Attitude of Television Journalists in South-South Nigeria to Citizen Journalism

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Abstract
Recognition of the ability of non-professionals to play an active role in the process of collecting, and sharing news is seen as one of the big shifts in journalism practice today. This informs the current effort to examine the attitude of television journalists in South-South Nigeria to citizen journalism. The survey design was adopted for the study. Data were obtained from a sample of 216 respondents drawn from nine television stations in six states in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. Since the population of journalists was not very large, census was done. The results show that journalists have a positive attitude to citizen journalism but rarely air reports emanating from citizens for want of institutional support. It is therefore recommended that news outfits encourage the citizens to embrace the opportunities that citizen journalism offers by making use of reports sent in by citizens as long as such reports meet basic journalism standards. Recognising that the adoption of citizens' reports by television journalists is based on how credible the source is, there is need to educate the citizens on rudiments of news gathering and reporting so they can effectively complement the efforts of professional journalists.

Keywords: Attitude, Citizen Journalism, Journalists, Television, Professionalism, South-South Nigeria.

Introduction

Over time, some scholars have observed that news dissemination has become more participatory, giving rise to what is widely known as citizen journalism. Citizen journalism has been defined by Bowman and Willis (2003, p. 9) as the act of a citizen, or group of citizens, playing an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and disseminating news and information. Some organisations now gather content from the public and integrate it into their coverage of events (Nguyen, 2006; Singer 2006; Storm 2007). Morris and Organ (1996) observe that the Internet presents

new opportunities to advance mass communication, while Friedland (1996) speculates that a new electronic democracy that gives greater opportunity for public discourse is imminent, and Bruns (2006) anticipates a paradigm shift, resulting in the emergence of citizen journalism.

The emergence of citizen journalism in Nigeria, according to Onyebuchi (2010), is as a result of the happenings around us which far outstrip the manifest content of the traditional mass media. For instance, on the 3rd of November, 2008, on Muhri Okunola Street, Victoria Island, Lagos, a young lady was driving home after a hectic day's work but due to the chaotic traffic situation, she could not move her car quickly enough out of the way of a naval officer's convoy. The Rear Admiral's convoy had six armed guards who physically assaulted the lady. Were it not for a citizen who captured the assault with a smart phone, it would have been business as usual where officers beat up people and nothing happens.

Following the assault, a Lagos High Court ordered the Nigerian Navy and the Rear Admiral to pay the young lady the sum of one hundred million naira as compensation. This experience and many more simply show that many events occur without being reported either because there is no conventional journalist on site or none assigned to cover such beat. Burkholder (2010, p. 1) captures the essence of this situation when she notes that "More often than not, major news happens and there is no one around to report it. By way of interviews and records of the event, reporters are able to re-create it… Unfortunately, there is usually not the opportunity to capture news in the making with a camera or photograph".

Considering the powerful role citizen journalism is playing, traditional media outlets are now devising ways to tell better stories to viewers with the help of user-submitted content, build a better relationship with the viewers, involving them in the news-making process, and helping them use the digital networks as more powerful channels of distribution for the content. In the light of the foregoing, this study set out to identify the attitude of television journalists in Nigeria to citizen journalism.

Statement of the Problem

The ability of non-professionals to play an active role in the process of collecting, reporting, analysing and sharing news and information is seen as one of the big shifts in journalism. But a growing body of research suggests that the advent of citizen journalism, or user-generated content (UGC), has done little to change the way the media work.

Research has shown that the mainstream media are trying to tame the phenomenon, with the journalists seeking to maintain their position of authority and power to gather, process and disseminate information rather than create a more open, transparent, and accountable journalistic process that seeks to raise prominence for viewers and listeners. People are becoming more and more actively involved in the creation of content. This should stimulate collaboration between professional and

amateur journalists. However, in Nigeria, the situation is unclear. In the opinion of Paulusseen and Ugille (2008, p. 25), "Mainstream media are reacting to the trend of user-generated content in an ambivalent way. Although a kind of consensus seems to have grown among media professionals that user-generated content is something they have to embrace, the current initiative taken by mainstream media against citizen journalism suggests that professional journalists are still resistant to the idea of opening up the news making process to users".

Paulusseen and Ugille (2008) note that this cautiousness and resistance among journalists is not just a matter of professional conservatism. They argue that it should be understood in the broader context of work practice, daily routines, organisational structures and role perceptions in the newsroom. The issues surrounding how citizen journalism works involve policy more than technology. In simple terms, a blog can embody citizen journalism. A website that only includes stories from nonprofessional journalists might be fully open, with all responsibility for the content resting with the contributors, or it can have some level of editorial oversight, in which case decisions must be made about the kind of oversight exerted, such as checking facts or editing grammar. For a mainstream news outlet that allows public comments or story submissions, policies must be established about these issues as well as those that could affect the organisation's credibility. It is not yet clear if television journalists in Nigeria use or feel comfortable with information, audio, videos or pictures from citizens.

This study therefore, sought to ascertain whether television journalists in South-South Nigeria accept and make use of information, audio, videos or pictures submitted by citizens.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of this study were to:-

1. determine the level of usage of citizen journalism content by television journalists in South-South Nigeria;
2. determine the attitude of television journalists in South-South Nigeria to citizen journalism;
3. verify the impact of citizens' reports on the credibility of news reported by television stations in South-South Nigeria as perceived by practicing journalists;
4. ascertain the criteria used by television journalists to determine the acceptability of citizen reports;
5. ascertain the constraints of television journalists in accepting citizen reports;
6. determine the prospects of citizen journalism on television stations in South-South Nigeria.

Research Questions
To achieve these objectives, the following questions were posed:
1. To what extent do television journalists in South-South Nigeria use citizen reports?
2. What is the attitude of television journalists in South-South Nigeria to citizen journalism?
3. What do television journalists perceive to be the impact of citizens' reports on the credibility of news reported by television stations in South-South Nigeria?
4. What criteria do television journalists use to determine the acceptability of citizens' reports?
5. What constraints face television journalists in accepting citizens' reports?
6. What prospects does citizen journalism have in television stations in South-South Nigeria?

Research Hypothesis
H_1: Television journalists' attitude to citizen journalism will determine their acceptance of citizen reports.

Literature Review
Recent communication technologies (computers and the Internet) have facilitated an undeniable media shift that is changing the way news is gathered, with one result being the phenomenon of participatory news dissemination (Singer, 2006; Deuze, Bruns & Neuberger, 2007, Gordon, 2007). This is a blending of public participation that involves bloggers who break the news on independent websites, and citizens who capture newsworthy events with cell phone cameras. The resulting material is often referred to as user-generated content, and Websites like YouTube and Wikipedia allow people to easily distribute and share such content (Van Dijck, 2009).

The structured nature of traditional media has tended to be exclusive in its selection of stories and their sources. Citizen journalism, however, seeks to open the practice up to the participation of ordinary people.

Mainstream media in the region have generally sought to distinguish themselves from citizen journalism, arguing that mainstream media content is factual, verified, placed in context and, therefore, more credible compared to information in blogs. However, it is reasonable to observe that fact checking occurs during blog comments and discussions, which further deepens discussions. It is also reasonable to argue that some of the citizen journalists aspire to be *professional* journalists, placing high standards of verification upon themselves in order to produce high-level content that has challenged mainstream media.

Livingston and Bennett (2003) argue that as communication technologies open new gates, new studies will be needed to measure changes in how the media

perform their duties. These new technologies include cell phones with cameras that anyone can use to capture and share newsworthy images with the media (Gordon, 2007). Interactivity, convergence, cross media, and "produsage" are terms used to describe the fundamental changes that have been taking place in the media.

Citizen journalism is gradually gaining recognition in Nigeria; this development, according to Nnanyelugo, Diri and Odii (2013), is attributable to the overwhelming use of the social media in the country. Many media organizations in Nigeria are yet to brace up to the challenges posed by the Internet and multi-media technology, which have opened up the media space to inject a level of participation for the audience in shaping media content. Thus, Gbemiga (2011) suggests that Nigerian media organizations must embrace the audience as collaborators and stakeholders in the business of news generation and distribution. Many mass media organizations in Nigeria have not developed applications to harness the benefits of citizen journalism; many believe that the Internet revolution and its associated threat to traditional journalism are still alien to Nigeria.

The Citizen journalist is essentially an independent operator, free of the constraints and bureaucracy of a professional newsroom. But working on one's own can make it difficult to gauge whether one is really doing the best work possible. Tony (2012) suggests nine tips that a good citizen journalist must adhere to. He suggests that a good citizen journalist must:

1. Follow a code of conduct;
2. Be a thorough reporter;
3. Be objective and fair;
4. Avoid libel;
5. Avoid plagiarism;
6. Learn the news writing format;
7. Learn associated press style;
8. Find a mentor and, lastly;
9. Obtain feedback.

From the above, if a citizen journalist wants to be respected as a journalist, he needs to conduct himself in a professional manner when covering stories. It takes real professionalism as a journalist to keep one's own views out of the story, and to be fair, even to people with whom one disagrees.

Theoretical Framework

This work is anchored on two mass communication theories known as gate-keeping theory and Democratic – Participant Media Theory.

Gate-Keeping Theory

Bittner (1989) defines the gate-keeper as any person or formally organised group directly involved in relaying or transferring information from one individual to

another through a mass medium. According to Folarin (2002), the concept of gatekeeping is based on the fact that no media organisation can transmit all the messages it receives in the course of the day's routine. Some individuals have to decide which information to transmit, which to defer, which to modify and which to delete entirely.

Bittner (1989) suggests three functions of the gatekeeper thus:

1. To limit the information members of the public receive by editing this information before it is disseminated to them;
2. To expand the amount of information the public receives by giving them additional facts or views and;
3. To reorganise or interpret the information.

This theory is relevant to the work because the basic tenet of the theory shows that journalists as gate keepers can and do control the news traffic of the media organisation.

Democratic – Participant Media Theory

This theory advocates the liberalisation of the media for the common good of the people it is meant to serve. It believes that the people should have free access to the means of communication in order to better their lot. In a way, the theory vehemently opposes the monopolistic and rigid structure of traditional mass media. This theory is also relevant to the work under investigation because it anchors itself on individual citizen's right of access to the media. This work focuses on the citizens' participation in information gathering and dissemination thereby using the media as a platform to contribute to national development.

Methodology

The study adopted the survey design with the questionnaire as main instrument for data gathering. The study covered the six states that make up the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria, consisting of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo and Rivers.

The population for this study comprised television journalists in the South-South geo-political zone of Nigeria. The study covered federal, state and privately-owned television broadcast stations within the area of study. The total population of journalists in the news departments of the television stations under study was 216, and since the population of the journalists was not very large, the entire population was polled. Thus 216 became the sample size.

The study comprised nine television stations: one Federal Government-owned Television Station:- Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) Yenagoa, five State Government-owned Television Stations:- Akwa Ibom Broadcasting Corporation (AKBC), Uyo; Cross River Broadcasting Corporation (CRBC), Calabar; Delta State Broadcasting Service (DBS), Warri; Edo State Broadcasting Service (EBS), Benin

City; Rivers State Television (RSTV), Port Harcourt and three Privately-owned Television Stations:- African Independent Television (AIT), Port Harcourt; Independent Television (ITV), Benin City, and Silverbird TV, Port Harcourt. From each of these stations, one news editor was interviewed in addition to the responses obtained from journalists through the administration of the questionnaire.

Data Presentation and Analysis
The questionnaire was administered to all journalists in the news and current affairs departments of the nine television stations studied. Interviews were conducted with one top management executive of each of the nine television stations, who were news managers of the selected stations. Data collected through the questionnaire were analysed, using simple percentages.

Out of the 216 copies of the questionnaire that were administered, 210 were retrieved and found useful for analysis, thus yielding a 97% return rate.

Table 1: Propriety of Adoption of Citizen Reports in Television Stations.

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
Strongly Agree	112	53
Agree	20	10
Undecided	8	4
Disagree	42	20
Strongly Disagree	28	13
Total	**210**	**100**

The analysis in table 1 reveals that the majority of the respondents (132) agree in varying degrees that they would encourage the adoption of citizen journalism, while 70 respondents object to the adoption of citizen journalism. Only 8 were undecided. The result reveals that most respondents (63%) would encourage the adoption of citizen journalism in their stations.

Table 2: Respondents' View of Citizens as Potential Sources of Reports in Television Stations

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
Yes	160	76
No	46	22
Don't know	4	2
Total	**210**	**100**

Table 2 indicates that of the 210 respondents sampled, 76% recognise citizens as potential sources of reports on their television stations, 22% do not while 2% of the respondents are however, undecided.

Table 3: Respondents' Views on Whether Citizens are Knowledgeable Enough to Contribute to Reports on Television Stations

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
Yes	130	62
No	63	30
Don't know	17	8
Total	**210**	**100**

It can be gleaned from table 3 that of the 210 respondents, 62% consider citizens knowledgeable enough to contribute to reports in their stations, 30% do not. Eight percent have no opinion. It is evident from the table above that the majority of the respondents consider citizens knowledgeable enough to contribute to reports in their stations.

Table 4: Television Journalists' Acceptance of Citizens' Reports.

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
Strongly Agree	111	53
Agree	15	7
Undecided	4	2
Disagree	73	35
Strongly Disagree	7	3
Total	**210**	**100**

Table 4 reveals that 53% of the respondents strongly agree that their stations accept citizens' reports, 7% agree while 35% disagree that their stations accept citizens' reports, 3% strongly disagree. The survey result thus indicates that the majority of the respondents' stations accept citizens' reports.

Table 5: Regularity of Citizens' Reports Aired by Television Stations

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
Always	0	0
Sometimes	53	25
Rarely	157	75
Total	**210**	**100**

As indicated in table 5, of the 111 respondents who strongly agree and 15 respondents who agree that their television stations accept citizens' reports, none reported that their stations always air citizens' reports; 25% reported that their stations sometimes air citizen reports, while 75% reported that their television stations rarely air citizen reports. The survey result indicates that while television stations accept and air citizen reports, they (stations) do so sparingly. The majority of the respondents (75%) made this clear.

Table 6: Number of Citizen Reports Encouraged in a Single Bulletin

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
All citizen reports	0	0
Most of the citizen reports	12	6
A few citizen reports	141	67
None of the citizen reports	57	27
Total	**210**	**100**

Table 6 summarizes respondents' perception of how much of citizen reports they would encourage in a single bulletin. As indicated in the table above, 67% would encourage a few of the citizens' reports, 27% would not encourage the use of any citizen reports at all. However, 6% would encourage the use of most of the citizen reports, while none of the respondents encouraged the use of all citizen reports.

Table 7: Respondents' Opinion on the Impact of Citizen Reports on Journalism Standards

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
Yes	55	26
No	126	60
Not sure	29	14
Total	**210**	**100**

Table 7 presents data on whether the inclusion of citizen reports in television news bulletins would lower the standard of journalism. The analysis reveals that the majority of the respondents (60%) do not think so. However, 26% agree that the inclusion of citizen reports in their news bulletins lowers the standard of journalism, while 14% were not sure.

Table 8: Citizens' Reports Have Impact on the Credibility of News

Nature of Response	Freq	(%)
Strongly Agree	122	58
Agree	22	10
Undecided	14	7
Disagree	44	21
Strongly Disagree	8	4
Total	**210**	**100**

Table 8 indicates that while 68% of the respondents believe that the adoption of citizen journalism would put news credibility in doubt, 25% disagree.

Table 9: Viewers' Confidence will Fall if Television Journalists Use Citizens' Reports

Nature of Response	Freq	%
Yes	57	27
No	105	50
Not sure	48	23
Total	**210**	**100**

On whether viewers' confidence would fall if television journalists used citizen reports, table 9 reveals that the majority of respondents (50%) indicated that viewers' confidence would not be affected if television journalists used citizens' reports. However, 27% answered in the affirmative, while 23% were not sure.

Table 10: Considerations Before Using Citizens' Reports

Nature of Response	Freq	%
Editorial policy	105	50
Prominence	4	2
Consequence /impact	8	4
Timeliness of the report	11	5
Ethical standards	82	39
Total	**210**	**100**

Table 10 shows what television journalists consider before they decide whether to use citizen reports or not. Data above indicate that 50% consider the editorial policy of the station, 39% consider ethical standards of journalism and 5% indicate that they consider the timeliness of the reports, while 4% consider consequence/impact. Finally, 2% indicate that they consider prominence before they decide whether to use citizen reports or not.

Table 11: Editing as Requirement for Use of Citizens' Reports

Nature of Response	Freq	%
Yes	202	96
No	8	4
Total	**210**	**100**

Table 11 indicates that, of the 210 respondents studied, 96% agreed that they would subject citizens' reports to editing before using them, while 4% of the respondents would not.

Table 12: Constraints on the Adoption of Citizens' Reports

Nature of Response	Freq	%
Legal Liabilities	50	24
Available space/airtime	0	0
Challenges of technology	0	0
Station ownership	36	17
Credibility of the source	124	59
Total	**210**	**100**

It can be gleaned from table 12 above that of the 210 respondents, 59% consider credibility of the news source as a constraint on the adoption of citizen reports. Fifty respondents (24%) consider legal liabilities as a constraint while 17% consider station ownership as a constraint. None of the respondents saw available space/airtime and challenges of technology as a constraint on the adoption of citizen journalism.

Data on In-depth Interview with nine Top Media Executives
This aspect of the research deals with the thematic explanation of the interviews conducted on the news managers using the Yin explanation building model.

Attitude of television stations in South-South Nigeria towards citizen journalism.

Most of the station managers interviewed are favourably disposed to citizen journalism. However, the attitude to citizen's report depends largely on the standard of the news story. They contend that where the story is credible, such reports are aired and not discarded. However, the stories are investigated to substantiate their claims before such reports are put on air. In a contrast, one of the interviewees was not favourably disposed to the use of citizens' reports, stressing that citizens are not trained. As such they do not know the rudiments of journalism.

Extent to which television stations in South-South Nigeria use citizens' reports

Different views were expressed on the level of usage of citizens' reports. The majority, however, noted that from their experience in practicing journalism, hardly do citizens bring reports except for commercials. Some indicated that even when they bring, the stories are usually in formats they cannot use. Some noted that poor picture quality and bad camera angles limit the number of citizen reports that they make use of.

The impact of citizens' reports on the credibility of news reported by television stations in South-South Nigeria

It was not very easy for the journalists to tell what people certainly think about reports from citizens that they (journalists) put on air. Most of the subjects were optimistic that usage of citizens' reports would not lower the stations' reputation. It is obvious that citizens are everywhere and journalists are not. Thus, reports from citizens act as a complement to the work of the professionals.

Criteria television stations use to determine the acceptability of citizens' reports.

One of the greatest criteria the journalists identified is credibility of the story. If a story is true, and meets a few other news values like prominence, consequence/impact and timeliness such stories are aired.

Constraints television stations face in accepting citizens' reports.

Technology is identified as a constraint. Some journalists observe that citizens at times record in modes that cannot play in their equipment and that they lack sophisticated equipment for the conversion to the mode compatible with their systems. Others pointed to legal liabilities since citizens may not know what constitutes invasion of privacy. Some identified station ownership and organizational policy as constraints adding that the individual journalist may wish to use reports from citizens but if such is not allowed by the organization he is working for, his preferences become inconsequential.

Prospects of Citizen Journalism
Many of the journalists believe citizen journalism has come to stay. Some journalists believe it will lend a helping hand to journalists; others are of the opinion that citizens should learn the basics of journalism and with development in technology and awareness; it will soon be part of core journalism in Nigeria.

There has been growing speculation that soon everybody will become a journalist. Most of the journalists are convinced that citizen journalism cannot displace professionals. However, a respondent believed that citizen journalism has no prospect in Nigeria. He counselled that no media organization should accept and use citizens' reports, adding that they were often misleading.

Test of Hypothesis
Specifically, the hypothesis tested the relationship between television Journalists' attitude to citizen journalism and acceptance of citizens' reports.

Ho1: There is no significant relationship between Television Journalists' attitude to citizen journalism and their acceptance of citizens' reports.
To test the above hypothesis, responses on (table 4) television journalists' acceptance of citizens' reports (X) and responses on (table 1) adoption of citizen journalism in television stations (Y) are presented in the table 13 for correlation.

Table 13: Correlation of relationship between television Journalist' attitude to citizen journalism and acceptance of citizens' reports

Rating	Scores	Acceptance of CJR(X)	Adoption of CJR by stations (Y)	X^2	Y^2	XY
Strongly Agree	5	111	112	12321	12544	12432
Agree	4	15	20	225	400	300
Undecided	3	4	8	16	64	32
Disagree	2	73	42	5329	1764	3066
Strongly Disagree	1	7	28	49	784	196
Total	N = 210	?X = 210	?Y = 210	$?X^2 = 17940$	$?Y^2 = 15556$	?XY = 16026

The computation of the Pearson Product Moment Correlation shows a positive correlation (r) of 0.92. Since the calculated r value is greater than the critical r value of 0.138 at 0.05 level of significance with a 208 degree of freedom, the alternate hypothesis is therefore accepted. That means that there is a positive correlation between television journalists' attitude to citizen journalism and the acceptance of citizens' reports. The result agrees with the earlier finding that the majority of journalists would not mind having citizens contribute to their news bulletins since they view citizens as knowledgeable enough to contribute news reports and also as potential sources of news.

Discussion of Major Findings
This section discusses the findings of the study in relation to the five research questions raised.

Research Question One: What is the attitude of television journalists in South-South Nigeria to citizen journalism?
A look at Tables 1 to 4 respectively reveals that the majority of television journalists studied clearly demonstrate their willingness to encourage the adoption of citizen journalism in their respective television stations.

To further understand the attitude of television journalists to citizen journalism, their responses displayed in Table 1 show that 63% agree that they would encourage the adoption of citizen journalism in their respective television stations. This result agrees with Channel (2010). He examined the adoption of citizen journalism by CNN. The findings reveal that CNN encourages people to share images and videos of breaking news, their personal stories and other content with the network.

On whether journalists recognise citizens as potential sources of reports in their television stations, Table 2 shows that 76% of the respondents are in the affirmative. On whether citizens are knowledgeable enough to contribute to reports in television stations, results in Table 3 show that 62% of the respondents are of the opinion that citizens are. Table 4 indicates that, of the 210 respondents, 53% strongly agree that their television stations accept citizen reports. This result suggests that many television stations accept citizen reports and this corroborates the findings of a survey undertaken by Hermida & Thurman (2007). They measured the adoption of user-generated content initiatives (UGCIs) by 12 UK newspaper websites. Their findings show that news organisations are facilitating user participation by filtering

and aggregating UGC in ways they believe to be useful and valuable to their audience. These results no doubt shows that television journalist in South-South Nigeria are favourably disposed to citizen journalism.

Research Question Two: To what extent do television journalists in South-South Nigeria use citizens' reports?

Results presented in tables 5 and 6 reveal that television stations in Nigeria rarely use citizens' reports. Although table 4 reveals that 53% of the respondents strongly agree and 7% agree that they accept citizens' reports in principle, Table 5 shows that no respondent agrees that their station airs such reports regularly, 25% air sometimes, while 75% rarely air such reports. Results from Table 6 show that the majority of the respondents (67%) are of the opinion that their television stations use only a few citizen reports. The results in Table 5 show that acceptance of citizens' reports as a matter of principle does not translate into making use of such reports. The journalists explained that they do not trust much of citizens' reports and that they (citizens) do not have the basic knowledge of news gathering.

In their study, Paulussen and Ugille (2008) examined the extent to which professional newsrooms were prepared to exploit the editorial possibilities of user generated content in the news making process. The results help shed light on how participatory journalism is being adopted in professional newsrooms and why this adoption seems to be happening rather slowly. This is because adoption processes in newsrooms are not just 'triggered' by technological developments (such as the innovations that enable users to produce content themselves), but they are also shaped by the broader professional, organisational, economic and social context of the news production process. The study added that Journalists do recognise the complementary potential of user generated and professional content in news making, but at the same time they agree that in their daily practice they still make limited use of the vast amount of alternatives opened up by the (citizens) via the Internet.

Research Question Three: What is the impact of citizens' reports on the credibility of news reported by television stations in South-South Nigeria?

The results in table 7 show that journalists do not feel that the inclusion of citizens' reports in their news bulletins would lower the standards of journalism. Out of 210 respondents, 60% report that the inclusion would not lower the standards while 26% are of the opinion that inclusion of citizens' reports would. However, 14% are not sure what impact the inclusion of citizens' report would have. Table 9 indicates that viewers' confidence would not fall if television uses citizens' reports. The responses of 103 respondents (50%) show that journalists do not think that viewers' confidence

would fall; 27% think otherwise, while 23% are not sure whether viewers' confidence would fall or not.

The analysis shows that if journalists take care of factors like trustworthiness, fairness, bias, completeness, respect for privacy, representation of individual interest, accuracy, and concern for community wellbeing, separation of facts and opinion, concern for public interest, factual foundation of information broadcast and then edit reports from citizens to meet established journalistic standards, the credibility of their stations would be preserved.

Deuze (2008, p.4) argues that "if journalists refuse to use citizen reports always on the grounds of credibility, and then fail to meet the community's needs, they are going to route around professional journalists and find a better solution". Paulusseen and Ugille (2008) however, note that for a mainstream news outlet that allows public comments or story submissions, policies such as fact checking or editing grammar must be established in order to preserve the organisation's credibility.

Research Question Four: What criteria do television journalists use to determine the acceptability of citizens' reports?
Criteria are those standards that must be present for any citizen report to be accepted. Table 10 provides the answer to this research question. From the table, 50% see editorial policy as a major consideration for using citizens' reports. Ethical standards polled 39%, while consequence/impact, prominence and timeliness of the report made up only 11%.

The result indicates that journalists believe that ethical standards must be strictly observed. Table 11 indicates that television journalists would subject citizens' reports to editing before use; 96% of the respondents are positive. As much as 30% of citizens' submissions are rejected for various reasons such as poor sentence construction, factual errors, or lack of news value". Domingo *et al* (2008) noted in their study that the main factor for not using user generated content in news making relates to the professional newsroom culture. One major culture of the journalist is to maintain organisational standards. If any report falls short of these standards such is rejected.

Research Question Five: What constraints face television journalists in accepting citizens' reports?
Data presented in table 12 reveal that credibility of source is a major constraint on the adoption of citizen journalism by television journalists. In all, 59% of the respondents saw credibility as an issue. The majority of the respondents interviewed lamented that

credibility of the source limits their adoption of citizen journalism. This finding agrees with Domingo *et al* (2008). They observed that the journalists in his study 'embraced audience participation as a crucial feature of their work, but in practice, the professional culture made them perceive it as a problem to manage rather than a benefit for the news product'.

Research Question Six: What are the prospects of citizen journalism on television stations in south- south Nigeria?

The majority of the respondents interviewed see citizen journalism as a growing phenomenon in Nigeria. Although an extreme view, many are of the opinion that time will come when the reportorial beat of each media organisation will be a thing of the past. Some say that as technology is growing and developing, we will find situations where the newsrooms will become leaner and leaner in terms of personnel.

In their study to determine whether citizen journalism web sites complement newspapers, Lacy *et al* (2010) observed that while citizen journalism might not yet act as a pure alternative to the traditional media, it certainly serves its purpose. It will be intriguing to see how this relationship between traditional and citizen journalists plays out. As evident with the above-mentioned study, early signs show that the relationship can definitely work. Collaboration between the two already has proven to be successful and is becoming more common as more traditional news media reach out to citizens for help in reporting. It appears that the future of journalism offers a world where citizen journalists and the traditional media can work together to deliver the news, each doing their part to carry the load. The study shows that citizen journalism seems to have a bright future.

Conclusion

The study reveals that the journalists surveyed have a generally positive attitude to citizen journalism. They accept citizens' reports, recognise citizens as potential sources of reports, consider citizens knowledgeable enough to contribute to reports in their stations and also they encourage the adoption of citizen reports in their stations. Ironically, although television journalists in Nigeria are favourably disposed to the adoption of citizen journalism, they rarely air such reports. Television journalists do not think that the adoption of citizens' reports would lower the standard of journalism, reduce viewers' confidence or jeopardise news credibility. Television journalists consider, among others, editorial policy of the station and ethical standards of journalism before they accept citizens' reports. Furthermore, even when the reports meet these criteria, they are subjected to editing. Credibility of the source was identified as a major constraint to the adoption of citizen journalism among television

journalists in Nigeria. Television journalists' attitude to citizen journalism is positively related to the acceptance of citizens' reports.

Based on the above findings, it was concluded that journalists in television stations in Nigeria encourage the adoption of citizens' reports even though they rarely air such reports. The study reveals that the television journalists in South-South Nigeria have a positive attitude to citizen journalism. By having a positive attitude to citizen journalism, Journalists would encourage citizens to use the privilege to help in fighting corruption and other vices in the country as people would become careful since anybody could record the occurrence of vices and send reports to television stations for broadcasting.

Given the findings and conclusions reached, the following recommendations are put forward:

1. Television journalists in Nigeria should maintain a positive attitude to citizen journalism as this will hopefully lead to greater use of contributions from the citizens.
2. Citizens should be encouraged by professional journalists to be vigilant so as to capture and send happenings around them to television stations.
3. Television stations should endeavour to use reports sent in by citizens as long as they meet minimum journalism standards.
4. Professional journalists should give willing citizens training on the basics of news gathering and reporting so as to help make their reports more attractive to mainstream media.

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