



What about the independence of investigative journalism centers in Malawi

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Le journalisme d'enquête a apporté des avantages et des défis au Malawi. Les centres de journalisme ont révélé que même dans les médias, il y a de la corruption. Ces centres n'ont pas d'indépendance financière bien qu'ils aient une indépendance éditoriale et ne peuvent donc réaliser que des travaux qui ne nécessitent pas beaucoup de dépenses. Basée sur deux cas, à savoir le centre pour le journalisme d'investigation et la plateforme de journalisme d'investigation, l'étude a utilisé une approche qualitative qui comprenait des entretiens semi-dirigés. Elle a été guidée par la question suivante : dans quelle mesure les centres de journalisme d'investigation sont-ils indépendants ? Les résultats ont révélé que certaines institutions sont soutenues tandis que d'autres n'entravent pas le processus de journalisme d'investigation. Ils ont montré que les gouvernements et les agents de sécurité n'ont pas beaucoup d'influence sur la façon dont l'information est recueillie.

Mots-clés : journalisme d'investigation, centres, plateforme, indépendance journalistique, Malawi

Investigative journalism has brought advantages and challenges in Malawi. Centres for journalism have revealed that even in the media there is corruption. These centres do not have financial independence although they have editorial independence and hence can only carry work that does not require a lot of expenses. Based on two cases, namely Centre for investigative journalism and Investigative Journalism Platform, the study used qualitative approach that included semi-structured interviews. It was guided by the following question: to what extent are investigative journalism centres independent? The results disclosed that some institutions are supported while others are not hampering the process of investigative journalism. They showed that governments and security agents do not have much influence on the way information is gathered.

Keywords: investigative journalism, centres, platform, journalistic independence, Malawi

El periodismo de investigación ha traído ventajas y desafíos a Malawi. Los centros de periodismo han revelado que incluso en los medios hay corrupción. Estos centros no tienen independencia financiera, aunque tienen independencia editorial y por lo tanto solo pueden realizar trabajos que no requieren de muchos gastos. Sobre la base de dos casos, a saber, el centro para el periodismo de investigación y la Plataforma de Periodismo de Investigación, el estudio utilizó un enfoque cualitativo que incluyó entrevistas semiestructuradas. Se guió por la pregunta siguiente: ¿hasta qué punto son independientes los centros de periodismo de investigación? Los resultados revelaron que algunas instituciones son apoyadas mientras que otras no están obstaculizando el proceso del periodismo de investigación. Finalmente, mostró que los gobiernos y los agentes de seguridad no tienen mucha influencia sobre la manera en que se reúne la información.

Palabras clave : periodismo de investigación, centros, plataforma, independencia periodística, Malawi

Introduction

There are three metaphors of the media role. The first is 'the mirror where the community sees itself and corrects itself, secondly is the watchdog task which starts to bark to make noise when leaders in power become corrupt, and the last one is the marketplace of ideas where even the oppressed and the less privileged get a hearing' (Ziba, 2016:27; Craft & Davis, 2013). It is in this context that journalism is regarded as the fourth estate (Powe, 1992). This is because it is an important task of serving as an institution that monitors power in any government undertaking (Alexander, 2015). This trust is given by the people of a nation to ensure that there are balances and checks of power. In that way, it introduces an accountability paradigm in a nation.

Democracy came to Malawi in 1994 with the advent of multiparty democracy. Since then, the country has seen the birth of many radio stations and newspapers, although most of the newspapers have come and gone. While democracy was nurtured thereafter, the country has had no centre for investigative journalism until the establishment in 2013 of The Centre for Investigative Journalism of Malawi (CIJM) aimed at encouraging ethical, impactful, and unique reporting (CIJM, 2018) and the Platform for Investigative Journalism established in 2019 (PIJ, 2019) which has contributed immensely in digging out issues politicians had buried. In the region, the first centre dedicated to investigative journalism opened in 2010 in South Africa, sixteen years after the birth of democracy (Bizcommunity, 2010). It does not mean that there is no journalism practice because some newspapers were digging information risking their lives in the process.

In a democratic dispensation where people are independent of oppressive government, policy makers are so relaxed to steal from the public purse. It is at this juncture that investigative journalism can make a credible and effective watchdog thereby boosting the credibility of the press (Colonel, 2022). It is in this context that the Malawi population welcomed the birth of these two media institutions.

This paper investigates the extent these investigative institutions are independent. It also investigates the extent to which these institutions, known as investigative centres, have in fact been able to uncover corruption saving money for development in the process.

It is also in the interest of this paper to advance more literature on investigative journalism that can be used by scholars around the world to advance the growth of investigative journalism and develop a culture of investigations among journalists

Literature Review

It has been reported that Global Journalism Conference has 235 member organizations and ten percent of those are in Sub Sahara Africa. Among the 22, twelve are in Southern Africa, a big development indeed. However, it is also noted that not all have the same functions. Some are geared in training journalists while a few do the donkey work of investigative journalism, a reduction of foot soldiers in journalism in the process.

According to Majoni (2022, p. 1) 'a few of these member hubs in southern Africa — four of them — are, strictly, not investigative centres because they do not in themselves produce content. Rather, they offer support efforts related to investigative journalism. This support includes the provision of small grants, training and mentorship as well as research. Because of

this, the distinction between purely investigative centres and support centres tends to be blurred considering that the latter, in some cases, contribute directly and indirectly to the production of investigative news content through such interventions like mentorship'. This blurredness creates a gap on its own because the number of investigative reporters becomes fewer since others only focus on training of others. However, to overcome this drawback journalist can collaborate online with other reporters to get the required information continuity. This can lead to the adoption of a global perspective, enriching local, regional and national stories with information which could have been difficult to get due to lack of enough investigative reporters (Berglez, 2013).

Investigative journalism has dependent variables that must be explored. It is in the interest of this study to look at these independent variables which can give insight of the problems investigative journalism is facing.

Financial issues

One of the drawbacks of investigative journalism is that it is expensive although the future of journalism is embedded there. This is collaborated by the saying of Njoki Chege who coined the words that "Good journalism does not come cheap" (Kenya, 2022). The most powerful journalism break through is always expensive. A good example is the story in the globe's Pulitzer winning investigation of sexual abuse in the Catholic Church in which there was a 40 year cover – which was published on 1 January 2002 but it required 8 months of reporting and major litigation before a single word appeared in print ... the overall cost of this effort was probably more than \$1 million in staff salaries and tens of thousands of dollars in legal costs' (Houston, 2010, p. 52). This is corroborated by Clement *et al.* (2018:4; Ettema & Glaser 1998) who say investigative journalism is costly, as it requires (much more than daily journalism) the acquisition of information (e.g., documents, databases etc.), the analysis and verification of this information, and the discussion of findings prior to producing the first copy of the content, and sometimes also legal examination and assistance.

Even in collaboration in investigations to reduce costs as indicated above by (Berglez, 2013), not all issues can be collaborated as some have classified information and hence the information cannot be shared anyhow with any other journalists as some journalists may pass information to people that are being investigated. This alone creates a gap in research.

Although journalism is expensive, yields results are beneficial to society, because investigative journalism checks corruption. Hamilton (2016), cited by Hume and Abbot (2017, p. 4), concluded that 'for each dollar invested in an investigative story in the USA, there can be over \$100 benefits to society'. It is in this context that investigative journalism has attracted attention from governments around the world. 'United States Department's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights and Labor in 2016 allocated \$3 to \$5 million to the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project and Transparency International over the next three years for a project aimed at advancing investigative anti-corruption journalism with training and other support. Another example of increased USG donor interest is USAID's recent five-year \$6 million media development project in Moldova, which had a major focus on investigative journalism and anti-corruption activities' (Hume & Abbot, 2017, p. 4).

However, it should be noted that if the funds are abused by journalists, there is lack of confidence and that erodes donor confidence in media institutions. The next variable will therefore be accountability.

Accountability

According to McQuail (2005, p. 207) 'media accountability is a voluntary or in voluntary processes by which the media answers directly or indirectly to their society for the quality and/or consequences of publication'. On the other hand, Claude-Jean Bertrand defined media accountability 'as any non-State means of making media responsible towards the public (2000, p. 108). Both definitions will be applicable in this study.

There has been growing calls by media scholars to hold the mass media accountable (Plaisance, 2000). This is because of the role the media plays in prevention of corruption. Moreover, one of the areas that is of concern to investigative journalism is lack of accountability. Because of the fundamental role that news media play in a democratic society, it is of paramount importance for the media to be accountable all the time. It is in this spirit that the 2021 Media and Democracy Monitor (MDM) was conducted. The results were alarming as 'very few media organizations demonstrated a comprehensive commitment to the fundamental ethical elements of accountability and transparency. Teams of researchers in 18 countries investigated the performance of leading news media regarding media accountability for the 2021 MDM project (Trappel & Tomaz, 2021b, 2021c). The overall picture left a lot to be desired (Barbara *et al.* 2022; 232). In the same context a report of 'Global Investigative Journalism Network Executive Director David E. Kaplan's definitive 2013 survey for the Center for International Media Assistance, Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support (CIMA, 2013) concluded that just 2% of the nearly \$500 million spent on international media assistance annually went to investigative journalism. He was concerned that donors might be so interested in exciting new digital and data tools that they might fail to support systematic investigative reporting, which also requires a human element, to dig out secrets using forensic techniques, and provide meaning and context (Hume & Abbot, 2017, p. 4).

This is enough evidence that there is need to implement accountability not only in organizations outside the media but the media itself because it acts as a watch dog for the society. As a watch dog it acts as the salt as well as light for the common man. Such gaps therefore need to be filled to ensure trust by the common man.

Even so there have been instances in the media whereby journalists have been harassed or intimidated because perpetrators of violence do not want journalists to write about them.

Violence and intimidation of journalists

Organizations that monitor journalists such as the International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) and Reporters Without Borders (RSF) have established that violence against practicing journalists has been on the rise and continues to escalate around the world. These institutions say Journalists are being killed while others are kidnapped or injured and yet others are threatened the investigative work they do for the work they do, their investigations (Le Cam *et al.*, 2021).

United Nations states that every four days a journalist is killed by virtue of the work they do and presently 72 media workers had died in 2025 while 125 journalists died in 2024. The aim, according to Ferragamo (2025) is to stifle independent reporting.

Moreover, Amnesty international reports that in East and Southern Africa governments are using of the use of national security laws that includes counter terrorism and cybersecurity legislation that undermine the right to freedom of expression thereby punishing as well as suppressing media freedom. It is in such circumstances that Macmillan Mhone was arrested

and charged publication of news likely to cause fear and alarm (VOA, 2024). In addition to that Gregory Gondwe went into hiding following threats of arrest over coverage of Malawi army corruption issues (CPJ, 2024).

When the politicians pursue the violence discourse against journalists by using anti-media discourse, the more likely it is to increase journalists' vulnerability to attacks and the more the non-state actors to attack journalists. The intimidation and violent discourse signals to non-state actors as well as state actors that they can do anything to journalists without being arrested (Mazzaro, 2023).

It is therefore not a surprise that the study by Dorff *et al.* (2023) showed that as violence against journalists' increases, the news story specificity decreases (Dorff *et al.*, 2023).

There is therefore an element of antagonism and a thin line between the violence perpetrated to journalists and the efforts to safeguard the freedom of the press. There is therefore a gap in trying to protect the investigative journalists to do their jobs properly and the violence by state and non-state actors. This gap must be filled to ensure investigative journalism thrives in a nation.

Theoretical Framework

Two theories were used in this study, namely Media richness theory as well as Framing theory.

Media richness

This theory is a construct that is used to evaluate messages based on the way they are conveyed with richness by, among others, providing cues as well as body language. The theory deals with nonverbal cues like facial expressions, natural language and body language.

The architect of this theory is Daft & Lengel (1986) who posited that messages that are ambiguous and different to understand can be better explained using the richer media. To the authors, that avoids misrepresentation and makes the messages to be better understood.

The context of this study, investigative journalism adds colour to the language of journalism. Most of the issues are better explained and articulated using the investigative techniques. The actions of individuals as well as deeds are thoroughly investigated and evidence is brought forward to explain the meanings of actions as well as to convey, with a strong voice, to the public the meaning of accountability as well as freedom of speech and expression. For instance, investigative journalism will dig and explain how the public money was used, who used it and in what way. In that way it gives cues and body language on how the money was used properly or was stolen.

Framing Theory

Framing theory is journalism, as well as communication theory that shows how messages are presented, portrayed or framed (Chong & Druckman, 2007). Its purpose is to have an effect on a character of a person with aim of enticing him/her to do something. This comes into reality by selecting words or sentences and making them prominent in the sentences while omitting other words with an aim of aimed at driving people to an intended action. It should be noted that these framers, normally journalists put a lot of emphasis on specific areas of the story to make them to have impact to highlight their importance making an impact to message users in the process. They

also do this by providing specific context. For example, a story on community relations might emphasize on the duty of an individual than the general community. In other context the theory may use slogans or jargons to send the message across.

Framing theory is being used in rhetoric political campaigns to sway public opinion to the favor of a specific party. In behavioral change campaigners use certain language or words to their advantage by emphasizing so much on them. This is also done by civil liberties around the world even by mass media organisations like BBC, CNN and Aljazeera by emphasizing on some words like terrorism, genocide, harassment and intimidation of journalists who have been imprisoned by repressive governments around the world. They do this to send across a strong message to powerful nations like USA, Britain or France to act. There is infect a thin line between journalism of attachment and framing theory where the former stands with the community while the later just frames message for impact without any attachment. However, the aim is one, that is to make an impact for a purpose.

In the investigative context media houses use specific words to send a message across to the citizens of a nation to take an action if the media hose establishes that corruption has taken place. In terms of danger, media houses use a certain frame to enrage the citizens to take an action to force government to take an action. For instance, in Malawi the media houses used words such as rigging, tribalism, theft to incite people to demonstrate. And it worked as people poured in the streets while others, unfortunately, burned government buildings as well as private property belonging to ministers or those in government.

Methodology

Research design

This will be a qualitative study because data will be collected using interviews to understand informants' perspectives unlike the quantitative research whereby data is collected through statistics (Minichiello, 1990). In addition to this, I want to do interpretive study by interviewing people' attempting to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings Investigative Journalism Centres bring" to it (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p2).

Methodological framework

This research will use an interpretive approach. This is because it focuses on studying individuals lived experiences and meanings these individuals attach to such experiences. An interpretivist believes that 'to understand this world of meaning, one must interpret and the inquirer must elucidate and clarify how meanings are embodied' (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). Interpretivism therefore fits this research because I will interview the Investigative Centres to share with me the lived experiences and thereafter interpret the results.

Interpretivists study for meanings and motives that are behind people's actions and perceptions such as behaviour and interactions with others in the society, among others (Whitley, 1984). In this context, the investigative centres can be understood by studying their ideas, thinking, and the meanings that are important to them using thematic analysis (Boas, 1995). Thematic analysis will be discussed later.

Interpretivism tallies well with the theoretical framework of this study and the methodology. Media Richness Theory and Framing use interpretations to arrive at decisions. In the analysis thematic analysis uses interpretations.

In addition to that, Lin (1998) explains that interpretivist researchers not only look for the presence or absence of a causal relationship, but also the specific ways in which it is manifested and the context in which it occurs. Thus, these researchers can go beyond from what has occurred to see how it has occurred (Keliher, 2005; Lin 1998). In this study I propose to look at ways in which investigative journalism viewed by the populace as well as the context of investigative journalism by these centres.

Positivists, on the other hand believe in knowledge gained through measurement (Antwi & Hamza, 2015). This study is not amenable to empirical analysis using mathematics (Abrutyn, 2023).

Constructivism is based on the idea that people construct their own images determined by the experience and it is based on previous knowledge of the learner (Western Governor University, 2020). They contend that concepts and hypotheses are human constructions rather than either innate ideas or product of revelation, perception or intuition. The study is not about human construction but looking at issues and interpreting them hence constructivism is out of question (Collin, 2021).

Sampling

Data was collected from journalism centres as well as 20 journalists to seek their views regarding investigative centres. Purposive sampling was therefore used to choose the investigative centres. For journalists, simple sampling method was used to choose the respondents. This is because respondents were chosen because of the specific qualities that the respondents have (Bernard, 2002) to help to answer the research questions

Tools

Because I want to get information on life experiences of respondents in the environment they live as explained in the methodological framework, semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions as well as in-depth interviews were used. In depth interviews were used dig into the topic which helped the researcher get the data required.

Analysis

After data was retrieved from focus group discussions and from in-depth interviews (individuals), a thematic analysis (of in-depth interviews and focus group discussions transcripts and recordings) was used to analyze this data. This is because thematic analysis goes beyond counting phrases or words in a text as is the case with content analysis. This method of data analysis explores explicit and implicit meanings within data and reveals codes and themes (Brauk & Clarke, 2006).

Presentation of data and its analysis

This chapter will present results that were got using focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. These were the questions asked and the answers the researcher got.

1) Please provide profiles of your organization? (taken from the website PIJ)

Established in 2019, the Platform for Investigative Journalism (PIJ-Malawi) stands at the forefront of investigative journalism in Malawi. Born out of a need to bridge significant gaps in the investigative journalism genre within the local media landscape, PIJ-Malawi has quickly become a pivotal force in shaping transparent and accountable reporting. As a registered Media Non-Governmental Organization under the Companies Act, PIJ-Malawi is more than just a media entity. It is a beacon of truth, consistently unearthing stories that demand attention and action. By holding power to account, PIJ-Malawi not only promotes the principles of investigative journalism but also plays a crucial role in lighting the path for democracy in Malawi.

2) To what extent does the investigative centre have both financial independence and editorial independence?

The twenty journalists interviewed agreed that the editorial independence may sometimes rely on financial independence as several investigative tasks cannot be done without the organization's financial muscle.

PIJ acknowledges that financial independence is a big task. However, this is overcome by financial injections from donors who appreciate their work as well as personal savings. There is, however, need to make finances sustainable to ensure that investigative journalism to be sustainable.

3) How does financial independence affect editorial independence or vice versa?

All journalist agreed that financial independence stabilizes a media house saying a media house without finances cannot operate perfectly. They said it is not a surprise that many newspapers have folded up because of lack of finances to publish the newspapers.

Gregory Gondwe said a publication that is stable financially and does not rely on outside world for finances is able to publish independently and can hence be ethical like their publication. He said this affects even journalists. had received money from British businessman Zuneth Sattar. With an aim of influencing their editorial independence.

4) To what extent has the media exposed corruption?

Journalists said all the multi-party Presidents have issues with corruption. The media exposed so much corruption during the days of the first multi-party President Bakili Muluzi. It is alleged he stole money from Taiwan meant for development. The case was withdrawn by the state during the MCP Government after it stalled in the court for over ten years. On the other hand, one said the United Democratic Front (UDF) responded to the anti-corruption drive with an impeachment charge on Dr. Mutharika and accused him of using US \$300,000 of public money to launch his Democratic Progressive Party and alienating himself from UDF, the party that made him President. For Joyce Banda it was what was called Cash gate scandal whereby many civil servants stole money using Accountant General system. For Professor Peter Mutharika most say it is people around him that stole a lot of money while for Dr. Lazarus Chakwera it was again the people that surrounded him who connived with Indians stealing millions of dollars in the process.

5) To what extent are some institutions helping you in the fight against corruption?

Gondwe mentioned of organizations outside the country that are forth coming with information, particularly the western world like United Kingdom. He said he managed to get information. These were instances whereby Dr. Chilima Vice President of Malawi, Kapondamgaga, an aide to Former President Dr. Lazarus Chakwera and many others were alleged to have accepted money in exchange for awarding government contracts. Dr. Chilima denied the charges and the charges against him were dropped. Allegations against Kapondamgaga were later dropped. Mr. Gondwe also cited a few organizations in Malawi, particularly those that give him information secretly. Other journalists mentioned of some private institutions that are owned by individuals that easily give information.

6) To what extent are some institutions hampering the fight?

Most journalists mentioned lack of information that might shed light on corruption. Three quarters of the journalists interviewed said some government institutions are slow to give information while others said they even threaten some journalists saying such information is for national security. They mentioned the expenditures of the Police and the army where it is difficult to get such information. In other instances, red tape is prevalent although a law was passed for journalists to access information. They also mentioned of some institutions that will accept their questionnaires but would not send them back even after some many inquiries saying such actions hamper information collecting. They also mentioned of some organizations that are no go area for journalists. They look at journalists as enemies of their organizations.

7) To what extent have you risked your life to get information for the nation and the world?

Platform for Investigative Journalism said its journalists had been arrested several times because of publishing information which the police felt is against national security. Continuing publishing is enough evidence that journalists have been risking their lives. Out of the twenty journalists eight said they had been harassed and intimidated by police at one time or another. Almost all journalists said one cannot get information if he/she does not put his life at risk as already journalism is a risky profession.

Ten journalists talked of political stories. During investigations some allege that they were followed by young democrats of those parties, particularly the ruling party. They alleged that even the police do not protect them when they hear that it is the ruling party diehards that are pursuing them. A good example is during the reign of DPP and MCP whereby diehards were beating up demonstrators while the Police were just looking on.

8) What is your advice on the number of investigative centres in Malawi?

Fifteen journalists said there is need for just one Centre for investigations as the other one, Centre for Investigative Journalism is basically for training purposes, while five said there is need to have more investigative centres. Those fifteen said there is need to help the centre have well equipped, trained journalist that are spread across the country or region. The five said having more centres will enable a country to have more expertise as diverse journalism centres might bring in better expertise.

Some journalists said the PIJ should have volunteers to help them dig the stories especially on corruption. They also said the international organizations should make a deliberate effort to start a fund that should help in investigations as it takes time for some stories to be investigated especially stories that affect several countries. Other journalists mentioned the depth of stories saying some stories need a bigger depth for them to have a bigger impact.

9) How do you account for the funds?

Gregory Gondwe said that when they receive funding they account for every penny that they receive. The expenditures are sent to donors. It is therefore not a wonder that they donors give them money because they know the money will be properly used. Even for the money from our pockets which forms a big portion on what we use, we make it accountable. Accountability is our practice as well as our tradition.

10) Please say information that is relevant, but the questions have missed

Four journalists said there is need for collaboration with other media houses outside the country, especially corruption that involves several countries. One journalist mentioned of a syndicate of child trafficking and human trafficking between Malawi, Mozambique, Zimbabwe and South Africa. One journalist said he saw how one bus company was conniving with border patrols in all these countries. Such syndicates have facilitated the entry into South Africa children, men and women with no passports at all. Another journalist mentioned of multinational companies that have branches in several countries saying when they are being investigated there is need for reporters in their respective countries. In that way, he said, it would be cheaper to get information. Unlike operating from a different country.

Discussion of the results

The results have shown that all journalists agree that investigative journalism has managed to expose corruption in high places including in the media itself. All also agree that the platform for investigative journalism has managed to do a lot of work to investigate corruption. However, what many journalists do not agree is how gaps in investigative centres can be filled.

There is one school of thought that believes that Platform for Investigative Journalism should employ trainee journalists who can act as a feeder to the centre to adequately investigate a few cases as it is the only relevant journalism centre in Malawi. However, others disagree with it saying even presently the centre is failing to operate properly because of lack of funding.

Another area worth discussing is the independence of the centres, especially Platform for Investigative Journalism which is more proactive as Centre for Investigative Journalism is basically for training. It has been observed that the centres are professionally independent but there are economically independent. PIJ finds its only funds mostly from personal savings to do investigative stories. According to Mr. Gondwe, few organizations give them funding occasionally, but it is not always. This erratic funding, according to Gondwe, is hampering the investigations.

These sentiments agree with observations in the literature review whereby it was discussed that investigative journalism is very expensive. While several media houses can do investigative stories, they are not sustainable because of lack of funding.

Platform for Investigative Journalism is independent professionally. It is therefore not a surprise that it even investigates media professionals as well as government agencies. PIJ reporters have been harassed and intimidated. During the MCP Government PIJ revealed that there were some editors who were also involved in corruption and promised the corruptor that the stories involving him will not be published by the media houses.

Another issue under discussion is harassment of investigative journalists. In the literature review it was revealed that there is a worldwide crackdown of the investigative journalist and investigative journalism especially powerful organizations and individuals. In Malawi, Gondwe has been in and out of the prison together with his colleague Golden Matonga. In some instances, they had been harassed and intimidated by the police. After being arrested they had been moving them from one police station to the other, all these done with an aim of silencing them. However, it should be noted that the more they had been arrested the more they exposed the corruption. However, this puts lives of journalists at risk because exposures that makes corrupt officers lose their jobs can force the corrupt officer to take the law in their hands by killing them or just poisoning the journalists.

Another issue worth mentioning is the bribing of investigative journalists by conglomerate organizations, especially those that bribe senior government officials. Gregory Gondwe mentioned of the bribery syndicate involving very senior journalists in the media house that were given money by British businessman Zuneth Sattar. They were not taken to task. They are still working in their media houses. It ended up on the facts that it was alleged that this British businessman bribed them.

It should also be mentioned that journalism schools should so much focus on investigative journalism. The more the focus, the more the country can have more investigative journalists. Presently very few media houses have investigative journalists. This is partly because most media house just teach this area in one semester but in the four years of training for journalists.

It should be noted that investigative journalism is a very risky area of journalism and requires courage and commitment to the profession without which it is very difficult to get stories that are beneficial to the country and to the world. Just like soldiers that are ready to die for a country, those that want to venture into this area of journalism need to sacrifice a lot for the love of the country and it takes a lot of sacrifice. Even full-time journalists interviewed revealed that some journalists that have excelled are those that have put their lives at risk.

It should also be noted that framing theory as well as media richness theory have been demonstrated in the results. The framing of stories shows that the journalist wants them to have impact by using the corruption paradigm. The evidence of corruption and how people connived to get money are all illustration to make the strong look rich. In that way, people are thus able to follow the events properly.

Lastly, the results have shown that the PIJ is independent and has hence the editorial independence. However, it is not financial independent as it relies on donor money and sometimes their savings to investigate the stories. It is important for them to be financial independent as it is the only investigative centre that is thriving in Malawi.

Recommendations

I recommend that a fund should be established for investigative journalism. This fund should be set up by international organizations that protect the journalism profession. That is the best way for investigative centres to be independent and to make them sustainable. It would be very unfortunate to lose investigative centres that are vibrant. I also recommend that journalism should focus so much on investigative journalism to produce vibrant reporters that can join the investigative centres. Presently journalism centres only teach investigative journalism for just one or two semesters in the eight semesters that journalists are in college.

I recommend that there should collaboration between journalists around the world. One story that required investigations in another country or region can easily be done. These institutions that would pool money together for the fund can also coordinate in the transfer of information.

I also recommend that watchdogs to protect journalists should have regional or national offices, based on the funding. In that way investigative journalists can have a better protection from the state and non-state actors.

I recommend that there should be punishments in the media, especially for those that are not following professional ethics by Media Council of Malawi. Gregory Gondwe mentioned of the corruption in the media and this had not been investigated thoroughly. In the legal profession, allegations are investigated and the culprits punished. As the fourth pillar in democracy which checks on accountability of the three, the executive, the judiciary and parliament, there is need to put checks and balances. How can they be checking on others when they are doing the same?

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