

Reconciling Journalistic Professionalism With The Quality of News In Print Media: An Example of The Kenyan Press

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Abstract

Influential discourses on news presentation across conventional newspapers consistently undervalue the final causality of insufficient journalistic professionalism in the embodiment of biased news on such platforms. This undervaluation manifests primarily in manifold media discourses in Kenya, where ongoing ampliative and existential statements on the concatenation of lower levels of journalistic professionalism, and biased news on newspapers, are either rudimentary or bland and vague. An iterative review of these discourses suggests that newspapers' news biases are products of external interference from market-forces and the most influential actors' egoism. This functionalist conceptual traction, which is deeply entrenched in the cognitions, affective, and evaluation of the kleptocratic class in the production of biased news in Kenya's press, intends to reproduce unhelpful topoi of looking at the dialectic consilience of such bias in its entirety. In the context of this straw position, there is a need to subsume this framework of thinking into that of a news reporter's unpropitious conduct in newsgathering and delivery. This paper is ergo pedestaled on interactionist dualism in demonstrating how a news reporter's deficient rectitude underpins a legacy of biased news in Kenya's press. It provides a perfect backdrop for a systematic and rigorous analysis by propounding, in a rationalist fashion, the exclusionary and inclusionary decisions that are derivable from a professional journalist ipso facto a print medium's news reporter. It makes an ineliminable link to the ideal observer theories of ethics in affording leverage points to reconcile journalistic unprofessionalism with pejorative news production. It adopts a qualitative systematic review research design in its underlying commitment to bring about such linkage to the fore by analyzing relevant secondary data. This analysis demonstrates inter-rater reliability through media experts' holistic views that many news reporters succumb to coercion in the form of goodies to produce biased news. There is Pyrrhonism that the trend will

change, given the zeitgeist of this era that contributes to news reporters' lack of probity. It is proposed that individuals such as these experts are better placed to advocate for adopting a desirable and obligatory approach to news reporting in Kenya's press.

Keywords: *Biased news, ideal observers, journalistic professionalism, morality, newspapers*

I. Introduction

The whole gamut of crafting and structuring soft and hard news and disseminating them through newspapers can benefit consumers in a myriad of ways. One beneficial value that can be attached as an example is awareness creation regarding what is transpiring within this audience's environs, which can be crucial in granting them new potency to initiate and implement vital decisions about their livelihoods. Another example is that such news may provide mass education to an audience, including those segments that have been denied the same as a result of marginalization based on the matrix of oppressive and exclusive structures. There is an underlying assumption that empowerment of such an audience through awareness creation and education can only be achieved if news reporters are governed by the conscious intentionality of more creativity, hard work, and professionalism in gathering, processing, and presenting news. It is perceived that such objectivistic dispositions are essential in bringing forth news that appears neutral, progressive, and necessary. In this way, this news will carry with them a systematic reflection of a newspaper driven primarily by a set of explicit and universally agreed-upon normative structures of the logic and purpose of mass media.

Critical forms of reflexive thinking developed from interpretative approaches to media studies signify that much news in newspapers is disproportionate today and has, for this reason, diluted and corrupted the media's logic and purpose. There is a certain realm of probability about the conveyance of this kind of news that finds resonance in the global south countries and Kenya more distinctly. Indeed,



provocative analysis and a great deal of evidence demonstrate that such news is the media's 'sobering counterpart' in Kenya and that they are explicitly burgeoning on its newspapers. Such bias has garnered a groundswell of overarching concerns about the partisan approach of the country's press and initiated, in this way, a series of exploratory research studies gravitating towards establishing several complementary policy prescriptions designed to respond to this partiality.

An observable pattern that emerges in these studies, which forms a basis for their recommendations, is the notions of power through the interference of the dominant power bloc in the region, including government officials, politicians, media owners, news editors, advertisers, and many other influential groups. Recommendations based on the emphasis of such groups alone may lead to questioning of the soundness of their practical effectiveness, given that such scope appears parochial and, for this reason, incapable of providing a useful backdrop for conducting an analysis of this phenomenon (biased news) in toto.

In the context of such limitation, there is a need to juxtapose a journalist's role against those of these most influential groups in developing a clear or comprehensive framework that will elicit a concrete exploration of the deterministic causes of imbalanced news on newspapers. The incorporation of such a framework of thinking is essential given that print journalists are a distinct engine behind the ebb and flow of such news, and understanding the role they play in this sense may help break down the complexities and fill in the evidence gaps into a meaningful analysis that provides a springboard to action.

This paper is intent in this context to explore the role of news reporters in the production of imbalanced news on newspapers in Kenya. To achieve this objective's successful realization, it begins by presenting a systematic and rigorous review of contending discourses on the universally agreed upon expected journalistic professionalism standards in news production. Such review is crucial because it demonstrates an antithesis of how news reporters' lower levels of journalistic professionalism, or lack thereof, are directly linked to the production of biased news. It then presents an analysis derived from the review of scholarship dealing with the ideal observer theories of ethics. This analysis is essential as its core formulation derives posteriori knowledge that provides useful terms of reference for this paper's analysis of the retrieved secondary data.

II. An overview of the link between journalistic professionalism and news production

Many existing studies in the broader literature have tried to present clear and comprehensive narratives about the understanding of journalistic professionalism in news production in newspapers. Within such narratives, one observable pattern that emerges is that journalistic professionalism is firmly founded within the logic of morality and ethics, where it is governed by a system that

holds that even though news reporters wield the power of the press, they are not expected to abuse it. In other words, these reporters are discouraged from taking advantage of this power to achieve their gains that fall within the realms of social, economic, and political interests but encouraged to use it instead to achieve the public good that is contingent on the application and amplification of norms like; accuracy, unselfishness, fairness, and goodwill in news production. This standard is comparatively seen as a benchmark of journalistic professionalism acquired from higher education, distinguishing it from amateur or citizen journalism. Based on this comparison, journalistic professionalism is exemplified as legal and therefore rendering a professional news reporter, in this way, dominant and authoritative than an amateur or a citizen journalist (Adam, 2001; Bacon, 2006; Ehrlich & Saltzman, 2015).

It is probably possible that such a conclusion may also be arrived at if one was to analyze the existing set of internationally circulating principles of journalism's accepted practice. This eventuality may arise because such principles resonate with the broad conceptualization of journalistic professionalism as articulated in the previous paragraph. It is easy to establish in the literature that these globally circulating consensus-based principles emerged within the context of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's (UNESCO) discussions that occurred in the early 1980s in Mexico, the Czech Republic, and France. In such literature, the emergence of these principles resulted from the participants' realization in these discussions of a need to develop professional journalistic norms at an international level that would serve as a standard reference for journalistic practice in different parts of the world. In other words, it was anticipated that such principles would cascade to various localized contexts to ensure the streamlining of news reporting in those regions.¹

Indeed, a series of recent studies indicate that such universally accepted professional norms for news reporters have since been incorporated into various newspaper-related policies and legal documents across different localized contexts. It is argued in the literature that such adoptions became possible through the joint efforts of many like-minded actors who were keen on protecting newspapers' operations from external disruptions and also ensuring that such medium served its purpose as expected (Deuze, 2005; Kunelius, 2003). In ensuring that this purpose would be served adequately, it is noted that some of these actors further lobbied for the establishment of media-centric agencies whose recognition would be anchored in law and whose primary concern would be to ensure that newspaper reporters stuck to their journalistic code of ethics in news production. It is possible to recognize from a considerable body of literature that such initiatives materialized in some contexts (Deuze, 2005; Kumar, 2006; Kunelius, 2003). An

¹ <https://research.tuni.fi/ethicnet/country/international-principles-of-professional-ethics-in-journalism/>

example can be given in this regard to the establishment of the Media Council of Kenya (MCK), whose operation is understood to have fundamentally and consistently helped ensure that news reporters in Kenya uphold professional journalistic norms in their work.²

Dominant narratives show how such news reporters' adherence to professional journalistic norms contributes to the final product of news they present in newspapers. These narratives strongly suggest that such news contains information that is usually unbiased and impartial as its composition is conceived and implemented in a way that appears independent, proportional, and comprehensive. This comprehensiveness is demonstrated by news angles that are developed in a balanced way by the use of adequate resources that appear credible. It is easy to pick out such credibility in this news as their content is devoid of rumors and speculations. It is possible to make this observation, given that such content reflects accuracy, fairness, and truthfulness in their makeup. This reflection is also indicative of content whose final composition does not project traces of conflicts of interest (Champion, 2014; Potter & United States Department of State Bureau of International Information Programs, 2006).

On the flip side, it is argued in the literature that these traces of conflicts can be noticed quickly in the news whose production was not done in strict adherence to journalism's professional norms. This recognition may result, given that biases and partiality of the information provided in such news are easily discernible. Indeed, it is noted in the reviewed commentaries that the ease at which such detectability becomes possible is due to the presentation of one-sided views in this news. Commentators argue that in most cases, such presentation is deliberate because some news reporters are intent on using space in newspapers to promote particular causes, such as political agendas, for their benefit. Some commentators decry this habit as misleading and consider it more of a problem than the prevalent challenge of fake news (Lotan, 2016; Parker & Berman, 2016).

Clearly, in this brief discussion, it is possible to see how news reporters' strict observance of professional journalistic norms is crucial in resolving such problem of misleading a newspaper's audience. As we have seen, it is clear from the discussion of such norms that their initial articulation occurred within two levels, global and regional, and they resonate with each other. It would seem from such resonance that different global and local actors were keen on ensuring that journalistic professionalism's adherence receives much emphasis in news production. Indeed, it was demonstrated that such actors lobbied to establish media-centric organizations in various localized contexts that would facilitate such adoption. This adoption puts a news reporter's morality and ethics into sharp focus, as the discussion in this section demonstrates how they are indelibly intertwined with

journalistic professionalism's adherence or lack of it. The next section's discussion explores this connection further through the review of ideal observer theories of ethics.

III. Ideal observer theories of ethics

Historical studies of philosophy and phenomenology broadly claim that ideal observer theories are centrally informed by an understanding that a moral judgment's truth is determined by the attitudes of the so-called ideal observers (IOs), who are considered to be perfectly rational, impartial, and well-informed individuals. Based on such attributes, it is often argued that these IOs hardly go wrong in their moral judgments because they possess crucial information and do not hold false beliefs, all of which contribute to their consistency and unbiased nature (Brandt, 1955; Carson, 1984; Smith 1994).

Indeed, it is possible to realize in the literature regarding ethics that this argument forms a basis of an ongoing intellectual discourse whose initial articulation began in the eighteenth century through the Scottish philosophers; Hutcheson, Hume, and Smith's naturalism views about the standard moral assessment of a character trait or action. Their holistic views have since formed a pedestal for the completion of several seminal contributions in morality and ethics, with one of the most notable ones being Firth's (1952) study on ethical absolutism and the ideal observer. Other notable contributions include studies conducted by influential philosophers such as Richard Brandt, Thomas Carson, R. M. Hare, Michael Smith, Charles Taliaferro, and many others (Kawall, 2013).

As briefly outlined in this section's first paragraph, there is a general consensus-based claim among many such philosophers that IOs embody impartial and universalizable perspectives. Therefore, they argue in this context that the IOs form a class of experts within any specific area of interest. These philosophers argue, ergo repeatedly, that these experts are better placed to make assessments in their respective fields and, in this way, develop and provide unflawed guidelines that are worthy of attention by everyone who is associated, in one way or another, to those particular fields (Carson, 1984; Firth, 1952; Smith, 2004). In this context, then, it is possible to argue that those individuals who constructed the professional norms of journalism, and advocated for their adherence by news reporters, as shown in the previous discussion, are akin to such experts being referred to here in the previous sentence. Indeed, this ought to be the case given that in the literature about the ideal observer theories, commentators repeatedly present a shared understanding that all relevant IOs, such as these experts, appraise an action or event's moral status as of right or wrong, or as good or bad.

However, some commentators caution that some IOs are not sufficiently qualified to make such moral judgments. They point out that these IOs are deficient, in this way, as they cannot develop and provide determinate

² <https://www.mediacouncil.or.ke/>

responses or attitudes in various situations because their knowledge is limited due to lack of all facts relevant to such situations. In some cases, it is assumed that these situations place some constraints on the acquisition and processing of such facts by the IOs because they are beyond human beings' capacities (Brandt, 1955; Carson, 1984; Kawall, 2002; Sayre-McCord, 1994). In this sense, it would appear that the core object of critique in this scenario is the general attribution of omniscience to the IOs by some theorists.

It is worth mentioning that other theorists have responded to this skepticism in their various studies by demonstrating that even though the IOs may not possess all the relevant facts, they can still garner an adequate stock of information that they need to make reliably informed judgments. In this context, it is repeatedly argued that such judgments are plausible in the sense that these IOs maximally possess a set of systematically justifiable desires and are not subject to the effects of any physical or emotional disruptions (Kawall, 2002; Smith, 2004). In this regard, it would seem that despite the scepticism mentioned above, the IOs are beyond reproach and, for this reason, can still be trusted to offer moral guidance within their respective fields of expertise.

At this juncture, it can be argued that moral principles are an essential enrichment of various professional fields' formulated codes of conduct for those practicing in those respective fields. With this argument in mind, it would appear that people who participate in such formulations are the IOs, who, as we have seen in this discussion, are individuals who possess authoritative knowledge in their respective professional areas. There is a strong emphasis that such individuals are better placed to formulate such guidelines as they hold universalizable perspectives, are non-partisan, and do not stand to benefit in any way from the guidelines they articulate. As such, the ideal observer theories of ethics demonstrate that those who articulated the professional norms of journalism as a benchmark for all practicing journalists in different parts of the world are the IOs. This recognition helps us to understand, in particular, the critical role of these individuals in determining and evaluating the conduct of news reporters through the news they produce in newspapers.

IV. Methodology – A qualitative systematic review research design

As already established, this study aimed to gain insight into the unique concatenation of the Kenyan news reporters' lower levels of journalistic professionalism, or absolute lack of it, and biased news production on Kenya's newspapers. Therefore, as the initial step geared towards achieving this study's objective, the first task included generally retrieving secondary data on the broader subject of news bias in the Kenyan press for review. It was proposed that the retrieved data would be used as an actual depiction of the kind of bias that currently exists in the Kenyan newspapers' news. It was assumed that the secondary data that would best bring about

this reality was the ones obtained from books and journal articles, evaluative reports commissioned by different media stakeholders, unpublished dissertations, papers presented in various conferences and workshops, and newspaper and website articles. This presupposition was based on the understanding that those who had gathered these secondary data were media scholars who could easily fit into the category of the IOs as described in the previous section.

Having retrieved the study's secondary data for review, the second task involved purposively identifying the most recent ones as these were the most preferred for analysis. This preference was mainly based on the period the media scholars had gathered and presented these data through their various forms, and it was anticipated that such should not have been older than two decades by the time of writing this paper. The data collected and presented within this timeframe were selected as they were considered the most appropriate for analysis.

After settling on these data, the main task of analyzing them by way of integrative review began. We anticipated that the analysis framework that we had already established in the previous discussions would play a fundamental role in providing a valuable backdrop for this task. In more general terms, this framework would offer essential terms of reference for interpreting and understanding news bias in the Kenyan press. More particularly, the articulation of the *ideal observer theories of ethics* would provide a better way for analyzing such bias by deriving dialectic inductions regarding why they are produced and disseminated in such a manner. In more particular terms, it would entail bringing into sharp focus the news reporters' adherence to the professional norms of journalism that the IOs articulated and the degree to which it contributes to this bias in newspapers.

With these essential terms of reference in mind, the most crucial task of reading and rereading the selected secondary data to gain a general understanding of the kind of bias that the IOs identified on the news in the Kenyan press began. As this process went on, it was possible to see the main ideas regarding the bias that these IOs expressed in their data. It was then decided that these ideas had to be divided into smaller parts referred to as the meaning units. It was essential to condense these units further. This process was carried out while ensuring that the core meaning was still retained. These condensed meaning units were labeled by way of formulating codes and then grouping them into themes. Once this process was complete, the main task of analyzing and drawing conclusions in response to this study's objective took shape (Erlingsson & Petra, 2017; Luo, 2019).

V. Ineliminable link of journalistic unprofessionalism in news bias in the Kenyan press

The discussion in this section represents this paper's core area as it focuses on the analysis of the retrieved relevant secondary data obtained from the sources mentioned in the previous section. For analytical clarity purposes, this analysis

begins by establishing professional journalistic norms foregrounded in Kenya, followed by the various media commentators' general perception regarding how the Kenyan news reporters generally adhere to such norms. It then moves to a more detailed examination of how these commentators broadly present this perception by taking on the kind of news disseminated in most Kenyan newspapers. The discussion concludes by locating how the insights derived from the obtained commentaries resonate with the ones derived in this paper's earlier discussions.

At the very outset, it is noticeable from the reviewed secondary data that professional norms for journalism in Kenya are well articulated and presented by mass communication statutory institutions through their various documentation modes. It is possible to confirm and verify from these documentations that accuracy and fairness are the foregrounded journalistic norms for all news reporters in Kenya.³ Several commentators argue in their various forms of writings that this foregrounding is deliberate because these norms' strict adherence leads to unbiased news where all sides to a story are represented. Given that such stories are usually public interest stories, it is noted that if one side is not fairly covered and that the stories are full of distortions and inaccuracies, the news reporters through their print media institutions are obligated to apologize and effect corrections immediately. In other words, this formulation holds that news that fails to meet the standards of accuracy and fairness is not publishable (Masaviru, 2015; Nyabuga, 2012; Simiyu, 2013).

It is probably most practical that inflexible news reporters, and by extension, all independent newspapers, are primarily unencumbered not to publish such stories. Perhaps because of this underlying presumption, independence is mentioned immediately after the principles of accuracy and fairness in the list of professional journalism codes in Kenya, as the other crucial pillar that 'propagules' unbiased news reporting. It is argued in the reviewed commentaries that strict adherence to this principle curtails imperiousness to external actors, which impedes, in turn, their control over news content. In this respect, news reporters are urged to report stories without fear or favor, and this entails not yielding to the interests of these external actors, who may include news sources, advertisers, influential individuals, and special interest groups. Also, it is worth mentioning that incontrovertible evidence draws some plausible link between the adherence of the other listed journalism codes of ethical practice and the attainment of unbiased news (Masaviru, 2015; Wanyama, 2009; Mbeke et al., 2010).

An observable pattern from the review of evidence and experts' opinions is that news reporters' inadequate compliance with professional journalism norms in collecting and delivering news in print media finds the most purchase in Kenya (Makokha, 2017; Mwaura et al., 2013; Mbeke et

al., 2010; Nyabuga, 2012; Ongalo, 2014; Ong'ayo, 2008). Evidence is mounting that this inadequacy poses a significant concern to several media stakeholders, especially the general public, given the profound generic 'trust' it had bestowed on journalists based on the understanding of their perfectionism to practice professionally as custodians and conveyors of information it needs. It is argued in the reviewed literature that the journalists' flagrant violation of their professional norms in their daily news gathering and processing is, therefore, most egregious, particularly in the eyes of this public that held them and arguably still holds them in high regard (Makokha, 2017; Mwaura et al., 2013). Commentators galvanize a consensus-based claim that such violation, which is evident through several news reports, has repeatedly exposed this public to one-sided or biased information, leaving them bereft of the kinds of information they sorely need. They generally argue that the production of such news in newspapers renders journalistic practice in Kenya tendentious and ineffective at realizing its specific objective of disseminating informative and unbiased content (Gathara, 2017; Mudhai, 2007; Nyanjom, 2012).

Commentators posit causal relationships between news reporters' pandering to partisan interests in their newsgathering and processing and this inefficiency. Their *parti pris* approach is thought to have contributed to a derisory effect in the news, and as a result, garnered their widespread and sustained refutations across the country (Expression Today, 2011; Makokha, 2017). These refutations have easily distilled into significant complaints that have been channeled to relevant statutory bodies against some news reporters through the media institutions where they work. Commentators point out, in this context, that these bodies have since received prominent complaints, especially from respective influential people whom such news has brought harm to as they have been unfairly covered in them. Here it is noted that such bodies, upon completion of their independent investigations into such complaints, have reinforced these complaints acceptance as valid, and in this way, some media institutions have had to apologize on behalf of their news reporters. Others have been forced to pay for damages due to these reporters' breach of journalistic codes in their news reports (Makokha, 2017; Media Council of Kenya, 2014).

A large number of existing studies demonstrate a fatalistic view about how a vast range of issues precludes some news reporters from observing these fundamental canons of professional ethics. Within these studies, it is argued that the main issue that consigns them to a position of violating their ethical standards is the wretched salaries they receive. Due to this poor pay, these reporters easily capitulate to coercion in the form of money or other goodies to present news in a manner that meets the givers' interests (Mbeke et al., 2010; Ogongo-Ongong'a & White, 2008). On this conception, journalism ethicists argue that news reporters are not always approached for such deals, but rather some of them also approach the givers with proposals of writing news

³ <https://accountablejournalism.org/ethics-codes/Kenya-Mass-Media>

that favors them in return for significant proceeds (Makokha, 2017; Ongalo, 2014; Ong'ayo, 2008; Simiyu, 2013).

Another issue that is thought to aid these reporters' breach of professional norms is the dangers they are exposed to in their practice, including possible murder, abductions, arrests, assault, and job terminations. Within discussions of this nature, it is possible to identify cases where some news reporters have indeed encountered such atrocious acts, forcing those who have learned of such incidences to apply 'Darwinianism theory' in their daily practice, such as that of the promotion of one-sided or biased information in news reports. It is understood that the newspapers' leading advertisers also fuel such bias. In this context, it is often explicitly argued that any emerging negative story about these advertisers is either given a wide berth by news reporters or tweaked at a positive angle. It is pointed out that such action is ubiquitously connected to the continuous flow of revenue from such advertisers, and the main actors who are understood to sustain such connection by fueling partisan approach to news production include editors, media owners, and the media's most significant shareholders (Helander, 2010; Mbeke et al., 2010; Nyabuga, 2012; Simiyu, 2013).

Within this understanding of partisan reporting, anecdotal evidence suggests that it also exists to benefit several other actors different from the newspapers' leading advertisers, including politicians, political parties, government officials, top companies in the region, and the government. Even though these actors' understanding can be convolutedly interwoven with that of advertisers, it is possible to encounter philosophical fallibilism in the reviewed literature about some stories being crafted in their favor even though they are not one of the advertisers in the newspapers where such stories appear. This scenario may be taken to mean that such stories are crafted in such manner as an individual benefit to news reporters, editors, or newspaper owners but not to the newspaper as a single entity (Helander, 2010; Makokha, 2017; Ong'ayo, 2008).

However, some commentators caution against the assumption that such partisanship is always the case in Kenya by illustrating how some journalists have risen against their interests and those of other influential actors by sticking to their professional norms of practice in their journalistic exploits. They point out that there are some cases where various media-centric bodies have recognized such journalists through their various awards for their professionalism and creativity.⁴ There are claims that even though such awards could be faddish, they are necessary and crucial in encouraging all news reporters to be more professional and creative in their journalistic practice (Simiyu, 2019; Wabwire, 2015).

Within this discussion of how journalistic unprofessionalism has been the boon for biased news production in Kenya's press, there is an ongoing

acknowledgment of the IOs, whom we encountered earlier in this paper, who participated in the articulation of this country's professional journalistic norms and various commentaries regarding their adherence by news reporters. By the very nature of such involvement, we have seen how they are better placed in evaluating news reporters' professional conduct through the news reports they present in Kenyan newspapers. By reviewing some of their evaluations in this discussion, we have seen that while some news reporters adhere to their professional norms, others violate them. We saw a vast range of issues inimical to the adherence of these norms by some news reporters. The following section presents proposals in light of such issues.

VI. Conclusion and recommendations

The review of the retrieved secondary data in Section Five suggests that Kenya's media commentators, otherwise referred to as the IOs in this paper, are cognizant of context-specific professional journalism norms that all newspaper reporters must model in newsgathering and presentation. We saw that these IOs articulate such norms under the aegis of different statutory bodies in Kenya and their other various capacities, including academic and non-academic domains. It emerged within the review of their commentaries that, indeed, some of these IOs have attempted to evaluate how news reporters are modeling their professional code of ethics in Kenya. We saw that whereas some of them are adhering to these codes of ethics, others are not. This violation, as we saw, is driven primarily by a vast range of issues, including specific dangers to news reporters, their poor remuneration, and influence from different figures of authority.

In light of these deleterious effects on professional news reporting, it can be concluded that the future of professional reporting in Kenya's press cannot be guaranteed with such impediments unaddressed. It is, instead, the continued commitment of the IOs that will ensure the success of professional news reporting in the country's press through relevant media policy developments. To ensure that this policy intervention succeeds, it may be valuable to return to the existing guidelines for journalistic practice and find out how best they can be improved. As part of doing this, attention should be paid to how news reporters' safety can be guaranteed, how news reporters can engage their employers better on their remuneration package, incentive strategies, and better mechanisms for dealing with external disruption from the dominant bloc in news reporting. However, it is unlikely that these guidelines will be implemented without a substantial effort on the Kenyan government to create an environment in which this becomes a reality. Also, news reporters will need to build 'insurgent consciousness' that will coalesce into the realization of higher professionalism levels in newsgathering and presentation in Kenya's press.

Such processes geared towards the realization of professionalism in news reporting would also benefit from further research of this paper's nature that can build on its insights. In this respect, it is proposed that there is a

⁴ <https://www.icfj.org/our-work/michael-elliott-award-excellence-african-storytelling>

particular need for an empirical study drawing on the insights of the IOs and newspaper reporters in Kenya through qualitative interviews. Their insights may provide helpful guidelines for articulating approaches to professional reporting that are appropriate to the local context. At the same time, it is of equal importance to conduct a directed qualitative content analysis to contribute to the understanding of requirements needed to facilitate professionalism in newsgathering and presentation in Kenya's press.

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