thus, many Russians are presented with the view that the Ukraine invasion of Ukraine by Putin is a fight for the survival of Russia (Khatsenkova & Holroyd, 2022; Oleinik, 2022) in which as of June 2022 75% of Russians still support the war against Ukraine although in March 2022 shortly after the invasion, the Russian support for the war was 81%, an indication that the public support of the war was waning albeit slowly (Volkov & Kolesnikov, 2022). Many of those whose support for the war was declining were those who were able to get information from independent news sources which include a tiny percentage of Russians who have access to services like Virtual Private Networks (VPN) and can bypass the

Government's strict control of media content and see what happens in Ukraine (Panwar, 2022).

Similarly, more than half of Indonesian social media users have a positive perception of the war because they believe Putin is a strong leader and is "brave" to be able to fight against the West (Dharmaputra, 2022). In a Bloom Consulting study of 1500 citizens from 43 countries across the globe carried out between 28 March and 3 April 2022, findings show that global citizens had a 54% positive perception of Russia and 10% for Russia. Conversely, 75% had a negative perception of Russia compared to 23% negative impression of Ukraine (Statista.com, 2022).

Based on the above studies, there have not been known studies on the perception of Africans on the Russian-Ukrainian war. This study intends to fill this gap but with special emphasis on the perception of Nigerians but specifically the sub-sect of students with the expectation that this will give a glimpse of how Nigerians nay Africans perceive the war.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions will guide this study.

Rq1: To what extent do students follow the Russian-Ukraine war?

RQ2: Through what media platforms do the students follow the Russian-Ukraine war?

RQ3: To what extent do students trust information received on the Russian-Ukraine war?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Generally, people understand wars and conflicts based on what they gather from the media. This also depends on which media consumers have access to. Citizens in the Global North have more varieties of media from which they get information on wars and conflicts. On the other hand, people from the global south access information on wars and conflicts from limited sources. For those who live in dictatorial nations, such limited access is further restricted by their governments. People's perception of a war or a conflict can be affected by the angle from which the media report or present such conflicts such as the real causes, the effects, the victors, the victims, the perpetrators, etc. Some experts opine that in war, "the control of communications outweighs the control of the geographical territory," such that what and where people get information about the war is crucial (Cherkaoui, 2022).

the top-down perception, to process sensory stimulus to organize and form cognitive contents, one needs to have a prior experience or knowledge or other helpful similar influences (Démuth, 2013). Some scholars (Brown, 2008; Sollberger, 2015; Zigman, 2018) argue that perception is mind-dependent whether the objects of perception arise from colours, shapes and sounds. Such mind-dependent perception can be largely subjective which enables the individuals to have a representation of that which is perceived (Brown, 2008; Sollberger, 2015). That representation, thus, helps the subjects of the perception to understand and event to some extent explain the external material world. Some authors call this kind of perception “representative realism” (Zigman, 2018).

Perceptual experience involves two components: The sensory and the conceptual. The sensory component is a conscious internal state that possesses phenomenal qualities which are known through the human senses of touch, sight, smell, hearing, and taste. The conceptual component involves the classification of concepts. Here, one can be to separate apples from oranges because of the qualities experienced at the sensory level. This enables one to put things in their proper perspective and place them in their proposer contexts (Zigman, 2018).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey design was used in the study with the tool of the questionnaire with structured questions sent via Google Form to students of Edo State University Uzairue Nigeria between 1st and 30th April 2022. The questionnaire was distributed to 200 students with only 120 returned for analysis.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	30	25
Female	90	75
Total	120	100

Table 1: Respondents' gender

Age	Frequency	Percentage (%)
17-29	39	32.5
21-25	78	65
25-30	3	2.5
Total	120	100

Table 2: Respondents' age

Level	Frequency	Percentage (%)
100	16	13.4
200	17	14.3
300	21	17.6
400	61	50.4
500	5	4.2
Total	120	100

Table 3: Respondents' educational status

RQ1: To what extent did you follow the Russian-Ukraine war?

Time	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Daily	14	11.6
Weekly	27	22.3
Sometimes	73	60.3
Never	6	5.8
Total	120	100

Data from Table 4 above show that Nigerians did not follow the Russian-Ukraine war as 66.1% of the respondents paid little or no attention to the war while 33.99% of Nigerians followed the war. In other words, 2 out of every 3 Nigerians were not interested in the

Russian-Ukraine war while only 1 out of 3 Nigerians paid any serious attention to the war.

RQ2: Through what media platforms do the students follow the Russian-Ukraine war?

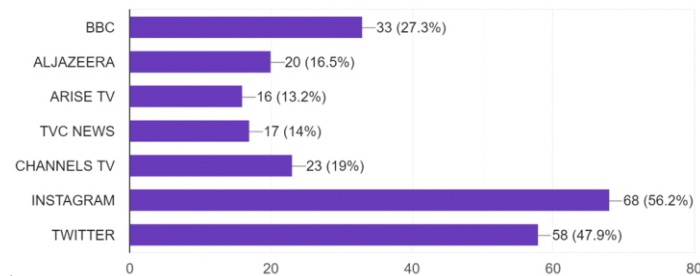


Figure 2. Media platforms through which respondents followed the Russian-Ukraine.

From Figure 2, data show that a significant percentage (54%/n=126) of Nigerians who followed and monitored the Russian-Ukraine war got their information majorly from online sources, particularly Instagram and Twitter. A quarter of respondents (24%/n=56) for their news on the war from local TV news channels such as Arise, Channelstv and TVC. The least source of information on the war came from the International TV sources such as BBC and Aljazeera (22%/n=50). This implies that Nigerians are increasingly trusting online sources and particularly social media (Instagram and Twitter) for important international news. In other words, 2 out of every 4 Nigerian rely on social media for information on the Russian-Ukraine war.

RQ3: To what extent do you trust the information on the platforms that you used?

Depth	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very Large Extent	24	20.7
Large Extent	80	66.1
Low Extent	15	12.4
Very Low Extent	1	0.8
Total	120	100

Table 5: Extent to which respondents trust the information received on the Russian-Ukraine war.

While Figure 2 indicates that Nigerians rely on social media for their news on the Russian-Ukraine war, data from Table 5 above show that most Nigerians trust social media sources for information on the war. In fact, an overwhelming 86.8% (n=104) trust social media sources. In other words, approximately, 9 out of 10 Nigerians who got their information on the war from

Instagram and Twitter trust those sources for credible information on the war.

DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Findings show that, in general, Nigerian undergraduates were not interested and did not follow the war as only one in three Nigerian undergraduates followed the war. This is maybe connected with the finding of Adeoye (2022) that Africans in general saw the Russian-Ukraine war as a proxy war between Russia and the West and did not want to get involved in the fight of the titans. Findings also reveal that most Nigerian undergraduates get their information on the war from social media, particularly Instagram and Twitter. This aligns with the findings by Cherkaoui (2022) and Flanagan (2022) who found that social media especially social media, was the major source of information for Ukrainians. Similarly, the use of the social media platforms of Facebook, Instagram and Twitter which the most used by the Ukrainians to get information on the war. This finding negates studies by Egielewa (2021a) and Egielewa et al (2021c) that established that Whatsapp was the most consumed by Nigerian undergraduates.

This shows that increasingly Nigerian undergraduates are increasingly relying on social media for vital and critical information in times of crisis. This was revealed by findings that an overwhelming 9 and of 10 Nigerians trust information from social media despite the possibility and inherent dangers that fake news can be easily disseminated on social media.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Based on the findings above it can be concluded that Nigerian undergraduates are not following the Russian-Ukraine war because they believe it is a proxy war between Russia and the West and has nothing to do with them and that they needed not to get entangled in it. It can also be concluded that Nigerian undergraduates who followed the war do so mainly via social media platforms particularly, Instagram and Twitter and Nigerian undergraduates use social media to get information on the war because they trust information from social media sources.

Thus, the study recommended as follows:

1. Nigerian undergraduates should follow the war as the crisis has wider implications for Nigerians and the global community.
2. Nigerian undergraduates should learn to use

social media with caution as the possibility of fake news being disseminated is higher with social media than with mainstream media.

3. There should be further research on the perception of the Russian-Ukraine war by the generality of Nigerians.

References

1. Adeoye, A. (2022). How is the war in Ukraine affecting perceptions of Russia in Africa? *Chatham House*. <https://www.chathamhouse.org/2022/06/how-war-ukraine-affecting-perceptions-russia-africa>

Cherkaoui

2. , T. (2022). The real battle for perceptions continues in Ukraine-Russia conflict. <https://www.trtworld.com/opinion/the-real-battle-for-perceptions-continues-in-ukraine-russia-conflict-60326>
3. Dahrendorf, R. & Collins, R. (2006). Conflict and Critical Theories Part I: Conflict Theory: Lewis C o s e r . https://us.corwin.com/sites/default/files/upm-binaries/13636_Chapter7.pdf
4. Démuth, A. (2013). Perception theories. <https://www.truni.sk/sites/default/files/uk/000294.pdf>
5. Dharmaputra, R. (2022). Understanding Indonesia's response to Russia's war in Ukraine: A preliminary analysis of the discursive landscape. *Journal of Global Strategic Studies*, 2(1), 115-128.
6. Dixon, R. (2022). As war drags on, weary Russians yearn for a return to normal life. <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/06/05/russia-war-public-opinion/>
7. Echosec Systems (2022). Russia-Ukraine war: Public perceptions and sentiment in Russia. <https://www.echosec.net/weeklybulletin/russia-ukraine-war-public-sentiment>
8. Eddy, K. & Fletcher, R. (2022). Perceptions of media coverage of the war in Ukraine. *Reuters Institute*. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk/digit>

- al-news-report/2022/perceptions-media-coverage-war-Ukraine
9. Egielewa, P. E. (2021a). Effect of social media COVID-19 awareness messages on behavioural change in Nigeria. *Jos Journal of Media and Communication Studies*, 3(5), 266-283.
10. Egielewa, P. E. (2021b). COVID-19 and fake news on social media: Types, challenges and recommendations. *Kogi State University Journal of Contemporary Social Research*, 5(1), 80-90.
11. Egielewa, P., Unegbu, P., Ekele, P. & Tijani, M. (2021c). Socialmediatised education: An analysis of social media impact on undergraduate studies in Edo State University Uzairue, Nigeria. *CRUTECH Journal of Communication*, 3(1), 71-83.
12. Flanagan, C. (2022). Harvard professor warns of misinformation in Russia-Ukraine conflict. <https://www.boston25news.com/news/local/harvard-professor-warns-misinformation-russia-ukraine-conflict/DSQYKNG5OZH45PRVKPBH32CUSI/>
13. Harold, B. (2008). The case for indirect realism. In E. Wright, *The case for Qualia*. MIT Press.
14. Hayes, A. (2022). Conflict theory definition, founder, and examples: What you need to know about the Karl Marx theory. <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/c/conflict-theory.asp>
15. Inyundele, A. (n.d). Conflict theories: An Analysis. University of Nairobi. https://www.academia.edu/12077161/CONFLICT_THEORIES_AN_ANALYSIS
16. Khatsenkova, S. & Holroyd, M. (2022). 100 days of war: How Russian state media are covering Ukraine invasion. *Euronews.com* <https://www.euronews.com/my-europe/2022/06/03/100-days-of-war-how-russian-state-media-are-covering-ukraine-invasion>
17. Mueller, J. (2022). Russian public opinion on the Ukraine war: Perspectives from the American experience. <https://www.cato.org/blog/russian-public-opinion-ukraine-war-perspectives-american-experience>

18. Oberschall, A. (1978). Theories of social conflict. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 4(1), 291-315.
19. Oleinik, A. (2022). War-time media reporting is shaping opinions about Russia's Ukraine invasion. <https://theconversation.com/war-time-media-reporting-is-shaping-opinions-about-russias-ukraine-invasion-180107>
20. Panwar, P. (2022). Experts discuss media coverage of the Russia-Ukraine war. <https://theithacan.org/news/experts-discuss-media-coverage-of-the-russia-ukraine-war/>
21. Sollberger, M. (2015). In defence of a structural account of indirect realism. *European Journal of Philosophy*, 23, 815-37.
22. Statista.com. (2022). Change in international perception of Russia and Ukraine during the w a r 2 0 2 2 . <https://www.statista.com/statistics/1338103/change-perception-russia-ukraine-war/>
23. Volkov, D. & Kolesnikov, A. (2022). *My Country, right or wrong: Russian public opinion on Ukraine*. Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Publications.
24. Zigman, P. (2018). *Theories of Perception and Recent Empirical Work*. The Graduate Center, City University of New York. https://academicworks.cuny.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=3837&context=gc_etds