

## **Attitude and Perception of Media Practitioners in South East Nigeria towards Investigative Journalism.**

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### **Abstract**

In the practice of journalism, investigative function of the press, no doubt, remains a cardinal responsibility that is pivotal to the efficiency of the press. There is no doubt that investigative journalism is a very risky enterprise, particularly in Nigeria. It was the hazards involved that led to the untimely death of Dele Giwa (man referred to as the father of investigative journalism in Nigeria) some 28 years ago. Premised on the above, this paper critically analysed the *Realities and Opportunities of Investigative Journalism among Media Practitioners in South East Nigeria*. The study adopted the Concurrent Triangulation mixed method research design. Questionnaire and interviews were used to elicit behavioural responses which reflected feelings, beliefs, attitudes and opinions of respondents on investigative journalism. Evidences from research data suggest that investigative journalism in South East Nigeria remains a risky venture and the risks involved in investigative journalism practice have continued to contribute to the inefficiency of investigative journalism in Nigeria. Based on the findings, the study concludes that despite the democratic nature of Nigerian society, there is still much hostility against the press. This, to a large extent, has affected the attitudes of investigative journalists in South East Nigeria. Based on the conclusion, the paper, among others, recommends that investigative journalists, their families and news sources be given adequate security to avoid attacks on them. This, the researcher believes, will help influence the attitude of the practitioners positively, so as to bring about sustained practice of investigative journalism in South East Nigeria.

### **Introduction**

Investigative journalism is considered as one of the most vibrant tools that uncover wrong doings and other morally objectionable acts carried out by public officials and those in government, particularly in Nigeria. No doubt, it is an integral part of our democratic or social system. Therefore the press can be regarded as the pillar of democracy.

Investigative Journalism is the act of digging deep to get things or facts out in the open.

Herbert (2000) posits that the investigative report produces a story that is gathered and published or broadcast that would not have been revealed without hard work, which in turn provides a story of public importance that had to be pierced together from diverse and often observe sources.

Kamath, (1980, p.156) asserts that “at its best, investigative reporting is master detective work. It is a way of reporting that makes it a tool of the in-depth writer. Also, it is situation reporting rather than event reporting, although events may be involved”.

No doubt, Investigative journalism is a very unique (specialized) form of journalism around the globe. This is based on the fact that it involves going extra-mile to unravel the unknown. It goes beyond mere

reportage of an issue to unraveling hidden secrets (facts behind the facts) surrounding the issue in question.

Scholars have argued that this form of journalism strengthens the press. This is premised on the fact that it maximally satisfies the felt needs of the audience which ultimately demands amongst others accuracy, promptness, balance and fairness in the reportage of events.

Investigative journalism calls for libertarian-like press freedom. That is, the press being at liberty to discharge their responsibilities without government or any other interference. Ironically, no nation on earth can boast of total freedom (*not even America*), despite the freedom of speech enshrined in their various constitutions. In Nigeria, section 39 of the 1999 constitution guarantees freedom of speech. It states that *“every person shall be entitled to freedom of expressions including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference”*. Section 22 of the same 1999 Constitution of Nigeria also states:

The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of government to the people.

Investigative journalism is arguably one of the most important contributions that the press makes to society. The performance of the press through investigation is revealed in the remarkable Watergate in the united state of America in 1972, when Bob Woodward and the Carl Bernsteirs’s revelation led to the resignation of the then United States President Richard Nixon from office in August 1974 (Randall, 1996).

A good example here in Nigeria is when the news magazine blazed the trail in investigative journalism and successfully exposed a case of certificate forgery by the then speaker of the house of representatives Salisu Buhari , during Olusegun Obsanjo’s administration. Similarity, tell magazine equally exposed the then president of the senate, Evans Enweren of certificate Forgery, which ultimately made him to lose his seat.

Channel TV in 2014 aired documentary on the rot in Police College, Ikeja. The documentary shows the deplorable state of Police College and this prompted president Jonathan to pay impromptu visit to the college to assess the situation.

Unfortunately, investigative journalism in Nigeria seems confined within the boundaries of straight news, captivating stories and entertainment, leaving investigative journalism unexplored. This perhaps could be attributed to the risk involved, or what Akanni (2009) describes as hostility to transparency.

### **Problem Statement**

Virtually in all societies, the performance of the media is key to the overall socioeconomic and political development. To perform, and beyond mere reportage for that matter, the practicing Journalist must rise above board. In the task of doing investigative reporting, the media steps on toes of those that are being investigated. Accordingly, the job of the investigative journalist becomes riskier in an intolerant developing society like that of Nigeria.

Some of the journalists that attempted this specialised style of journalism have been greeted with harassments and intimidation. Some have been severely brutalised by thugs and security agents while others have been killed extra-judicially for simply discharging their constitutional duty of investigation.

Fears have therefore been sent into spines of the journalists over the years, not only in Nigeria, but across the globe. Such intimidating trends in a seemingly risky enterprise of investigative journalism, the attitude of the practitioner are naturally expected to affect professional practice of investigation, and social responsibility function is endangered in the process. In the face of all these, the attitude of the contemporary Journalist and consequent perception of the practitioner to investigative journalism has been called to question. Can the journalist be disposed to function in the sociological risky business of investigative reporting? This is the kernel that precipitated this study.

### **Research Objectives**

Broadly, this paper investigates the “*Attitude and Perception of Media Practitioners to Investigative Journalism in South East Nigeria*”. However, the paper was designed to achieve the following specified research objectives:

- i. To assess the extent to which Nigerian Journalists are passionate about the practice of investigative journalism?
- ii. To check the influence of ownership structure in the practice of investigative journalism contemporary Nigeria?
- iii. To evaluate the involvement of Nigerian Journalists in the practice of investigative reporting in the past.
- iv. To ascertain the readiness of the Nigerian Journalists to be involved in the risky enterprise of investigative journalism.
- v. To check the extent to which insurance cover and job enhancements can readily motivate Journalists to do investigative practice?
- vi. To find out if contemporary Nigerian society encourages the practice of investigative journalism practice?

### **Research Question**

Based on the foregoing specific objectives, this paper wishes to provide answers to the following research questions:

- i. Are the Nigerian Journalists passionate about the practice of investigative journalism?
- ii. Has ownership structure influenced the practice of investigative journalism Nigeria?
- iii. To what extent have the Nigerian Journalists been involved in the practice of investigative reporting?
- iv. To what extent are the Nigerian Journalists ready to be engaged in the risky enterprise of investigative journalism.
- v. To what extent can insurance cover and job enhancements readily motivate Journalists to do investigative practice?
- vi. Does the Nigerian society encourage the practice of investigative journalism practice?

### **Research Hypotheses**

To make the study statistically empirical necessitated the formulation of testable hypotheses. Martyn (2008, p.1) averred that a research hypothesis is the statement created by researchers when they speculate upon the outcome of a research or experiment. Every true experimental design must place hypotheses at the core of its structure, as the ultimate aim of any experiment. The hypothetical statements are hereunder stated.

- H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant relationship between ownership structure and the actual practice of investigative journalism South East Nigeria.
- H<sub>2</sub>: There is significant relationship between motivation and Journalists’ readiness to be engaged in the risky business of investigative journalism.

### **Contribution to Literature**

Hopefully, this paper contributes to literature in this field of knowledge through:

1. **Theoretical approach:** To present the concept of investigative reporting in developing nation like Nigeria. By so doing, examines the influence of the political system,

ownership structure, the work settings and the overall risks associated with investigative reporting on the practitioner's attitude and perception to investigative journalism.

**2. Explorative approach:**

This is addressed through an inquiry about actual disposition of today's Journalist towards investigative journalism. This was addressed through the Concurrent Triangulation mixed method research design.

**Significance of This Research**

This study remains a noble effort to contribute to scholarly debates on ways of encouraging investigative journalism practice in a sociological geography where the job of the investigating journalist is becoming riskier by the day. Accordingly, findings and recommendations of this paper will surely provide the leeway to safeguard the freedom of the press generally, but specifically protect the investigating journalist in an intolerant environment like Nigerian.

No matter the level of democratic participation in any country, this study points out that less transparency would be achieved in a government where checks and balance are not carried out by effective and seasoned investigative journalists, who often compliment the already widespread straight news reporting. The study will be of significance to practicing journalists and media owners.

The study will therefore pave the way to a new era in which the mass media will become more aggressive in reporting activities of politicians and hidden national issues, and in the process raising a new generation of reporters that will embrace investigative reporting and passionately seek to uncover new scandals in the country.

This paper, no doubt, contributes significantly to the pool of theoretical and empirical literature in this area of knowledge.

**Literature Review**

**Theoretical Framework**

There is a body of theories that provide explanation for observable phenomena in our endeared world of mass communication. Theories therefore are maps of realities. Therefore, theories help to give explanations as to why things occur the way they do. In stressing the importance of theories in the world of knowledge, Ohaja (2003, p.63-64) argues that "knowledge does not exist in vacuum". Accordingly, this study was anchored within the *social responsibility and libertarian theoretical frameworks*.

**Social Responsibility Theory:** This theory, in the view of Ndolo, (2005, p.35), "owes its origin to an American initiative- the 1947 Hutchins Commission on the freedom of the press". But it goes beyond the libertarian theory, in that it places more emphasis on the press's responsibility to society than on the press's freedom. The theory posits that the power of the media imposes on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly represented and that the public has enough information to decide. This theory maintains that the importance of the press in modern society makes it absolutely necessary that an obligation of social responsibility be imposed on the media of mass communication.

Within the frame of this research, therefore, it is argued that the press is duty-bound to be responsive and accountable to the society which it serves. As cited in McQuail (2008, p.171), Hutchin's (1947) report notes that a responsible press should provide a full, truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning. However, in Nigeria, vital national issues of public importance seem to have been glossed over in media reportage where the press is concerned more with sensational news.

The Nigerian media practitioners (Journalists), in performing their investigative function must at all time uphold accuracy, balance and fairness. This is the base upon which effective and efficient practice of investigative journalism is built.

**The Libertarianism:** Libertarianism, otherwise known as “Free Press Theory” is well known for its philosophy of rationalism and natural rights. This theory advocates for press freedom. It holds that the press must be given total liberty to operate without any hindrance, interruption or interference. This system advocates 100 percent freedom where information is freely sold at the free market place of idea.

The theory calls for the press to operate freely (within the frame of investigative journalism) without interference, as anything done contrarily will be very unhealthy for the efficiency of the press in their investigational responsibilities to man and society.

In domesticating this theoretical construct to this research, it is noteworthy to state that the incessant intimidations, harassments and attacks that have been used to scare journalists away from their constitutional duties is not only antithetical to the stipulations of this theory, but negates the very essence of investigative journalism in a corruption-ridden society like Nigeria.

### **The Practice of Investigative Journalism**

Chambers (2000) posits that investigative journalism in the United Kingdom had flourished in the last three decades of the 20th century. However, Dorril (2000 p. 89) contended that investigative journalism enjoyed “a brief bloom in the seventies, flowered for a short period in the seventies, badly witted in the eighties and is now effectively dead.” On the contrary, Hanna (2000, p.2) argues that investigative journalism was not dead but in decline.

The Nigerian press has over the years played an active role in the struggle for the country’s independence and influenced the thinking and actions of stakeholders as well as government policies. Today, scholars hold that the Nigerian press has become lazy and does less in-depth reporting. Abide (2010 p.16) noted that “sensational news, congratulatory messages and coronation news have become the major contents of national newspapers”

([www.naij.nig.org](http://www.naij.nig.org)). Many vital issues and events of social significance seem to have been left out of the daily reportage in the newspapers.

Media Right Agenda (MRA) (2011) in a workshop in Abuja identified the causes of the dearth of investigative journalism to include: threats to life and job, personal / political interests and the policy of secrecy on government at all levels.

Studies have shown that the style of investigative journalism goes beyond the usual coverage of incidence, press conferences and press statements. Scholars agree that investigative journalism seeks to unearth the hidden information of vice, malpractice and misdemeanor that may injure society (Horrie, 2008; Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2007).

Investigative reporting has now begun to change the definition of news value. It is gradually shifting news reporting from the old style of reporting on spectacular single incidents and personal crimes to more original conscious reporting on the systematic operations of societies (Ocholi, 2010).

Investigative Journalism (IJ) also called watchdog journalism means exposing how laws and regulations are violated; it is holding the powerful accountable. Succinctly put, investigative journalism is the finding, reporting and presentation of news which other people try to hide ([www.journalism.eu](http://www.journalism.eu)). Relatively new as the term is, investigative journalism has through the decade metamorphosed into a formidable tool for critically and thoroughly exposing facts and secrets which governments, institutions, organisations or individuals would naturally try to obscure from the public.

The media are the bridge between the government and the governed as well as the mouthpiece of the society. A basic duty of the media professionals in every society is to be a civic watchdog whose mission

is to uncover secrets and issues while keeping the government accountable to society. As observed by Itule & Anderson (2007, p.397), to achieve this often demands investigation and in-depth work which requires researching, digging deeply, interviewing and writing.

Ufuophu – Biri (2008, p.127) is of the opinion that “investigative journalism goes beyond mere reporting of plain and visible facts.

It involves digging deep to uncover that which has been hitherto hidden.” The distinguishing element according to Ohaja (2011 p. 15) is that:

The report which must be of public importance should stem from the finding of a reporter; not a report of an investigation made by someone else. It must also be an issue which those involved are attempting to hide from the public.

This form of journalism has long standing in the press. It was first identified in the early twentieth century in America (Muckraking era) when magazine journalists took the lead in exposing political corruption, social problems and economic exploration through investigation. According to Assay (2009, p.8), cited in Ocholi (2010) in a typical Nigeria setting, exposing corrupt practices by government officials can be a very herculean task for the media. Officials use the police, thugs and security operative to harass, intimidate, abuse and even assault journalists.

A lot of journalists have lost their lives while investigating very delicate scandalous stories. Ocholi (2010 p. 9) posits:

A very good example of this is the various arrest, detention and damages of working tools like cameras, midgets of journalists covering scandalous cases. Some even lost their lives in the process. The case of Dele Giwa of the News Watch magazine, and Baguda Kaltho of the News are clear examples. Other examples of harassment and detention are cases like those of Durojaye Rotimi, senior Advocate and correspondent of Daily Independent, and Bayo Arelubu of African independent Television (AIT) who were arrested and charged to court in 2006 for reporting on the presidential jet which was purchased with billions of naira.

The press has been found guilty on several fronts as expressed by Agbese (2000, p.13) thus: “reports do not correctly mirror the society. They ignore the wider national interest in pursuit of narrow and selfish interests.”

### **Freedom: A Necessity for Investigative Journalism**

One fundamental demand by the press has always been freedom. This freedom, they have argued, will enable them do their job very objectively and accurately as well. The freedom amongst others is the liberty from ownership control and extra-judicial killings of journalists.

All over the globe, especially the developing nations, this demand has always met with severe attacks and outright dismissal of lots of journalists from duty. Press freedom to many third world nations, is an abomination that carries severe sanction on any agitator. This, to a very large extent has crumbled the ability of the press to carry out their investigative role.

### **Inhibitions to Investigative Journalism in Nigeria**

**Threat to the Relatives of the Investigative Reporter:** An exposed case of corruption could lead to sacking or forced the resignation of a person, or even to the person's arrest. It could be a loss of huge but fraudulent business the person was doing. The risk of losing their family members has contributed to the inefficiency of investigative journalism in Nigeria. Nwabueze (p.49) asserts that "some die-hard aggrieved persons could go to the extent of going after family members of a journalist just to punish him for investigating and exposing a development, the publication of which negatively affected the aggrieved person. Failure to get the reporter could make his family members targets." This as well hampers investigative journalist in Nigeria.

**Poor Remuneration:** In the process of discharging their duties, journalists engage in very risky adventures that most often cost them their lives. However, Nigeria and other third world nations have continued to neglect and relegate the press to the background. This has manifested in the poor and unacceptable pay most Nigerian journalists receive as salaries. Nwodu, (2004, p.75) in his survey of Nigerian journalists and their salaries, shows that 28% of the journalists studied earn N5,000 or below, per month, 15% of the journalists earn between N6,000 and N9,200 or below, per month. The study also unveiled that 23% of the journalists earn between N9, 300 and N13, 000 per month, while 349 of the journalists studied earn 13,500 and above, per month.

The salary is so little that it has discouraged journalists from embarking on such risky duties as the investigative role. The government owned media outfits care-less for the welfare of journalists.

**Absence of Motivation:** In Nigeria, journalists are not adequately motivated. Even where media owners claim to motivate their staff, it is so poor that it cannot trigger any form of motivation amongst the journalists. Nwabueze (p. 48) opines that journalists are poorly remunerated, apparently as a result of what has been described as "media poverty". Things like hazard allowance enjoyed by their colleagues in the developed world are either non-existent or exist only on paper. Some journalists in Nigeria are owed salaries for as long as twelve months or even more. Under this condition, no one will actually be willing to take the 'risk' called investigative reporting".

**Ownership Influence:** ownership influence, has dealt a serious blow to the investigative role of the press. Here, media owners dictate the way things are done in the establishment. It is the case of "who pays the piper dictates the tune". In this case, owners of media houses influence the house style of their various outfits. Government media no doubt are serious victims of this impediment. Often, government uses their media to sell their selfish political ideologies. They have turned government media to mere lapdogs instead of watchdogs. Okoye (2008, p.35) opines that "some governments through the state owned and controlled media use the tool of propaganda to subdue the masses while gross embezzlement of public funds is going on. This further reduces the media to a mere "barking but toothless bull dog". This obviously impedes on the effective performance of the investigative role of the press".

**Bribery and Corruption:** As a result of the corrupt atmosphere in Nigeria, most journalists, no doubt, participate in this evil and the practice of investigative journalism in the country is very much hampered. There is no doubt about the fact that Nigeria is one of the most corrupt countries in the globe. Top on the list of corrupt people are state governors, ministers, national and state assembly members and some other political office holders. The intensity of this has consigned most Nigerian journalists to participate in this ugly act. Agbese, (2006, p.17), posits that "the media take on the forms and coloration of the social and political structures within which it operates". A poor democratic structure characterized by bribery, looting and embezzlement of public funds, a situation that media practitioners are sufficiently acquainted with and are effectively positioned to participate in, will have a telling effect on the practice of objective journalism. (Udomisor, 2002, p.91).

## **Methodology**

The study adopted the **Concurrent Triangulation** mixed method research design. Concurrent Triangulation according to (Creswell, 2003) is characterised by two or more methods used to confirm, cross-validate, or corroborate findings within a study. Data collection is concurrent. This is to overcome a weakness in using one method with the strengths of another.

This method enables the researcher to generate data from two sources:

- **Designed Questionnaire:** A well structured questionnaire was used to collect quantitative data from responding Journalists across South East States of Nigeria in response to the research objectives.
- **Interviews:** In-depth interviews were used in the collection of qualitative data from responding Journalists which ultimately strengthens the data from the questionnaire.

### **Population/Sample Size of the Study**

In any academic research, population means all the potential sources of data. Kane, (1987, p.90), defines population as: “a group in which all the individuals or items singled out for study”.

This study was conducted among practicing Journalists, who are into the business of news reportage, packaging, programming and presenting media contents in all the Media stations in the South East geopolitical zone, housing Abia, Anambra, Ebonyi, Enugu and Imo States of Nigeria.

From the statistics obtained from the office of the Chairman, Enugu council of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), the number of registered journalists in the South East zone is 338. This number therefore, represents the population of the study.

**Table I: Proportional Sample Representation of the Population Size**

State	Population size	Sample	percentage
Abia	56	13	16.7%
Anambra	72	17	21.8%
Ebonyi	48	11	14.1%
Enugu	94	21	26.9%
Imo	68	16	20.5%
<b>Total</b>	<b>338</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100%</b>

Source: Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), State Councils.

### **Sampling Technique**

The researcher used the Australian National Statistical Service (NSS) online sampling Calculator, which is widely used by both social science and physical science researchers in Europe and parts of Asia to obtain a manageable sampling frame of 78.

**Instrumentation:** Structured Questionnaire specifically designed for the study were used to source research data. A total of 78 questionnaires were administered to the Journalist in the South East geopolitical zone: Abia State.-13; Anambra State.-17; Ebonyi State.-11; Enugu State.-21; and Imo State - 16. The questionnaire was used in collecting respondents' biographies as well as research data in line with the research broad and specific objectives

Attitude and Perception of Media Practitioners to Investigative Journalism in South East Nigeria.

### **Data Analytical Test Tools**

For the sake of simplicity and directedness, the researcher adopted the simple percentage and statistical table as the basic tools of research data analysis for this study.

Accordingly, chi-square statistical measure was used in testing the hypotheses.

## **DATA ANALYSIS**

### **Test of Hypotheses**

H<sub>1</sub>: There is significant relationship between ownership structure and the actual practice of investigative journalism Nigeria.

**DATA TESTED:** Research data (generated from question 11) presented on Table XII shows that 9 or 12% of the respondents claimed that their organization encourages investigative journalism, 54 or 72% claimed that their organization do not encourage investigative journalism, while 12 representing 16% of the respondents were indifferent.

**Table II: Contingency Table for Question 11**

Response	Government-owned		Privately.-owned		Corporate-owned		Total
	fo	(fe)	fo	(fe)	fo	(fe)	
Yes	2	(6.1)	7	(2.6)	0	(0.2)	<b>9</b>
No	41	(36.7)	12	(15.8)	1	(1.4)	<b>54</b>
Can't say	8	(8.6)	3	(3.5)	1	(0.3)	<b>12</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>		<b>22</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>75</b>

**Table III: Computational Test for Hypothesis One**

Fo	fe	fo - fe	(fo - Fe) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
2	6.1	-4.1	16.81	<b>2.7</b>
41	36.7	4.3	18.49	<b>0.50</b>
8	8.6	-0.6	0.36	<b>0.04</b>
7	2.6	4.4	19.36	<b>7.4</b>
12	15.8	-3.8	14.44	<b>0.91</b>
3	3.5	-0.5	0.25	<b>0.07</b>
0	0.2	-0.2	0.04	<b>0.2</b>
1	1.4	-0.4	0.16	<b>0.11</b>
1	0.3	0.7	0.49	<b>1.63</b>
<b>75</b>				<b>13.56</b>

$X^2 = 13.56$

At 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the table value is 5.991. The calculated value (13.56) is greater than the table value (5.991). Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted. It therefore means that there is significant relationship between ownership structure and the actual practice of investigative journalism Nigeria.

H<sub>2</sub>: There is significant relationship between motivation and Journalists' readiness to be engaged in the risky business of investigative journalism.

**DATA TESTED:** Research data collected as presented on Table XVII above (generated from question

16) shows that 65 or 86.6% of the respondents are willing to undertake the risky enterprise of investigative journalism, only if motivations like insurance cover and job enhancements are provided. 3 or 4 % of the respondents are not willing to undertake the risky enterprise of investigative journalism even if they are well motivated. 5 or 6.7 % of the respondents are somehow willing to undertake the risky enterprise of investigative journalism if the needed motivations are provided. However, 2 representing 2.7% of the respondents were undecided.

**Table IV: Contingency Table for Question 16**

Response	Government-owned		Privately.-owned		Corporate-owned		Total
	fo	(fe)	fo	(fe)	fo	(fe)	
Yes	47	(44.2)	16	(19.1)	2	(1.7)	<b>65</b>
No	1	(2)	2	(0.9)	0	(0.1)	<b>3</b>
Somehow	1	(3.4)	4	(1.5)	0	(0.1)	<b>5</b>
Can't say	2	(1.4)	0	(0.6)	0	(0.1)	<b>2</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>51</b>		<b>22</b>		<b>2</b>		<b>75</b>

**Table V: Computational Test for Hypothesis Two**

Fo	fe	fo - fe	(fo - Fe) <sup>2</sup>	$\frac{(fo - fe)^2}{fe}$
47	44.2	2.8	7.84	<b>0.18</b>
1	2	-1	1	<b>0.5</b>
1	3.4	-2.4	5.76	<b>1.69</b>
2	1.4	0.6	0.36	<b>0.26</b>
16	19.1	-3.1	9.61	<b>0.50</b>
2	0.9	1.1	1.21	<b>1.34</b>
4	1.5	2.5	6.25	<b>4.17</b>
0	0.6	-0.6	0.36	<b>0.6</b>
2	1.7	0.3	0.09	<b>0.05</b>
0	0.1	-0.1	0.01	<b>0.1</b>
0	0.1	-0.1	0.01	<b>0.1</b>
0	0.1	-0.1	0.01	<b>0.1</b>
<b>75</b>				<b>9.59</b>

$X^2 = 9.59$

At 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the table value is 5.991. The calculated value (9.59) is greater than the table value (5.991). Therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted.

It therefore means that there is significant relationship between motivation and Journalists' readiness to be engaged in the risky business of investigative journalism.

## **Discussion**

In testing hypothesis one, data generated from question 11 as presented on Table XII was used. Research data presented on Table XII shows that 9 or 12% of the respondents claimed that their organization encourage investigative journalism, 54 or 72% claimed that their organization do not encourage investigative journalism, while 12 representing 16% of the respondents were indifferent.

At 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the table value is 5.991. Since the calculated value (13.56) is greater than the table value (5.991), the research hypothesis was therefore accepted. It therefore means that there is significant relationship between ownership structure and the actual practice of investigative journalism Nigeria.

The qualitative research data as presented on Table XXI supports this finding. A respondents from Abia State in the interview, contended that “Yes. The fact that my station is owned by government, there is nothing to investigate. You cannot investigate your employer who eventually pays you or the friends of the government” Also, Chika, a practicing Journalist from Anambra State believes that “Surely, as one would expect influences from a government-owned enterprise”, Looking at the quantitative and qualitative research data, the finding become synchronous with the conclusion drawn by Omehia (2004, p.344) in his research “The Myth Of Investigative Journalism in Developing Democracies: A Focus On Nigeria”. He concluded that ownership style of the station to a large extent shapes the manner with which investigative journalism is practiced.

Evidences from research data as presented on Table XV suggests that investigative journalism is a risky enterprise. 66 representing 88% of the respondents believe that investigative journalism is a risky enterprise. 4 representing 5.3 % believe that investigative journalism is somehow a risky enterprise. However, 5 representing 6.7% of the respondents were undecided.

Testing the hypothesis two, data generated from question 16 as presented on Table XVII was used in testing hypothesis two. Research data collected as presented on Table XVII above shows that 65 or 86.6% of the respondents are willing to undertake the risky enterprise of investigative journalism, only if motivations like insurance cover and job enhancements are provided. 3 or 4 % of the respondents are not willing to undertake the risky enterprise of investigative journalism even if they are well motivated. 5 or 6.7 % of the respondents are somehow willing to undertake the risky enterprise of investigative journalism if the needed motivations are provided. However, 2 representing 2.7% of the respondents were undecided.

At 0.05 level of significance and 4 degree of freedom, the table value is 5.991 Since the calculated value (9.59) is greater than the table value (5.991), the research hypothesis was therefore accepted. It therefore means that there is significant relationship between motivation and Journalists’ readiness to be engaged in the risky business of investigative journalism.

Table XXII contains the qualitative data from the practicing journalists who stated that investigative journalism is a risky enterprise. Chika, a practicing Journalist from Anambra State, on her readiness to be engaged in the risky business of investigative journalism contends, “Not at all. Why should I be ready? What for? Not in Nigeria that we all know too well”.

However, qualitative data on Table XXIII shows that incentives like insurance cover and job enhancements can actually motivate journalist to do investigative practice. Although Eke, a practicing journalist from Imo State contends that insurance cover and job enhancements cannot motivate him, Okafor, a practicing journalist from Abia State believes that “With insurance cover and job security support, I Can as well be motivated to go into investigative journalism practice.”. Also, Oluchi from Ebonyi State holds that “There is no doubt about that. I will be motivated to do that.” All these go to contradict the findings of Adeleye (2011, 127) in his study, “The Dangers of Investigative Reporting in Nigeria: The Prospects for a better society”. He submitted that Journalists in Nigeria will continue to sit on the fence, no matter what is done to encourage them into investigative reporting.

Evidences from quantitative research data indicates that Journalists are to a great extent,

passionate about their professional practice. Data presented on Table X shows that 58 representing 77.3% of the respondents claimed that they are passionate about their job as practicing journalists, 11 or 14.7% claimed that they are not passionate about the practice of journalism, while 6 or 8% of the respondents were indifferent.

Only very few of the Nigerian journalists have been involved in the business of investigative reporting, as presented on Table XIII, (7 representing 9.3% of the respondents claimed to have done investigative journalism in the past. Majority of the respondents (54 representing 72) % claimed not to have done investigative journalism in the past) However, 14 representing 18.7% of the respondents were undecided.

Presentation of research data on Table XIV shows that out of the 7 respondents that claimed to have been involved in investigating reporting in the past, 1 or 14.3% of the respondents claimed that he almost lost his job. Majority of the respondents (5 representing 7.4) % claimed that they almost got killed when they did investigative journalism in the past, but 1 of the respondents 14.3% was undecided.

Research data suggests that Nigeria as a developing society do not have a robust tolerance for investigative journalism practice. Research data as presented on Table XVIII shows that 11 representing 14.7% of the respondents believe that Nigeria as a country has a robust tolerance for investigative journalism practice. 48 or 64 % of the respondents believe that Nigeria as a country has is grossly intolerant to investigative journalism practice. 8 or 10.6 % of the respondents believe that Nigeria as a country somehow has a robust tolerance for investigative journalism practice. However, 8 or 10.6 % of the respondents were undecided.

Qualitative research data as presented on Table XXI supports the quantitative research data as presented on table XVIII. Chika, a practicing Journalist from Anambra State believes that “The Nigerian society frowns at investigative journalism. Therefore, it doesn’t encourage investigative practice of journalism”. Also, Okafor from Abia State in the interview contended that “Nigeria is a very hostile ground for investigative journalism practice”. In the same vein, Eke from Imo State believes that “Nigeria is hostile towards investigative journalism practice” This, he believes discourages professional practice in this aspect of journalism.”

### **Research Findings**

Some of the very important findings of this study include:

- Evidences from research data suggest that investigative journalism in Nigeria remains a risky venture even in the conventional democratic practice.
- Research data suggests that Nigeria as a developing society do not have a robust tolerance for investigative journalism practice. Such hostility towards investigative journalism practice affects the attitude of journalist and ultimately discourages professional practice in this aspect of journalism.
- The risks involved in investigative journalism practice have continued to contribute to the inefficiency of investigative journalism in Nigeria. This has no doubt hampered investigative journalism practice in Nigeria.
- Evidences from quantitative research data indicates that Journalists are to a great extent, passionate about their professional practice. Unfortunately, only very few of the Nigerian journalists have been involved in the business of investigative reporting.
- There is significant relationship between ownership structure and the actual practice of investigative journalism Nigeria. Result indicates that privately-owned media organization still provide better platforms for the practice of investigative journalism over the years than the government-owned media.
- Research data shows that there is significant relationship between motivation and Journalists’ readiness to be engaged in the risky business of investigative journalism. Journalists are willing to undertake the risky enterprise of investigative journalism, only if motivations like insurance cover and job enhancements are provided.

### **Conclusion**

Having successfully researched into the “Realities and Opportunities of Investigative Journalism among Media Practitioners in South East Nigeria”, the following inferences can be reasonably drawn from this study:

- ✓ With the signing of Freedom of Information Bill (FOB) into law, the practice of investigative journalism in Nigeria holds some alluring prospects for the future of mass communication in Nigeria.
- ✓ It is surprising to note that even with so much media houses in the country, the extent of practice of investigative journalism is relatively low.
- ✓ Despite the democratic nature of Nigerian society, there is still much hostility against the press. This, to a large extent, has affected the attitudes of investigative journalists in Nigeria.
- ✓ In Nigeria, there are no provisions for the security and insurance of the journalists who want to go into the risky enterprise of investigative journalism practice

### **Recommendations**

The researcher makes the following recommendations based on the findings of the study:

- (i) Journalists should constantly engage themselves in fora such as symposia, workshops and the likes to evaluate the practice of investigative journalism in the country and chart the way forward
- (ii) There should as well be adequate and efficient training and re-training of investigative journalists to enable them conform to the modern and current technique of fact-finding. The employment of journalists must as a matter of necessity be based on merit so as to ensure that qualified personnel are recruited.
- (iii) Investigative journalists in Nigeria must be well remunerated and motivated. This will ensure that bribery and corruption in the practice of investigative journalism are curtailed or wiped out.
- (iv) Media owners should raise the bar by telling the truth objectively and covering all shades of opinion and facts relevant to the issue in question. This is what investigative journalism can do and the editorial policy should espouse this to the latter.
- (v) The investigative journalists, their families and news sources must be given adequate security to avoid attacks on them.
- (vi) Investigative journalism thrives on press freedom. Accordingly, Media owners must understand that the press can only perform maximally when they are at liberty to discharge their duties without unnecessary influence by owners. In this regard, owners of media establishments are encouraged to give their media houses the liberty to operate in line with the rules and regulations of journalism practice.
- (vii) Media owners should not sacrifice the truth on the altars of partisanship or profit-making or any other selfish ends.

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