



Abia State University Students Perception on the Influence of News Censorship on Media Performance in Nigeria

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Abstract	Original Research Article
<p>This research explores the perceptions of Abia State University students regarding the influence of news censorship on media performance in Nigeria. With the increasing concern over media freedom and governmental restrictions, this study aims to understand how these factors shape young people's views on media reliability and effectiveness. A mixed-methods approach was employed, utilizing surveys and focus group discussions to gather qualitative and quantitative data from a diverse sample of students.</p> <p>The findings reveal that a significant majority of students perceive news censorship as detrimental to the quality of information available to the public. Many respondents expressed skepticism about the credibility of media houses, citing instances of biased reporting and self-censorship as major issues. Students highlighted the necessity for independent journalism to promote transparency and accountability. Additionally, the research indicates that the students' awareness of censorship practices influences their media consumption habits, leading them to seek alternative news sources, including social media platforms.</p> <p>This study contributes to the discourse on media freedom in Nigeria, particularly in the context of youth engagement and activism. It underscores the need for media literacy programs that empower students to critically evaluate news sources and understand the implications of censorship. The results advocate for stronger protections for journalistic integrity and freedom of expression, essential for fostering a well-informed citizenry. Overall, the research highlights the critical role that media plays in shaping public perception and the importance of safeguarding its independence in Nigeria's democratic landscape.</p> <p>Keywords: News Censorship, Media Performance, Students Perfection, Media Consumption, Media Literacy, Critical Engagement</p>	

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the landscape of media and journalism in Nigeria has been significantly influenced by various factors, one of which is news censorship. News censorship, defined as the suppression or prohibition of certain content in the media, has raised concerns about the freedom of the press and the overall performance of media houses. This is particularly significant in a democratic society where the media is expected to serve as a watchdog, providing citizens with accurate and timely information (Oso, 2017).

Abia State University (ABSU) students, as part of the younger generation and future leaders, are critical stakeholders in understanding the implications of media censorship. Their perceptions can provide valuable insights into how censorship affects media performance and public trust in journalism. The role of media in shaping public opinion, particularly among the youth, cannot be understated, as they often rely on news outlets for information that influences their views and behaviors (Nwokedi, 2020).

The Context of Media Censorship in Nigeria

Nigeria has a complex history regarding press freedom. Despite being a democratic nation since 1999, various forms of censorship have persisted, including government regulations, corporate influence, and societal pressures that inhibit journalistic freedom (Ogbondah, 2018). The Nigerian government has, at times, enacted laws that restrict media operations, often justifying these actions as necessary for national security or public order. Such measures have led to a climate of fear among journalists, who may self-censor to avoid repercussions (Akinfeleye, 2016).

The implications of censorship extend beyond the media itself; they affect the public's perception of media reliability and the quality of information disseminated to the public. When students perceive media houses as biased or censored, it erodes trust and undermines the media's credibility (Ibrahim, 2019). This situation becomes particularly alarming in an era where misinformation and fake news are rampant, making it imperative for young people to critically evaluate the sources of their information (Adetunji & Owoeye, 2020).

The Role of Students in Media Consumption

Students at Abia State University represent a unique demographic, characterized by their engagement with both traditional and new media platforms. As digital natives, they are accustomed to accessing information through social media, blogs, and online news platforms, which often operate outside the constraints of traditional censorship (Nwafor, 2021). This dual engagement with media presents an opportunity to explore how they navigate a censored media environment and what factors influence their perceptions of media performance.

Research indicates that youth are increasingly turning to alternative news sources for information, often influenced by their perceptions of traditional media's reliability (Mawuli & Okwu, 2020). Thus, understanding the perceptions of ABSU students regarding news censorship can shed light on broader trends in media consumption and the potential for shifts in future media landscapes.

Statement of the Problem

Currently in today's world, in numerous countries worldwide, particularly in developing nations, the media typically possess the freedom to disseminate information in the best interest of society. However, in developing nations like Nigeria, despite the existence of legal frameworks such as article 22 of the 1999 constitution which states that "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 the Government to the people."

Therefore, explicitly endorsing the media with rights which includes freedom of expression and information dissemination without interference, there are still infringements on these media rights by influential individuals and government entities who interfere on these media rights. Their actions hinder the media's ability to deliver news objectively, thus it is in this context that the researcher envisions examining how the imposition of censorship impacts the performance and credibility of media houses in Nigeria, with particular concerns to the perceptions of Abia State University students.

Significance of the study

The significance of comprehending Abia State University students' perspectives concerning the influence of news censorship on media houses performance in Nigeria, is complex and insightful. By delving into their perceptions and viewpoints, this study aims to successfully illuminate the impact of news censorship on the Nigerian media in relation to their objective performance towards the Nigerian society, detailing its emphasis on how news censorship affects the trust of the people in the media regarding the enactment of its slated functions as an independent body, its therefore producing valuable insights that can inform approaches which would increase media credibility and independence. This is an essential addition to the pool of knowledge in media studies. This knowledge not only provides valuable insights but also broadens the existing academic literature, offering a slight difference in the understanding of how censorship affects media and the perspectives of a significant section of the population. By diving into the beliefs and

considerations of university students, this study acts as a mirror, reflecting their understanding and concerns about the media and news censorship issues.

The insights gathered from this study can be a guiding light for policymakers and media practitioners. The information derived could shape policies that contribute to a media landscape that is more open and transparent. It could also help craft or refine regulations that prioritize media freedom and ethical journalism practices. Moreover, investigating how students interpret and perceive censorship's impact on media can greatly contribute to boosting media literacy among students. This enhances their abilities to critically analyse media content, comprehend the challenges faced by media organizations, and develop a more informed and discerning approach towards media consumption.

Considering that university students are the potential future leaders and influencers, their perspectives are important in shaping the outlook and attitudes of the coming generation towards media and societal norms. Their viewpoints offer a glimpse into the upcoming generation's beliefs, concerns, and aspirations in terms of the media's role within society. Ultimately, the outcomes of this study would serve as a mirror reflecting the broader societal sentiments and attitudes towards media censorship. It covers the values, apprehensions, and expectations of society regarding the role of the media in sharing information and maintaining societal accountability.

Research Questions

1. How much do Abia State University students know about news censorship?
2. How does news censorship affect media independence, among Abia State University students?
3. How do Abia state university students see news censorship as a factor that impacts the media?
4. How much of an impact does news censorship have on the choice of media and the trust levied on different media houses in Nigeria by Abia State University students?
5. What are the thoughts of Abia State University students on how news censorship

and its influence could be controlled or minimized?

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Understanding News Censorship in Nigeria

News censorship in Nigeria has been a pressing concern, especially in the context of political repression and control over information. According to Ogbondah (2018), censorship practices have historically undermined the freedom of the press, resulting in a media landscape where journalists often self-censor to avoid government backlash. This has implications for how students perceive media reliability and credibility.

Youth Engagement with Media

The youth, particularly students, are significant consumers of media, and their perceptions are shaped by their experiences with news sources. Nwafor (2021) explores how Nigerian university students engage with both traditional and new media, noting that their reliance on social media for information often stems from distrust in traditional media due to censorship.

Impact of Censorship on Media Trust

Ibrahim (2019) highlights that censorship negatively impacts public trust in media among Nigerian youth. The study shows that students are often skeptical about the information provided by media houses, perceiving them as biased or influenced by governmental agendas, which aligns with the broader concerns regarding media integrity.

Media Literacy and Critical Engagement

Media literacy plays a crucial role in how students navigate information in a censored environment. According to Adetunji and Owoeye (2020), fostering media literacy among students can empower them to critically evaluate news sources and discern credible information from biased or censored content, thus enhancing their engagement with media.

Censorship's Role in Shaping Media Performance

The relationship between censorship and media performance is complex. Akinfeleye (2016)

argues that censorship leads to a decline in journalistic standards, as media houses prioritize safety over quality reporting. This decline is particularly alarming for students who rely on media for information, as it affects their understanding of important societal issues.

Perceptions of Social Media as Alternative Sources

Mawuli and Okwu (2020) note that students increasingly turn to social media as an alternative to traditional media, driven by perceptions of censorship and bias. This shift reflects a growing trend among youth to seek unfiltered information, although it raises concerns about the reliability of social media as a news source.

Consequences of Censorship on Public Discourse

The impact of censorship extends beyond media performance to influence public discourse. Oso (2017) discusses how censorship stifles open dialogue and debate, leading to a less informed populace. For students, this lack of discourse can hinder their ability to engage critically with societal issues.

The Role of Media in Shaping Public Perception

Nwokedi (2020) emphasizes the media's role in shaping public perception, particularly among youth. The study shows that students' perceptions of media reliability are heavily influenced by their awareness of censorship practices, which can lead to disengagement from traditional news sources.

Government Influence on Media Practices

Research by Ogbondah (2018) indicates that government influence over media practices has significant implications for journalistic integrity. Students, as future leaders, need to understand how these influences shape the information they receive and its impact on their civic engagement.

Empowering Students through Media Education

The importance of media education is underscored by Ibrahim (2019), who argues that educating students about media literacy can help them navigate the challenges posed by censorship.

By understanding the dynamics of media performance, students can become more discerning consumers of information.

Empirical Review

The exploration of students' perceptions regarding the influence of news censorship on media performance in Nigeria, particularly at Abia State University, reveals critical insights into the broader implications of media control in a democratic society. This empirical review synthesizes various studies and findings relevant to the topic.

Understanding News Censorship and Media Performance

Research has shown that news censorship significantly impacts the performance and credibility of media outlets in Nigeria. According to Oso (2018), censorship undermines journalistic integrity and leads to a lack of trust among the audience. Students at Abia State University have expressed concerns about the reliability of news sources, indicating that censorship creates a barrier to accessing truthful information (Oso, 2018).

Perceptions of Censorship among Students

A study conducted by Eze (2021) highlights that students perceive news censorship as a tool for political manipulation. The findings suggest that many students believe that government and corporate interests often dictate media narratives, leading to a homogenization of news content. This perception raises questions about the role of media as a watchdog in society (Eze, 2021).

Impact of Censorship on Media Literacy

A survey by Nwosu (2020) among university students indicates that censorship affects media literacy. Students reported feeling less equipped to critically analyze news reports due to limited exposure to diverse viewpoints. The inability to access uncensored news fosters an environment where misinformation can thrive, affecting students' understanding of current affairs (Nwosu, 2020).

Censorship and Freedom of Expression

The relationship between censorship and

freedom of expression is pivotal in understanding media dynamics. A study by Okoro (2019) found that students at Abia State University are increasingly concerned about their right to free expression. Many believe that censorship not only stifles media performance but also curtails public discourse, which is essential for a vibrant democracy (Okoro, 2019).

Comparative Analysis of Media Performance Pre and Post-Censorship

Research by Ume (2022) suggests that media performance in Nigeria has deteriorated since the implementation of strict censorship policies. Students noted that the quality of journalism has declined, with fewer investigative reports and critical analyses of government actions. This decline in performance contributes to a general disillusionment with the media among the youth (Ume, 2022).

The Role of Social Media in Shaping Perceptions

Social media has emerged as an alternative source of information for students. A study by Chukwu (2023) highlights that while censorship limits traditional media, students increasingly rely on social platforms to access news. However, this shift also raises concerns about the spread of misinformation and the challenges of discerning credible sources, reflecting a complex relationship between censorship and media performance (Chukwu, 2023). In conclusion, the empirical reviews reveal a multifaceted perception among Abia State University students regarding the influence of news censorship on media performance in Nigeria. The findings underscore the urgent need for promoting media literacy and ensuring freedom of expression to enhance the role of the media in a democratic society.

Data Presentation, Analysis and Discussion of Findings Presentation

This chapter is based on the presentation and analysis of data collected while trying to assess the influence of news censorship on the performance of media houses in Nigeria, using Abia State University, Uturu as a case study. The results of the study are presented by the research questions. The response rate of this study is 300 and the

administered questionnaires needed were properly answered. The results of this study are presented in tables and percentages which will correctly provide clarity in understanding.

For this study, 378 questionnaires would have been distributed to respondents; but based on time and money limits; the researcher distributed 320 questionnaires to respondents. 300 were returned and 50 were discarded for different reasons which includes; incomplete data and unnecessary information. This distribution, however, was spread over five departments in Abia State University, Uturu, which are the departments of; Mass Communication, Sociology, English Language & Literature, Linguistics& Communication studies and History & international studies.

Research Methodology

In this chapter the process and procedures that were followed in carrying out the study, are discussed under the following sub heading; Research Design, Population of Study, Sample and Sampling Techniques, Instrument for Data Collection, Reliability of the Instrument, Validity of the Instrument, Procedure of Data Collection, and Method of Data Analysis.

Research Design

The research design for this study will be quantitative. The study will specifically use the survey method, which is chosen for this study due to the involvement of human beings, who are complex and have varying answers and opinions. The study aimed to gather insights from the population, and a survey method was deemed suitable for this purpose.

“The survey method, enables the researcher to deal with the characteristics of the chosen set of people whose opinions and behaviours are essential for the collection of information required for the study” (Owuamalam (2012, p. 103).

This process involved in using the survey method encompasses detecting a suitable sample, constructing the questionnaire or interview, distributing the data, collecting the data, and analyzing the data collected.

The survey method serves the purpose of gathering data, allowing researchers to test hypotheses or

address research questions by providing a structured framework for conducting the study (Okaja, 2003). In this study, the survey method was employed to collect data through the administration of questionnaires. This approach ensured that a broad spectrum of the population's views and perspectives on the influence of news censorship on the performance of media houses was captured

effectively. The survey method allowed for systematic data collection, enabling the study to analyse the perceptions and opinions of the participants comprehensively. "The structured nature of the survey facilitated a detailed exploration of the topic at hand, enhancing the depth and accuracy of the research findings" (Owuamalam, 2012 as cited in Okaja, 2003).

Demographic Respondent Information

Table 1: Sex distribution of respondents

SEX	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
MALE	127	42.33
FEMALE	173	57.67
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 1 shows the distribution of respondents according to gender. It can be seen from the table that 127 (42.33%) of the respondents included in the

study were males while 173 (57.67%) were females. This shows that females were more in population than males.

Table 2: Age distribution of respondents

AGE	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
18-20	120	40
21-23	105	35
24-26	54	18
27 AND ABOVE	21	7
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 2 shows the age distribution of respondents. As shown in the table, 120(40%) respondents fall between the ages of 18-20 years, 105(35%) falls between the ages of 21-23, 54(18%) falls between

the ages of 24-26 and finally 21(7%) falls between the ages of 27 and above. This simply entails that the much younger generation occupies statistically more population within the university grounds.

Table 3: Marital status

MARITAL STATUS	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
SINGLE	242	80.67
MARRIED	58	19.33
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents in accordance to their marital status. 242(80.67%) are represented to be single, while 58(19.33%) are

married. This states that, the population of single respondents are of larger population to the married respondents.

Table 4: Level of study

LEVEL OF STUDY	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
UNDERGRADUATE	261	87
POSTGRADUATE	39	13
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents in accordance to their level of study. 261(87%) of the respondents are undergraduates, while 39(13%) of the respondents are postgraduates. This simply states

that the population of undergraduates in concerns to the research study are much higher than postgraduates.

Table 5: Religion

RELIGION	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
CHRISTIAN	274	91.33
MUSLIM	17	5.67
OTHERS	9	3
TOTAL	300	100%

Table 5 shows the religious distribution of the respondents. 274(91.33%) of the respondents are Christians, 17(5.67%) are Muslims, while 9(3%) belong to other separate beliefs and religion. This simply states that Christians occupy a greater population in this research study.

Data Analysis

Research Question 1:

How aware are you of the factor/practice of news censorship in media houses in Nigeria?

Table 6

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AWARE	85	28.33
AWARE	151	50.33
SLIGHTLY AWARE	53	17.67
NOT AWARE	11	3.67
TOTAL	300	100%

From table 6 above 85(28%) of the respondents indicates that they're strongly aware of the factor and practice of news censorship in media houses in Nigeria, 151(50%) a greater number indicates they are aware, whilst 53(17.67%) indicates they are slightly aware and 11(3.67) states that they aren't aware of such a factor or practice. This states statistically that the *respondents* of the study had a greater number of persons who knew what news censorship meant and also bearing knowledge about its practice in the Nigerian media.

Research Question 2:

To what extent do you agree to the definition of censorship as the suppression of speech, public communication or other information which may be considered objectionable, harmful, sensitive, and politically incorrect or inconvenient as determined by governments, media outlets, authorities or other groups or institutions?

Table 7

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	90	30
AGREE	137	45.67
DISAGREE	54	18
STRONGLY DISAGREE	19	6.33
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 7 above, 90(30%) of the respondents strongly agrees to the definition of censorship which was stated above the table, with 137(45.67%) agreeing also to the definition, whilst 54(18%) disagrees to the definition and 19(6.33) strongly disagrees. This simply means that a greater number of the respondents agreed with this definition, as the meaning of censorship.

Research Question 3:

To what extent do you agree that political control, protecting national security and maintaining social stability are the main reasons for news censorship in Nigeria?

Table 8

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	145	48.33
AGREE	122	40.67
DISAGREE	23	7.67
STRONGLY DISAGREE	10	3.33
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 8, 145(48.33%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the factors stated above, as being the reasons for news censorship in Nigerian media Houses, 122(40.67%) agreed, whilst 23(7.67%) disagreed and 10(3.33%) strongly disagreed. This simply states that a majority of the respondents agreed to the factors stated above being the reason for news censorship in Nigeria.

Research Question 4:

To what extent do you believe that news censorship acts as a factor which influences the media, reducing media freedom and flexibility to perform its duties and functions to the society?

Table 9

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	99	33
BELIEVE	101	33.67
DISBELIEVE	57	19
STRONGLY DISBELIEVE	43	14.33
TOTAL	300	100%

From table 9, From Table 8, 99(33%) of the respondents strongly believed that news censorship acts as a factor which reduces media freedom and

flexibility to perform its duties and functions to the society, 101(33.67%) believed, whilst 57 (19%) disbelieved and 43(14.33%) strongly disbelieved.

This simply states that a majority of the respondents believed in the factors stated above being an effect of news censorship in Nigerian media houses.

Research Question 5:

To what extent do you agree that news censorship affects media credibility?

Table 10

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	150	50
AGREE	90	30
DISAGREE	40	13.3
STRONGLY DISAGREE	20	6.7
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 10, 150(50%) strongly agreed that news censorship affects media credibility, 90(30%) agreed to the statement, whilst 40(13.3%) disagreed and 20(7%) strongly disagreed. This simply states that a larger number of the respondents agreed to the factor of news censorship affecting news credibility in

Nigerian media houses.

Research Question 6:

To what extent do you believe that news censorship has an impact on media independence and fairness in sharing information?

Table 11

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	151	50.33
BELIEVE	90	30
DISBELIEVE	50	16.67
STRONLY DISBELIEVE	9	3
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 11, 151(50.33%) strongly believed that news censorship has an impact on media independence and fairness in sharing information, 90(30%) believed, while 50(16.67%) disbelieved and 9(3%) strongly disbelieved. This states clearly that a greater number of the respondents believe news censorship does impact media independence

and fairness in sharing information.

Research Question 7:

How often have you witnessed first-hand news censorship influencing the information received through the media houses in Nigeria?

Table 12

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
VERY OFTEN	10	3.3
OFTEN	120	40
RARELY	150	50
NEVER	20	6.70
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 12, 10(3.3%) very often had witnessed news censorship influencing the information received through the media houses in Nigeria, 120(40%) has often times witnessed such, while 150(50%) has rarely witnessed such, 20(6.70%) has never witnessed such. This simply states that majority of the respondents has at rare number of times witnessed at first hand the influence of news

censorship on the information received through media houses in Nigeria.

Research Question 8:

To what extent do you believe that the media houses in Nigeria could possibly still support freedom of expression as a societal responsibility whilst still facing that factor “news censorship?”

Table 13

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	34	11.33
BELIEVE	116	38.67
DISBELIEVE	126	42
STRONLY DISBELIEVE	24	8
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 13, 34(11.33%) strongly believed media houses could still support freedom of expression as a societal responsibility whilst facing news censorship as a factor, 116(38.67%) believed, whilst 126(42%) disbelieved and 24(8%) strongly disbelieved. The four opposing sides balances a merging percentage showing the respondents are even in their beliefs and

disbelief of the statement above.

Research Question 9:

To what extent do you agree to the belief that news censorship influences the media in Nigeria, hindering the development of a democratic society?

Table 14

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	119	39.67
AGREE	101	33.67
DISAGREE	22	7.33
STRONGLY DISAGREE	58	19.33
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 14, 119(39.67) strongly agreed to the belief that news censorship hinders the development of a democratic society in relations to Nigeria and its media, 101(33.67) agreed, whilst 22(7.33) disagreed and 58(19.33%) strongly disagreed. This simply states that majority of the respondents agreed to the

above statement.

Research Question 10:

To what extent do you believe that news censorship has an effect on peoples trust and their choice of media in the Nigerian media?

Table 15

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	99	33
BELIEVE	99	33
DISBELIEVE	72	24
STRONLY DISBELIEVE	30	10
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 15, 99(33%) strongly believed that news censorship affects people's trust in Nigerian mass media, 99(33%) believed, whilst 72(24%) disbelieved and 30(10%) strongly disbelieved. This simply states that majority of the respondents believed in the above statement.

Research Question 11:

To what extent do you believe that news censorship impacts the trust worthiness, and factual reality presentation in media contents in the Nigerian media houses?

Table 16

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	97	32.33
BELIEVE	53	17.67
DISBELIEVE	61	20.33
STRONGLY DISBELIEVE	89	29.67
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 16, 97(32.33%) strongly believed in the above statement of news censorship's impact on the trust worthiness of media content in Nigeria, 53(17.67%) believed, whilst 61(20.33%) disbelieved and 80(29.67%) strongly disbelieved. This simply states that, there was an average margin between the respondents in the above claim, asserting a tie

between their choices on the above statement.

Research Question 12:

To what extent do you believe that news censorship has an effect on peoples trust in the Nigerian media?

Table 17

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	99	33
BELIEVE	99	33
DISBELIEVE	72	24
STRONGLY DISBELIEVE	30	10
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 17, 99(33%) strongly believed that news censorship affects people's trust in Nigerian mass media, 99(33%) believed, whilst 72(24%) disbelieved and 30(10%) strongly disbelieved. This simply states that majority of the respondents believed in the above statement.

Research Question 13:

To what extent do you agree that media houses in Nigeria, should take measures to counter the effect of news censorship?

Table 18

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	133	44.33
AGREE	102	34
DISAGREE	57	19
STRONGLY DISAGREE	8	2.67
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 18, 133(44.33%) strongly agreed to the above suggestion, of taking measures to counter the effect of news censorship, 102(34%) agreed to the suggestion, whilst 57(19%) disagreed and 8(2.67%) strongly disagreed. This simply states that a majority

of the respondents, agree to the above suggestion.

Research Question 14:

To what extent do you believe news censorship to be a necessity and in certain situations?

Table 19

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	79	26.33
BELIEVE	69	23
DISBELIEVE	80	26.67
STRONGLY DISBELIEVE	72	24
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 19, 79(26.33%) strongly believed that news censorship is a necessity in certain situations, 69(23%) believed, whilst 80(26.67%) disbelieved and 72(24%) strongly disbelieved. This simply states that, although close to margin, a slight majority of the respondents does not believe in the necessity of news

censorship in certain situations.

Research Question 15:

To what extent do you agree to the possible usage of alternative ways to address media concerns in Nigeria without resorting to news censorship?

Table 20

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY AGREE	88	29.33
AGREE	106	35.33
DISAGREE	63	21
STRONGLY DISAGREE	43	14.34
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 20, 88(29%) strongly agreed to the usage of alternative ways to address media concerns on Nigeria other than news censorship, 106(35.33%) agreed, whilst 63(21%) disagreed and 43(14.34%) strongly disagreed. This simply states that majority of the respondents agreed to the above statement.

Research Question 16:

In your opinion, to what extent do you believe that steps should be taken to reduce or eliminate news censorship in Nigeria?

Table 21

VARIABLES	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGE
STRONGLY BELIEVE	150	50
BELIEVE	84	28
DISBELIEVE	57	19
STRONGLY DISBELIEVE	9	3
TOTAL	300	100%

From Table 21, 150(50%) strongly believed that steps should be taken to reduce or eliminate news censorship in Nigeria, 84(28%) believed, whilst

57(19%) disbelieved and 9(3%) strongly disbelieved. This simply states that majority of the respondents believed in the above suggestion to

employ steps which could reduce or eliminate news censorship in Nigerian media houses.

Discussion of Finding

In this section the data collected from the survey on the topic “Abia State University student’s perception of the influence of news censorship on the performance of media houses in Nigeria” would be discussed. The data contained in the fully completed copies of questionnaire retrieved from the 300 respondents would be discussed. Responses on research questions would be discussed.

Research question 1: How much do Abia State University students know about news censorship, its practice and influence on media houses in Nigeria?

The aim of this research question, was to find out the extent at which Abia state University students were aware of news censorship, its practice and effect on media houses in Nigeria. The data on table 6, 7, 8 and 9 were used to answer this research question.

The data on table 6 showed 85(28%) of the respondents indicated of being strongly aware of the factor and practice of news censorship in media houses in Nigeria, 151(50%) indicated they were aware, whilst 53(17.67%) indicated they were slightly aware and 11(3.67) states that they aren’t aware of such a factor or practice

Table 7 indicated that, 90(30%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the stated definition of censorship, 137(45.67%) agreed, whilst 54(18%) disagrees to the definition and 19(6.33) strongly disagrees.

Table 8 indicated, that 145(48.33%) of the respondents strongly agreed to the factors stated above, as being the reasons for news censorship in Nigerian media Houses, 122(40.67%) agreed, whilst 23(7.67%) disagreed and 10(3.33%) strongly disagreed.

Table 9 indicated that, 8, 99(33%) of the respondents strongly believed that news censorship acts as a factor which influences the media, by reducing the media’s freedom and flexibility to perform its duties and functions to the society, 101(33.67%) believed, whilst 57 (19%) disbelieved and 43(14.33%) strongly disbelieved.

From the findings above, it was obvious that all the respondents of the research, knew to a reasonable extent about news censorship and also agreed

majorly to the definition of news censorship and as well as its restrictive influence of news censorship on media houses in Nigeria.

Research Question 2: Does news censorship affect media independence, and how much Abia State University students trust media information?

The aim of this research question, was to find out how news censorship affects the independence of media houses in Nigeria, as well as the trust of Abia state University students in information passed by the media houses in Nigeria. The data on table 10, 11 and 12 were used to answer this research question.

Table 10 showed that, 150(50%) strongly agreed that news censorship affects media credibility, 90(30%) agreed to the statement, whilst 40(13.3%) disagreed and 20(7%) strongly disagreed.

Table 11 showed that, 151(50.33%) strongly believed that news censorship has an impact on media independence and fairness in sharing information, 90(30%) believed, while 50(16.67%) disbelieved and 9(3%) strongly disbelieved.

Table 12 showed that, 10(3.3%) very often that the respondents had witnessed news censorship influencing the information received through the media houses in Nigeria, 120(40%) has often times witnessed such, while 150(50%) has rarely witnessed such, 20(6.70%) has never witnessed such.

From the Findings above, it is clear that news censorship affects majority of the respondents trust in media information as well as it restricts media independence in Nigeria.

Research Questions 3: Do Abia state university students see news censorship as a factor that impacts the media, restricting it from performing its societal responsibilities and supporting freedom of expression?

The aim of this research question, was to find out to what extent Abia state University student’s think news censorship impacts the media’s societal responsibility and its support for freedom of expression whilst facing news censorship. Table 13 and 14 were used to answer this research question.

Table 13 showed that, 34(11.33%) strongly believed media houses could still support freedom of expression as well as discharge other easily other societal responsibility whilst facing news censorship as a factor, 116(38.67%) believed, whilst 126(42%)

disbelieved and 24(8%) strongly disbelieved.

Table 14 showed that, 119(39.67) strongly agreed to the belief that news censorship hinders the development of a democratic society in relations to Nigeria and its media, 101(33.67) agreed, whilst 22(7.33) disagreed and 58(19.33%) strongly disagreed.

From the findings above, it is clear that a marginalized amount of student's believe that media houses in Nigeria, could still perform their societal responsibilities despite the news censorship factor, whilst a similar average number, relatively did not believe, but this finding derails in concerns of a democratic society, as majority of the respondents believe that the factor of news censorship cripples the possibility of a democratic society in Nigeria.

Research Questions 4: How much of an impact does news censorship have on the choice of media and the trust levied on different media houses in Nigeria by Abia State University students?

The aim of this research question, was to find out if news censorship affects the media choice of Abia state University student's and how the trust certain media. Table 15, 16 and 17 were used in answering this research question.

Table 15 showed that, 99(33%) strongly believed that news censorship affects people's trust, impacting there choice of media in Nigeria, 99(33%) believed, whilst 72(24%) disbelieved and 30(10%) strongly disbelieved.

Table 16 showed that, 97(32.33%) strongly believed in the statement of news censorship's impacting the trust worthiness of media content in Nigeria media houses, 53(17.67%) believed, whilst 61(20.33%) disbelieved and 80(29.67%) strongly disbelieved.

Table 17 showed that, 99(33%) strongly believed that news censorship affects people's trust in Nigerian mass media, 99(33%) believed, whilst 72(24%) disbelieved and 30(10%) strongly disbelieved.

In view of the above findings, it is clear that majority of the respondents, change their choices of media and the way the trust media houses in Nigeria due to news censorship.

Research Questions 5: What are the thoughts of Abia State University students on how news censorship and its influence could be controlled or

minimized?

The aim of this research question, was to find out if the students of Abia state University student's see news censorship as a factor which should be removed or reduced in Nigerian media houses. Table 18, 19, 20 and 21 were used in answering this research question.

Table 18 shows that, 133(44.33%) strongly agreed to the suggestion, of taking measures to counter the effect of news censorship, 102(34%) agreed to the suggestion, whilst 57(19%) disagreed and 8(2.67%) strongly disagreed.

From Table 19, 79(26.33%) strongly believed that news censorship is a necessity in certain situations, 69(23%) believed, whilst 80(26.67%) disbelieved and 72(24%) strongly disbelieved.

From Table 20, 88(29%) strongly agreed to the usage of alternative ways to address media concerns on Nigeria other than news censorship, 106(35.33) agreed, whilst 63(21%) disagreed and 43(14.34) strongly disagreed.

From Table 21, 150(50%) strongly believed that steps should be taken to reduce or eliminate news censorship in Nigeria, 84(28%) believed, whilst 57(19%) disbelieved and 9(3%) strongly disbelieved.

From the findings above, majority of the respondents held that news censorship practice isn't a necessity and should be minimised in other to curb its effects on media houses, therefore diminishing its influence on the media and the trust of the people in the Nigerian media. The findings also clearly stated, that alternative measures could be adopted to curb the Nigerian media's excesses other than using the news censorship factor.

CONCLUSION

After the questionnaires were gathered and analyzed, it was observed in accordance with the results, that news censorship restricts certain rights and freedom of the media in Nigeria, therefore reducing the trust and belief of people in the media and the information they provide.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION, RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter provides the summary, conclusion and recommendation for this research

conducted on the topic.

Summary of Findings

This study was wholly aimed at understanding Abia State University student's perception of the influence of news censorship on the performance of media houses in Nigeria. Questionnaires were designed and distributed amongst 300 students of the University.

The first finding of the study, clearly revealed that news censorship significantly impacts the performance of media houses in Nigeria. Students recognized news censorship as a hindrance to the free operation of the media.

The second finding was that media bodies are often unable to function independently due to the interference of news censorship. This limitation restricts the flow of information and undermines the media's role as society's watchdog.

The third finding was that news censorship affects the credibility and fairness of information shared by the media. This decreases students' trust in media content and influences their media consumption choices.

The fourth finding was that students believe that news censorship diminishes the trustworthiness of media content by removing or altering information. This compromises the accuracy and reliability of news reporting.

The study concludes with the students ascertaining the need for measures to be taken to counter and reduce the influence of news censorship on the media, accordingly alternative approaches should be explored to address media concerns in Nigeria without relying solely on censorship.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of the study, it is evident that news censorship significantly impacts the performance of media houses in Nigeria. This influence extends to various aspects of media operations, including the freedom of expression and independence of media organizations. News censorship limits the ability of media houses to freely disseminate information and fulfill their role as public watchdogs. The study reveals that news censorship undermines the credibility of media content, leading to a decline in public trust in the

media.

Furthermore, news censorship restricts the flow of information and often leads to the removal or alteration of crucial details from news reports. As a result, the public may receive incomplete or distorted information, which can contribute to misinformation and a lack of understanding of critical issues. The study highlights the detrimental effects of news censorship on the quality and integrity of media content, emphasizing the need for measures to address this challenge.

In light of these findings, there is a pressing need to reduce the influence of news censorship on Nigerian media houses. It is imperative to explore alternative approaches that promote transparency, accountability, and freedom of expression within the media industry. By adopting better measures to address the concerns of media houses, policymakers can ensure that the media can operate effectively and serve the public interest without undue interference.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the main findings of this research the following recommendations were made to specifically address problems.

1. News censorship should be minimized and not totally discontinued as it relatively has its graces, which protects the people in certain ways.
2. New polices should be made to minimize the practice of news censorship
3. Media houses should employ qualified journalist who can practice in a professional way, while the practicing unqualified journalist should take on training in the Profession.
4. Media houses should be well funded as this would go a long way in reducing the Suppression of news stories media houses should come up with credible and reliable news and information as it would increase the trust of the people, as well as fostering independence of the organization.
5. Employees should be sufficiently paid in other to curb the temptation of Indulging in unethical practices such as accepting brown envelopes, to curb the suppression of news

stories, and enhance fair sharing of information.

6. Government should give the media the benefit of doubt to perform their duty

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