

# Effects of Non-Professionalism in Nigeria Journalism

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## Abstract

For a very long time, Nigeria scholars in various fields of endeavours have argued on the trade journalism. This issue bothers on the fact that every dicks and harry dabbles into this profession either to make ends meet, practice for political ambition or easily pick it up at the time of employment recession in Nigeria. Journalism as a profession especially in Nigeria has been hijacked by quacks or subtly put, people from other professional careers at the detriment of this noble profession. In light of this, the paper raised who is a professional journalist and how does non-professionalism affect the practice of journalism in Nigeria. Journalists in Nigeria were used as participants while survey method was used to carry out the research. Frequency distribution involving tables was used to analyse the data while the result showed that Nigeria journalists are non-professionals. So, relevant suggestions were recommended to help journalists develop a sense of professionalism among which are, that the regulatory bodies should enforce the code of ethical conduct and rid of quacks in the profession. It pushes further that proper marriage between formal education and experience along necessary training should form basis for entrance into the profession.

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*Index terms*— Effect, Non-professionalism, Journalism, Professionalism.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

arious professions the world over have identity carved for themselves in which they depend on for pride. Some are known for routinisation, some are famous for their unity of purpose salutation while some are known for their esprit de corps. The Nigerian print media has taken a new turn in this 21st century though a large percentage of print media ownership is still in the private hands while government clung to monopoly of the broadcast media is gradually giving way.

Notwithstanding, concern from the scholars perspective is more on the issue of non-professionalism -which is more rampant in journalism. It is not uncommon for politicians who have no knowledge of journalism to establish one, two, three and even numerous media houses purposely to prosecute their political ambition and sometimes establishing such for financial gains.

The institution of Nigeria does not guarantee specific press freedom, it only guarantees freedom of expression including the freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information. Several professional bodies such as Law, Engineering, Accounting, Medicine, etc today enjoy a high sense of respect because they are clearly identified and defined by Nigeria constitution adhered to ethical values and governing rules. Ironically, the journalism, which is widely seen as the conscience of society is yet to be certified a profession, judging by the yardstick on what a profession should be. The practice of journalism in Nigeria has courted great controversies especially in relation to ethical regulation and adherence to professional precepts. Journalism is an esteemed profession that has a lot to offer in the reformation of the society; unfortunately in Nigeria it has become an allcomers affair.

The former Abuja Bureau Chief of the Tide Newspaper, Alloys Nweke, during the January 2008 Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) Submit in Port-Harcourt frowned at the numerous untrained people bestriding the streets

## 5 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

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44 with pen and paper claiming to be journalists. Nweke speech revealed that the number of fake journalists in  
45 Nigeria society is higher than the real practitioners, this is really painful and embarrassing because it depicts  
46 journalist as beggars and irresponsible whereas, true Nigerian journalists have remained in the forefront of  
47 democratic change and social re-ordering through its doggedness and abrasive posture. Akinfeleye, 1990 quoted  
48 an American critic, Dean Rosco Pound who once wrote that every profession is governed by certain rules, and  
49 the absence of such rules makes it a vocation (Akinfeleye, 1990).

50 For a very long time Nigeria scholars, professionals and practitioners have argued as to whether journalism  
51 is a profession or not in Nigeria. Some scholars and practitioners of journalism in Nigeria say journalism is a  
52 trade, others say it is a craft or an occupation while the rest simply say it is a vocation. According to Akinfeleye,  
53 (1990,p.6) the confusing state of affairs as whether journalism is a profession or not in Nigeria has been partially  
54 brought about by the colonial rulers, particularly Britain where until recently journalism was regarded as "an  
55 unqualified profession" ??Akinfeleye, 1990, p. 6).

## 56 2 II.

## 57 3 NIGERIA PERSPECTIVE

58 Every profession is being governed by its ethics and code of conduct. The early and the nationalist press were  
59 not governed by any formal ethics and code of conduct. For example, editorial policies didn't exist, from the  
60 four paged bilingual Iwe Iroyin to many paged Daily Times. On ethical and code of conduct in early Nigeria  
61 journalism practice, Udoakah & Nnadi, (2007,p.447) position that there was no regulation in the profession and  
62 anything went through. This accounts for one of the reasons why up till today journalism in Nigeria is still not  
63 being seen as a profession since it is all-comers affair.

64 Responsible regulation came with the ethical code of the Nigeria Union of Journalists in 1962. This was after  
65 the press have established themselves as trade unionists on March 15, 1955. It started with 12point functions  
66 and 12-point code for members. Following this on May 21, 1961, the Nigerian Guild of Editors was inaugurated.  
67 Both NUJ and NGE in 1962 proclaimed 16-point code of ethics for journalism practice in Nigeria with all forming  
68 organizations in January 15, 1979 and signed the ethics and code of conduct which was in operation before  
69 a modification in 1998. The 1998 adopted code of ethics emphasizes: the publication of truth, the question  
70 of corruption, the question of free access to news, the question of confidentiality, the publication of plagiarism  
71 and errors of facts. Colonial rulers in Nigeria and their succeeding "Nigerian-Europeans" regarded journalism  
72 education as an unnecessary undertaking. This view partly accounts for the reason why for many years all  
73 Nigeria universities did not offer any formal journalism training. Until recent times, Nigerian journalists were  
74 being viewed as a bunch of dropouts who had been rejected by other professions. This uncomplimentary view of  
75 journalism and journalists in Nigeria has made the profession, trade, craft, or vocation, very unprestigious.

76 It has now become a truism that low literacy rate contributes to a low degree of journalism training and also to a  
77 low standard of journalistic performance. Journalism profession has suffered serious setbacks in its developmental  
78 processes in Nigeria because; Nigeria nation has not given priority to degree programmes in journalism. Instead  
79 graduates from other disciplines such as Political science, Economics, Sociology, English etc are being given  
80 on-the-job training in journalism and these non-professionals do cause serious damage to this noble profession.  
81 Just of recent, the immediate ex-NUJ President, Akwu in Port Harcourt, after a deliberation on the profession  
82 submitted that journalists should ensure strict adherence to the ethics of the profession in order to change the  
83 perception of the world about them. Making comment on the issue of non-professionalism in Nigeria journalism,  
84 Gboyega (1989) frowned at the inability of the very many press barons in Nigeria to make deliberate efforts to  
85 transform journalism in the country to an enviable profession that can compete favourably in its organizational  
86 structure, effectiveness, thoroughness and virility as in other professions like Legal, Medical, Engineering and  
87 Banking professions. In view of all these, this research seminar will critically examine some issues and aim at  
88 providing solutions to them.

## 89 4 III.

## 90 5 THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

91 Professionalism is attained when a profession has functional clearly defined or prescribed educational standards,  
92 licensing and enforcement of performance of standard by the profession itself. In view of the practice of non-  
93 professionalism in Nigeria the researcher tends to use gatekeeping theory to make the research work arrive at a  
94 logical conclusion. Kurt Lewin originated this theory in 1947 while Westley-Maclean model visualized the concept  
95 of the gatekeeper in the mass communication process. McQuail (2005, P. 512) says the core idea of the theory  
96 is that "the news media indicate to the public what the main issues of the day are and this is reflected in what  
97 the public perceives as the main issues." The research paper broadly explores gatekeeping process in relation to  
98 the regulatory bodies of journalism on what they consider as the criteria for those practicing journalism. The  
99 regulatory bodies in this way are the gatekeepers because whatever they objectively lay down will be followed.  
100 Secondly, this theory appraises the media content that is, what the media practitioners dished out to the public,  
101 how they mediate, select news content, and suppress facts in exchange for materialism.

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102 According to Ekeli as quoted in Folarin (2005, P.120) "gate keeping is nothing but voluntary selfcensorship  
103 performed by the media themselves". Hence, the employers of media practitioners should strictly adhere to the  
104 minimum standard because they are gatekeepers in that sense while journalists themselves should be socially  
105 responsible to their readers in whatever materials they package and elevate the virtues of the profession.

106 IV.

## 107 **6 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

108 The following research questions are formulated to guide the study.

### 109 **7 Q1**

110 Who is a professional journalist? Q2 Does government influence in any way encourage non-professionalism? Q3  
111 How does non-professionalism affect the practice of journalism in Nigeria?  
112 V.

## 113 **8 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

## 114 **9 LITERATURE REVIEW**

115 This chapter on literature review will attempt to review the available literature on the practice of professionalism  
116 in journalism. It reviews the word profession, journalism as a profession and the attributes that make a journalist  
117 qualify as professional vis-à-vis his approved functions in the society.

118 When does an occupation become a profession? Alfred E. Opubor as quoted in Akinfeleye (1991, P.11) says  
119 an occupation must possess the following criteria: 1. Systematic body of theory 2. Professional authority 3.  
120 Community sanction 4. Ethical codes 5. Professional culture.

121 Opubor explains that while some insist that people who practice an occupation themselves should be the  
122 determinant of when they have become professionals. Others argue that, to become a professional in any field, a  
123 person must undergo a certain minimum period of training or introduction during which the skills and values of  
124 the profession are imparted in him. Professionalism is associated with competence, training, relevant education  
125 body of knowledge, standards of evolution and improvement.

## 126 **10 VII.**

## 127 **11 WHAT IS A PROFESSION?**

128 From historical foundation a profession means the act of professing. According to Webster's New Word Dictionary,  
129 a profession is ? "a vacation or occupation that requires advanced education and training and involves intellectual  
130 skills".

## 131 **12 VIII.**

132 PROFESSIONALISM This is the high standard which is expected of a person who is well trained in a  
133 profession/job.

## 134 **13 IX.**

## 135 **14 WHO IS A PROFESSIONAL?**

136 One of the American reputable social scientists, William J.Goode states that professionals constitute a  
137 homogeneous community whose members share values, identity, definition of roles and interest. He added that  
138 members of a profession are bound by sense of identity and they share common values.

139 According to (Olatunji, 1991), sociologists hold that, in order for a job to qualify as a profession; it must  
140 possess the following attributes. First, it must emphasize a unique and essential service. Second, it must perform  
141 a unique and essential service. Third, it must have a long period of specialized training to acquire a systematic  
142 body of knowledge, based on research. Fourth, it must be given a broad personal responsibility for their judgments  
143 and actions. Sixth, it must place greater emphasis on service than on private economic gain. Seventh, it must  
144 develop a comprehensive, selfgoverning organization. Eight, it must have a code of ethics which has been clarified  
145 and interpreted by concrete cases.

146 Needless to say, no single profession or occupation passes all these tests. A profession, then, is nothing but an  
147 ideal type in the sense which does not describe any actual profession, but which is fruitful in the analysis and  
148 investigation of actual professions. What we have in reality therefore is a continuum, with zero professionalism  
149 at one end, maximum professionalism at the other. Various professions may be plotted at various points along  
150 this continuum. It may well be that, on such a continuum, journalism is further from maximum professionalism  
151 like law or medicine or even closer to zero professionalism than in law or medicine. Astor (1991) expresses the  
152 thought of the United States of America's Bureau of Labour Statistics which summarizes the qualifications of  
153 professions thus, prescribes educational standards, licensing and enforcement of performance of standard by the

154 profession itself. By and large, research conducted by ??kinfeleye (1991) explains the features of professional as  
155 follows.

### 156 **a) Solidarity :**

157 A member of a profession believes closely in solidarity with other members and thinks that, it is a good thing to  
158 present a solid front to those outside the profession. How far can we say this about the Nigerian journalists? It  
159 is a common feature of journalists to scoff their colleagues when in ataxia (topsy-turvy).

### 160 **b) Trust :**

161 A member of a profession assumes that he can be trusted since he professes to have certain expertise that is not  
162 common. To what extent can a Nigerian journalist claim this point and be believed? It is viewed that everybody  
163 is a journalist in this country (even if he only features via letter to the editor). The impression created by print  
164 media that everybody should become journalist by creating his own news is not helping matters. Though it is  
165 acknowledged that there should be democratisation of news via citizen journalism notwithstanding, expertise  
166 should still be upheld to make the profession one of the best.

### 167 **c) Objectivity :**

168 Members of a profession is expected to think objectively and inquiring about matters subject to orthodoxy and  
169 sentiment which limit intellectual exploration. This feature of professionalism is dead in Nigeria journalism where  
170 emphasis on materialism is placed about intellectual exploration. Majority of journalists are not interested in  
171 story that will not enrich their pocket-so, pocket first others follow.

### 172 **d) Certification :**

173 Certification and licensing are sacrosanct to the practice of a profession while a member can also expect to be  
174 put out of the profession if he does not live up to professional code of ethics. How many times have the Nigerian  
175 journalists practised this without any amount of success? Is it not possible for reporter "A" to be punished for a  
176 professional misconduct, or professional malpractice and after a few days he is being employed by another media  
177 organization who is also a member of the profession that instituted the punishment in the first instance? e)

#### 178 Training :

179 A member of a profession is expected to meet the various minimum entrance standards for the profession such  
180 as a diploma, degree, or degrees in the professional area. Just what is the minimum entry standard for Nigerian  
181 journalists? There is certainly none and as such, everybody moves in and out of the profession. Though the Press  
182 Council in its Ilorin Declaration of 1998 specified the minimum entry requirement for journalism in Nigeria but  
183 there is no known back-up legal force, rather, it is only being backed-up by professional ethics and codes which  
184 are often violated by all.

185 Okunna, (1991) stated that : ?the merits of higher education for journalists have become widely recognized in  
186 all parts of the world. A review of studies in professionalism conducted in both developed and developing countries  
187 show that journalists with higher formal education exhibit more professional orientation in the performance of  
188 their duties, and are generally classified as high and medium professionals in contrast to their low professional  
189 colleagues most of whom have not had formal higher education (P.3).

190 A high status could ultimately make the journalist become more ethical and professional inclined because the  
191 visibility arising from this attribute could engender the journalist the conviction that he or she has a name to  
192 protect. f) Reward :

193 Astor (199, P.68) says that members of a profession share in a discrete end substantive body of knowledge  
194 available to those in the profession. Following this, a member of a profession participates in a system of rewards  
195 monetary and or honorary for those who conduct themselves most notably within their code of ethics. Nigeria  
196 journalists truly jostle for both monetary and honorary reward but on the platter of laziness. It is on record  
197 that there was no winner for the 2011 TV presenter in the just concluded Nigeria National Media Merit Award  
198 (NNMMA) held in Akure Ondo State. g) Code of Ethics :

199 Code of ethics governing the entrance and practice of members of a profession is a must. This governs their  
200 practice to a high degree of group control. There only exist on paper numerous codes of ethics for various Nigerian  
201 journalism associations, yet, the actual practice and submission to peer control has not been brought to fruition.  
202 The journalists' creed of 1908, media council law of 1988, Ilorin Declaration of 1998 and other code of ethics  
203 governing the conduct of journalism in Nigeria only exist on paper.

204 X.

## 205 **19 PROFESSIONALISM AND MEDIA ETHICS**

206 McQuail, (2005, P.173) points out that lack of political independence has been identified as one of the effects of  
207 professionalism in journalism. This takes various forms, including organization into associations, the formation  
208 of press councils and the drawing up of principles of good practice in the form of codes of practice and ethics.  
209 The press councils are typically voluntary or at least non-governmental bodies that mediate between the public

210 and the mass media. The function implies the need to have some codes of standard principles to which reference  
211 can be made; and in general press councils are instruments of selfregulations for the press that acknowledge a  
212 responsibility to the public. There are codes of ethics in Nigeria but it is often flawed -selling conscience at the  
213 altar of money.

## 214 **a) Why Codes of Ethics?**

215 Codes of ethics exist virtually in all professions in order to ensure standard practice and since journalism is not  
216 an exception thus, it bends along with dictates of the standard. The phenomenon reflects the general process of  
217 professionalism of journalism especially from the threat of external intervention and reduced autonomy. It reveals  
218 the values that the media publicly proclaim as guidelines for their work. Common features of the codes includes:  
219 the prohibition of discrimination on the basis of race, ethnicity, religion; respect for privacy; and prohibition of  
220 bribes or any other benefits. As a matter of fact, truth and objectivity are central to the values of journalism.

## 221 **21 XI.**

## 222 **22 IDENTITY OF A PROFESSIONAL JOURNALISTS**

223 Astor (1991) explains that journalist is not a man who can write good, sound, logical English which he has  
224 learned at school or which divine providence has put into his head without effort on his part, unless he knows  
225 something of the fundamental of the things which he assumes to be calling. Such people are special writer, a  
226 contribution to the press. Surlin (1987) after his study of values of journalism practitioners before and after  
227 undergoing course in media ethics opines that the media ethics course had a noticeable and ethically positive  
228 effect upon the student value system. Consequently, one might assure that this shift in values will lead to more  
229 ethical and responsible decision making by these soonto-be media professionals.

230 Ogunsiji (1993) agrees with social "communicologist" that no doubt, professionalism will certainly restrict the  
231 ranks of those who practise journalism in Nigeria and that; it will also eliminate quacks from practicing. This  
232 will make Nigeria press in general appear more responsible and respectable. In the same vein, Akinfeleye (1990)  
233 opines that journalists and pseudo-journalists will find the lure of professionalism very strong because, it would  
234 give them the aura of social responsibility and dignity. Astor also ascertains that professional journalist is the  
235 foundation stone of the structure without which the seeker for news and the writer thereof, all the vast and  
236 intricate mass of machinery of melting post, of dynamos, picture of fleets of motor cars and special trains -all  
237 will be useless.

## 238 **23 XII.**

## 239 **24 RESEARCH DESIGN**

240 This study employed the use of both secondary data and survey method of research to carryout and elucidates  
241 the bane of non-professionalism in Nigeria journalism. The issue of non-professionals bastardizing journalism  
242 may not easily yield objective answers and solutions so, the choice of survey method was considered an option  
243 to obtain necessary data in order to proffer solutions to the problem.

244 Osuala, (1982) and Nwadu (2008) submit that survey research method is a vital means of eliciting information  
245 from respondents; it facilitates the computation, analyses and interpretation of the findings. The Hope Newspaper  
246 was chosen for critical examination.

247 The population of the study included practicing journalists and since the evaluation did not intend to take  
248 the survey of all practising journalists, a representative sample close enough to satisfy whatever heterogeneity  
249 that existed was adopted. Included in the survey were editors, sub-editors, reporters and freelancers from The  
250 Hope Newspaper. The reason why this medium was chosen by the researcher bothered on the fact that Nigeria  
251 Government emphases qualify personnel with appropriate certificate in any appointment in all government owned  
252 establishments. The Hope is a state owned government newspaper which is supposed to operate at the highest  
253 level of professionalism above the private owned newspapers. In this media house there are twenty (20) journalists  
254 and all of them were used as sample size while questionnaire was design to elicit information from the respondents.

255 Each questionnaire has a set of thirteen questions, twenty copies of questionnaires were administered to twenty  
256 journalists in which fifteen representing 75% were recovered while the researcher was unable to cover the remaining  
257 five as at the time of collating the data. The fifteen recovered questionnaires stand the chance of hundred percent  
258 (15/15 x 100) that is, the fifteen questionnaires represents hundred percent. Due to limited space provided some  
259 of the demographic questions have been excluded while only pertinent questions are critically analyzed.

## 260 **25 XIII.**

## 261 **26 DATA PRESENTATION IN TABULATED FORM**

262 Question : Education Qualification Source : field survey 2011

263 This question seeks to know the academic background of the respondents. One respondent (6.7%) has SSCE;  
264 five respondents (33.3%) have ND while HND/B.Sc holders constitute 60%. Source : field survey 2011

### 265 27 Question : Field of study

### 266 28 April 2012

267 The research question one wants to know from the practicing journalists' perspective what they use as yardstick  
268 for the word "professional journalist" probably if there is different from those in academia. Interestingly, 40% says  
269 a graduate of Mass Communication/ Journalism qualifies as professional journalist. From this, 33.3% submits  
270 that whoever is a member of Nigerian Union of Journalist qualifies as professional while 26.7% says that whoever  
271 has journalistic experience even without formal education qualifies as professional journalist.

272 Questions : Does government influence in anyway encourage non-professionalism? Source : field survey 2011  
273 Research question two shows that 60% of the respondents said government influence has nothing to do with  
274 non-professionalism while 40% say it does.

275 Question : Relationship between professional and nonprofessional journalist? Source : field survey 2011  
276 Since journalism profession is a mixture of both quacks and professionals this question seeks to know the view  
277 of the respondents on activities of nonprofessionals in this trade and to know if quacks are welcome.

278 From the result, 60% says that the relationship is cordial while 40% disagrees.  
279 Research question three is an open-ended question on the effects of non-professionalism on journalism. Various  
280 and even virtually all responses attest that quacks in the profession are the reason while journalism is being  
281 relegated among other professions.

282 XIV.

## 283 29 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

284 From the result of this research work it reveals that a large percentage of 80% of the practicing journalists of  
285 The Hope Newspaper does not have the minimum requirement to practise which is Higher National Diploma  
286 (HND) in Journalism/Mass Communication. So, what is the importance or the effect of Ilorin Declaration of  
287 1998 and other regulatory bodies clamouring for professionalism in journalism? The United State Bureau of  
288 Labour Statistics as quoted in Akinfeleye, (1991, P.12) says that to qualify as a professional in a particular field  
289 the professional must meet the prescribed educational standard but this is found wanting in Nigeria journalism  
290 profession.

291 Okunna, (1991, P.3) reviews that journalists with higher formal education exhibit more professional oriented  
292 in the performance of their duties thus, those with lower formal education will only offer little because even at  
293 National Diploma level, a lot of professional courses are not part of the curriculum as such, they are not being  
294 taught; such are reserved for the last two years of a four-year programme.

295 The fact that 40% of the respondents studied non-journalism course is a threat to the profession of journalism.  
296 Among this great percentage are editors, sub-editors and reporters who probably learn the profession through  
297 on-the-job training. This is the position of Jerry Gana in 2001 when he rejected the call for special salary scale  
298 for those in the field of journalism calling them non-professionals.

299 Goode as quoted in Aston (1990) says that a professional must have attained a specified academic standard in  
300 the field or course of the profession before he can be certified. In view of Goode compared with this research a  
301 large percentage of Nigeria journalists are non-professionals. Practitioners themselves according to this research  
302 agree that journalism practice without formal education does not make one a professional journalist. Though  
303 26.7% of them say accumulated experience makes one a professional but, such percentage cannot be justified  
304 compared to other professions such as Law, Engineering, Medicine and others.

305 This research wants to know the yardstick being used from practitioners' perspective who a journalist is.  
306 Interestingly, 40% said he must be a graduate of Mass Communication/Journalism. From the findings, 33.3%  
307 argued that a member of a union for instance NUJ is qualified to be described as professional. Though this is  
308 one of the requirements but this should be after obtaining the minimum education standard. The remaining 26%  
309 submits that journalism experience is the yardstick but these respondents have the lowest followers.

310 It has been established that government influence and policies do not favour professionalism. Most of the  
311 editors and managing directors of media houses are there based on political appointment just to compensate the  
312 helmsmen who supported them during electioneering campaign.

313 The relationship between professional and nonprofessional journalists is sixty percent cordial -an element of  
314 solidarity, sense of identity and common values are shared in line with ??kinfeleye, (1991). But, going by the large  
315 percentage of 40% who said the relationship is not cordial, we cannot say Nigeria journalists are professionals  
316 because professionals should share a professional culture, believe in close solidarity and share professional  
317 ideology Aston, (1991), Opubor, ??1991). Hence, all the relevant requirements to qualify as professional are  
318 conspicuously absent among Nigeria journalists. Findings from research question three show that, bad headlines,  
319 poor production, brownenvelop and other professional misconducts are the effects of non-professionalism in  
320 Nigeria journalism.

321 XV.

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## 322 **30 SUMMARY**

323 The result of this research work shows that Nigeria journalists are yet to attain the standard of professionalism.  
324 In this 21st century where every profession requires special skill, minimum education standard, code of ethics,  
325 professional authority, community sectional and professional culture, journalism practitioners in Nigeria are still  
326 arguing and insisting that someone with journalistic experience should qualify as member of their profession  
327 while this issue has been settled long ago in other professions. Respondents from this research confirm that the  
328 result of non-professionalism has made the profession to be all comers' job and this relegates journalism to the  
329 background in the committee of professions.

330 Research question three probes into the consequences of non-professionalism in the profession and respondents  
331 furthermore identify excessive lost for brown envelops, unprofessional and badly written news, reports; badly  
332 produced journals and newspapers downgrade the profession in the estimate of other professions. A faulty  
333 machine cannot give correct output so is true of half-baked professional; he will certainly malfunction and  
334 package irrelevance for public consumption. Often, non-professionals in this trade do produce junk newspapers  
335 and magazines which usually have adverse effects on the action and reaction of readers to issues; therefore,  
336 objectivity and balance are foreign to their reportage.

337 From the field survey it is obvious that nonprofessionalism in journalism has slowed down the pace at which  
338 journalism would have moved in this country then, journalists are being deprived of benefits and rights which  
339 other professionals enjoy. Responses from this research work show that non-professionals often breach the code  
340 of ethics which makes the public to look down on journalists.

## 341 **31 XVI.**

## 342 **32 CONCLUSION**

343 Though press has been viewed as the training ground for future leaders, notwithstanding, whoever is going to  
344 practice the profession should equip himself/herself with the minimum standard. Peter Enahoro's statement in  
345 ??uyile (2004, P.396) that the press is the nation's training grand is not an exaggeration, neither is it a boast.  
346 The fact still remains that many young people gain their knowledge and experience by writing for the press from  
347 where they later discover the great fortunes in life. Obafemi Awolowo reported for Daily Times, Dr. Nnamdi  
348 Azikwe learnt his political traits by working in Ghana newspaper; Onabanjo was a journalist and columnist and  
349 later ruled Ogun State. Segun Osoba who became Ogun State Governor in 1999 joined Daily Times as a reporter  
350 while Tony Momoh formal Nigeria Information Minister worked in Daily Times so is Anthony Enahoro. All of  
351 them, (though subject to what was required in their time) went through formal journalism education. There is  
352 no doubt that being a journalist prepares one for the greater future, but the right thing must be done.

353 The death of vibrant and radical journalism is worrisome in Nigeria even those who have attained formal  
354 education engage in an unprofessional conduct, turning journalism to "money journalism". Front page which  
355 was once an exclusive news page is now being devoted to advertisement because proprietors of media houses are  
356 business tycoons who place wealth creation or revenue generation above professionalism. Tell Magazine a Nigeria  
357 print medium which was once voted the most courageous news magazine during the dark days of Gen. Sanni  
358 Abacha (former Nigeria Head of State) is now a shadow of itself -so are other newspapers. It is common this day  
359 to employ Industrial Training (IT) students in media houses as reporters so that the establishment will only pay  
360 token for the services of these students -this is a typical example as shown in table I. The Hope Newspaper (though  
361 government owned) refused to report the impeachment story of former Speaker of Ondo State house of Assembly  
362 due to directive from the state government. The same thing goes to other government owned newspapers that  
363 will never carry any story viewed as unfavourable to the government -this is purely unprofessional.

## 364 **33 XVII.**

## 365 **34 RECOMMENDATIONS**

366 Based on the findings of this research, the followings are recommended in other to attain professionalism in  
367 Nigeria journalism. 1. There should be special salary for the professional journalists in order to discourage brown  
368 envelop syndrome while the minimum entrance requirement which is Higher National Diploma should be strictly  
369 adhere to. 2. For journalism practitioners to qualify as professionals, the regulatory bodies; Nigeria Union of  
370 Journalists (NUJ), Nigeria Guild of Editors (NGE), Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN) and  
371 other regulatory bodies should enforce the code of ethical conduct and rid of quacks in the profession.

## 372 **35 Media houses should constantly organize training**

373 programmes for their staff so they will keep pace with the time-changes. 4. Government should lose their grip  
374 off the media and let them function as liberal societal structure. 5. Freedom of expression in reality not in  
375 theory should be guaranteed while the new Freedom of Information Bill (FOI) should be allowed to function  
376 accordingly. 6. Proper marriage between formal education and years of experience along necessary training  
377 should form basis for entrance into the profession. 7. The existing faculties that offer journalism in Nigeria  
378 tertiary institutions should improve on their curriculum and also equip Mass Communication Department with

### 35 MEDIA HOUSES SHOULD CONSTANTLY ORGANIZE TRAINING

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379 modern training facilities in order to redeem the dented image of Nigeria universities that turn out half-baked  
380 graduates. 8. Government as a matter of seriousness should provide adequate security for journalists during  
381 their major assignment. 9. There should be stiffer punishment for any member of the profession that breaches  
382 the rule or engages in professional misconduct.

10. Finally, more research should be carried out in this area in order to urgently solve this perennial problem.

#### 1

Response	No Respondents	of	Percentage
SSCE	1		6.7%
ND	5		33.3%
NCE	-		-
HND/B.SC/Above	9		60%
Total	15		100%

Figure 1: Table 1

383 1 2

#### 2

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Mass	9	60%
Comm./Journalism		
Others	6	40%
Total	15	100%

Source : field survey 2011

Nine respondents which represent 60% studied mass communication/journalism via formal education while other practitioners who represent 40% of the sample are from other fields: yet they practice journalism.

Figure 2: Table 2

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<sup>2</sup>Effects of Non-Professionalism in Nigeria Journalism© 2012 Global Journals Inc. (US)

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**3**

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage%
Yes	4	26.7%
No	10	66.6%
Don't know	1	6.7%
Total	15	100%

Source : field survey 2011

This question tries to probe into the relationship between in-house training and formal education in relation to professionalism. From the responses, 26.7% says journalism experience without formal education makes one a professional while 66.6% disagrees with that and 6.7% could not really say which is which.

Question : Who is a professional?

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %	Table 4
A graduate of Mass Comm. /Journalism	6	40%	
One without University education	4	26.7%	but with
journalistic experience			
A member of NUJ	5	33.3%	
Total	15	100%	

Figure 3: Table 3

**5**

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Yes	6	40%
No	9	60%
Total	15	100%

Figure 4: Table 5

**6**

Response	No of Respondents	Percentage %
Very Cordial	-	-
Cordial	9	60%
Not cordial	6	40%
Total	15	100%

Figure 5: Table 6



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