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Desmond Onyemechi Okocha, PhD[↔]; Roxie Ojoma Ola-Akuma^Y; Mercy Tartsea-Anshase, PhD^X

Sustainable Journalism in Nigeria: An Integrated Approach to National Development

Desmond Onyemechi Okocha, PhD[↔];

Roxie Ojoma Ola-Akuma^Y

&

Mercy Tartsea-Anshase, PhD^X

Abstract

The type of information that society receives and is capable of applying, determines its long-term progress along with social equality, and environmental and economic growth. Journalism in Nigeria is faced with a two-pronged sustainable crisis that stems from societal sustainability crises (e.g. climate crises, policy actualization crises, financial meltdowns, terrorism, community, and armed conflicts) and journalistic sustainability crises (e.g. poor operational policies, censorship, reduced marketing/advertising in the face of new media, misinformation and fake news, unemployment, and fierce competition from online information sources). The purpose of this study was to examine the three pillars of sustainable development vis-a-vis the role journalism can play in the myriad of problems in Nigeria. Hinged on the sustainable development model, the paper employed a qualitative methodology to x-ray the sustainability crises presently plaguing the nation which ultimately stands as a threat to journalism. Materials were sourced from academic journals, articles, books, conference proceedings, and online compilations. Findings show that these internal and external sustainability gaps are intertwined, and interdependent and need to be reconciled for holistic national development. The study thus recommends that scholars, journalists, and the international community should become interested in not just the business crisis of the media industry but also continue to sensitize the media on the social and environmental dimensions through which journalism could contribute to sustainable development.

Keywords: *National Development, Information, Nigeria, Sustainable Development, Sustainable Journalism*

Introduction

Sustainable journalism refers to the practice of news sourcing, gathering, editing, and dissemination of information with a conscious effort that seeks to ensure that these

[↔] Desmond Onyemechi Okocha, PhD., Department of Mass Communication, Bingham University, Karu, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. ORCID - 0000-0001-5070-280X. desmondoo@yahoo.com

^Y Roxie Ojoma Ola-Akuma, Department of Mass Communication, Bingham University, Karu, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. roxieojay@gmail.com

^X Mercy Tartsea-Anshase, PhD, Department of Mass Communication, Bingham University, Karu, Nasarawa State, Nigeria. mamet4u@gmail.com

journalistic activities, do not negatively affect sustainable development but contribute to it. It has been over 30 years since the discussion on sustainable development which is hinged majorly around environmental, social equality, and economic growth. These are the same triangulated areas that directly affect journalism which needs the triangle balanced to function efficiently hence the call for sustainable journalism. With compelling evidence that many traditional news organizations are not as profitable as they once were due to dwindling sales and advertising revenue, sustaining journalism is also paramount in the efforts to ensure sustainable journalism. This is because if many media companies cannot pay salaries and are laying off staff then there will be no one to perform the task to ensure that journalistic activities are aligned with the global calls for sustainable development.

The global calls for sustainable development have grown in recent decades, particularly in light of the United Nations' 2016 development goals (SDGs) which were targeted at countries to meet by 2030. The Sustainable Development Goals, or SDGs, are a set of 17 interconnected global goals intended to serve as a "blueprint for achieving a better and more sustainable future for all" (UN, 2016). The United Nations General Assembly (UN-GA) established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in 2015, to achieve them by 2030. The SDGs are a series of 17 aims that are now contained in an UN-GA Resolution called the 2030 Agenda, or Agenda 2030, as seen in the picture below:

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Source: United Nations

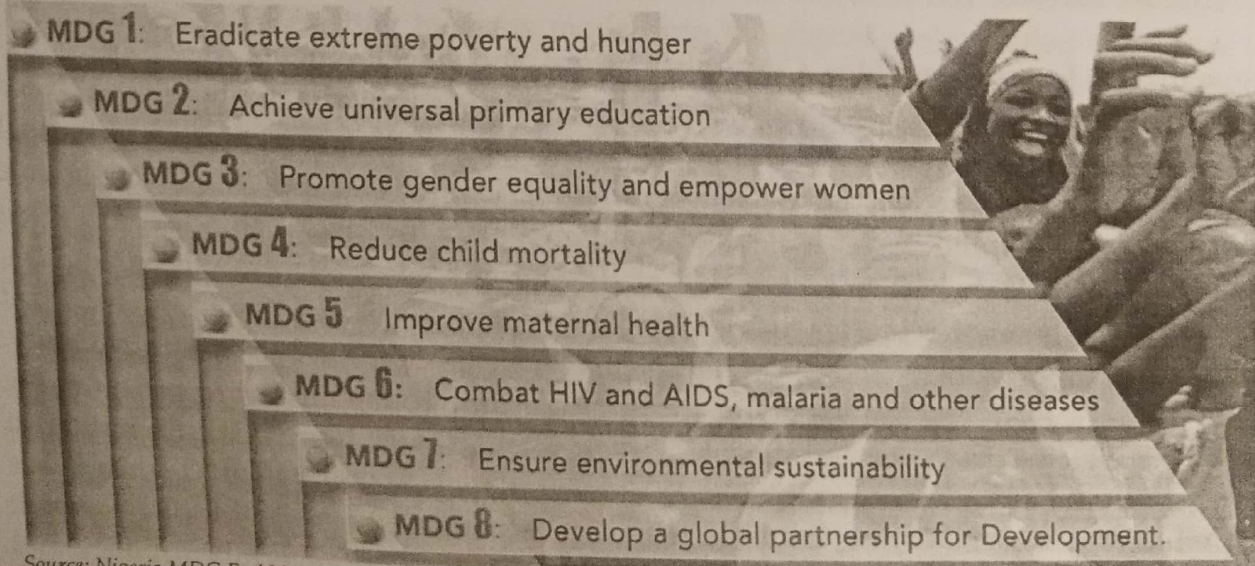
These 17 goals were set as part of the Post-2015 Development Agenda, to replace the Millennium Development Goals, which expired in 2015. They are: (1) No Poverty, (2) Zero Hunger, (3) Good Health and Well-Being, (4) Quality Education, (5) Gender Equality, (6) Clean Water and Sanitation, (7) Affordable and Clean Energy, (8) Decent Work and Economic Growth, (9) Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure, (10) Reduced Inequality, (11) Sustainable Cities and Communities, (12) Responsible Consumption and

Production, (13) Climate Action, (14) Life Below Water, (15) Life On Land, (16) Peace, (17).

Poverty and inequality have risen rapidly in relative terms throughout the world in recent decades. In Nigeria, there is a significant divide between the rich and the poor along neo-colonial capitalism lines within socio-economic metrics. Despite being endowed with vast natural and human resources, Nigerians have lived in abysmal poverty for the past 60 years of political independence. Considering Maslow's hierarchy of needs as a guide, it is clear that countries have even failed to meet basic physiological, safety, and social demands. Studies reveal that livelihood support programmes such as the one carried out by The Federal University of Agriculture, Abeokuta (FUNAAB), to neighbouring villages named Agricultural Productivity Programme (APP) have been undertaken to boost agricultural productivity and fight malnutrition (Oyedepo, et al., 2020). Other prevailing issues include poor housing, poor basic amenities, inadequate health, and educational facilities, poor political participation, poor economy, poor environment, and poor social policies which have all contributed to the scourge of poverty and inequality.

Thus, the UN made the SDGs more "actionable" than the MDGs, which were originally wide and interrelated. Each goal has its own set of objectives, as well as indicators that are used to track progress toward those objectives. A range of technologies exists to measure and visualize progress toward the goals, making effective monitoring easier. The goal is to make data more accessible and understandable. For instance, the online magazine *SDG Tracker*, which was published in June 2018, compiles data from all indicators. The SDGs pay attention to a variety of cross-cutting concerns, such as gender parity, education, and culture, which are all addressed in the SDGs. This is why the call for sustainable journalism calls for reporting that considers the economic growth, social equity, and environmental safety of society, all of which are important factors in achieving long-term development goals.

This was a sequel to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) which were a set of eight international development goals set in place at the United Nations Millennium Summit in 2000, following the approval of the Millennium Declaration. These were developed using the OECD DAC International Development Goals, which development ministers committed to in the "Shaping the 21st Century Strategy."



Source: Nigeria MDG End Line Report 2015

The Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were the United Nations bold endeavor to redress apparent inequities in global development between the South and the North, as well as promote long-term human and infrastructure development (Okon & Ukwayi, 2013). Almost all impoverished countries and most emerging countries, notably in Africa and Asia, did not make significant progress toward meeting most of the MDGs due to the timescale. According to a report on the prospects, problems, and consequences of achieving the MDGs in Nigeria, meeting all of the MDGs by 2015 was difficult because progress had failed to reach the poorest of the poor. Further justifying why the SDGs were created to make up for some of these breaches in the MDGs which have been observed in Nigeria and other countries.

Consequently, as a result of a world full of uncertainties and unforeseeable natural disasters such as the Covid-19 outbreak and the resulting worldwide economic collapse, journalists are fearful of another organizational failure. Furthermore, governments' skepticism in adopting sustainable development projects, which is exacerbated by a paucity of thought in communication for development, has been identified as a major obstacle. The type of knowledge a society receives and can employ impacts its long-term success in terms of social equity, environmental protection, and economic prosperity. The environmental crises, for example, as noted by Maxwell and Miller (2017), explain that instead of relying on paper and ink to print, newspaper publishers could consider users of smartphones all over the world particularly as electronic tablets make it convenient for downloads which save transportation costs and reduces carbon emissions from newspaper distribution and consumers who may need to travel to and from retail shelves.

Most scholars have focused on the issues threatening the sustainability of journalism. But concerning the journalistic crises and sustainable journalism, we must first look at media sustainability and secondly, look at journalism and how it can respond to sustainable development issues such as reporting matters around the key sustainable development goals (social equality, economy, and environment).

In light of these, the purpose of this research was to look into the pillars of sustainable development and the role journalism can play in addressing Nigeria's numerous difficulties in achieving sustainable development.

Literature Review

Sustainable Journalism - Idea, Concepts, History, and Developments

News coverage around sustainability has been derided as providing only minimal scope of solutions, with a negative bias, monopolized by political sources and influential organizations. Such actions have led to promoting images that only highlight the role that the markets and techno-scientific solutions play to leave behind unassailable consumer societies which are incapable of driving any economic growth (Atanasova, 2019). This is because reporters and editors can reshape or restrict the information that people use to form ideas and make judgments by determining what goes into a story, how it is conveyed, and the variety of stories. According to the novel component of the SDGsJR, which stands for Sustainable Development Goals Journalism Reporting, a project focused entirely on sustainable development goals on journalism reporting was introduced in 2020. SDGsJR offers knowledge and expertise on sustainable development as the foundation of strong journalism and its implications on government policy and

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development perception as a program backed by evidence which has placed the
and democratic media at the core of sustainability. According to the agency, they are
discovering how else to track specific SDG indicators, journalists can create appealing
stories, and decision-makers, civil society, and the general public may all be affected.
This may be a warm-up towards more sustainable reporting, but the issue remains: how
many news organizations are 'sustainability-conscious'? How prepared are they to report
on issues of sustainability? How committed are they to making journalism more than just
a cutthroat market?

The business of journalism is evolving from an economic standpoint (Arrese, 2016)
and as traditional news media competes with a wide range of media for both advertising
revenue and consumer expenditure, what we see is that the availability of information to
consumers is also growing rapidly. The hard blow came with the Corona Virus
Pandemic in 2020 which affected journalists across the world. Abubakre (2021)
discovered that in the later weeks of March 2020 and by mid-April, numerous news
organizations around the world revealed intentions to dismiss hundreds of staff.
Gannett, one of the largest newspaper publishers in the United States, is said to have
implemented cost-cutting measures, including layoffs and pay cuts for employees
(Kirsch, 2020; Hare, 2021). Similarly, Poynter.org, a journalism research organization,
published a list of media establishments from around the world that also had to
implement newsroom budget cuts, layoffs, and shutdowns (Hare, 2021). The case was
not different in Nigeria - in a study to evaluate how the COVID-19 shutdown in Nigeria
affected journalism, reports showed that some staff of the Punch Newspaper closed work
on May 29, 2022, with the sad news of either a termination of employment or a salary cut.
Before that, the newspaper outlet had reduced the pages of its newspaper from 48 to 32
pages, the reason hinged on a rapid drop in readership due to the lockdown (Obadofin,
2020). It is notable findings that the newspaper business experienced more tension
including organizations that could work remotely.

Earlier on, what began as a crisis in the mainstream newspapers with the advent of
the internet, has evolved into a dilemma in journalism as a business model. In its current
state, it does not appear to be commercially viable (Berglez, Olausson, & Ots, 2017). As
the old structures fall, the question is how future, viable business models for media will
evolve. Berglez and co-researchers found that the subject of how to renew the journalism
industry has piqued attention, but that much of the research has focused on how to
simply transfer the existing business model into the digital realm, rather than how to
genuinely reform or renew the business. One thing is clear: conventional quality
journalism is trapped in a paradigm that has already been hijacked and polished online
by a slew of amateur media and citizen journalists. What is evident is that at least some
of mainstream media's most important tasks, such as breaking news, have been
surpassed by millions of prospective players and their innovations. During the COVID-
19 outbreak, journalists had to be producing content from their homes. To comply with
public health regulations, news organizations adopted online submission of reports to
reduce physical presence in news outlets. One study showed that due to the workload,
some employees who were even fired by their companies were contacted informally to
submit articles as freelancers and were paid based on their deliverables. Employee
shortages compelled other journalists to make sacrifices, such as taking a pay cut or
receiving lower allowances while working excessive hours.

The environment is the first location a journalist is born into and comes to live in. According to Pona, Xiaoli, Ayantobo, and Tetteh (2021), the condition of the environment per time has a substantial bearing on the biotic and abiotic components within the environment which makes it essential for health and human living. Meaning the environment has to stay healthy, to avoid risk to its inhabitants. It, therefore, requires that a huge interest be placed on environmental issues by the gathering, authentication, production, dissemination, and exposition of information about current events, trends, and environmental issues in the reporting environment. In Nigeria, some of the environmental issues include but are not limited to the Herder-Farmers crisis, oil spillage, gas-flaring, open defecation, burning of firewood, indiscriminate dumping of refuse, erosion, deforestation, illegal mining, plastic proliferation (Udoayang & Etowa, 2013) and water pollution.

Every year, 240,000 barrels of crude oil are spilled in the Niger delta, Ordinioha and Brisibe (2013) in their study showed that the spill was mostly due to unidentified causes (31.85%), human activities (20.74%), and even technical issues (17.04 percent). These results in toxic chemicals contaminating the surface water, groundwater, atmospheric air, and even crops. As a result of these changes in vegetation, the rate of childhood malnutrition could climb by 24 percent. Contact with Nigerian crude oil has been shown in animal experimentation to be hemotoxic and hepatotoxic as it causes infertility and cancer. These are pertinent issues that must be understood and communicated in scientific terms by an environmental journalist. Because of the interdependence of acts that endanger human, animal, and plant life, continual reporting is required to inform and educate the public.

However, Nugent (2018) claims that the decreasing state of the environment, desertification, and soil degradation have caused Fulani herdsmen in Northern Nigeria to modify their migrating routes. Individuals must put their historical knowledge of environmental events to good use. The ability to follow environmental strategy initiatives and organizations is required.

More human activities are resulting in higher-than-ever rates of mass extinction, which have surpassed a thousand times the typical rate as of 2005 (Shah, 2005). The presence and abuse of plastics are one example. According to Fischer (2022), over 380 million tons of plastic are manufactured each year, roughly equivalent to the weight of all persons on the planet. 60 percent of that output is disposed of in landfills, incinerated, or repurposed, according to estimates. The rest of the plastic - 152 million metric tons per year - winds up in the environment. When it comes to the environmental impact of plastics, Rebecca Altman, an environmental sociologist, claims that 15 states were already exploring how to control the rapid proliferation of plastic containers as early as the 1970s. Atman (2022) goes on to say that plastics and climate change are not independent issues, but rather fundamentally related and mutually exacerbating problems. A great source of concern is the fact that more plastics operations, such as bottling plants and fast-moving consumer products, are sprouting up.

The discovery of nickel reserves in Kaduna State was announced by the Nigerian government in 2016. But, even before the government and the media were aware of the situation, a private mining consortium was already exploiting it (Premium Times 2016). The first step in maintaining environmental sustainability is to identify the environmental liabilities that may be incurred at each stage of mining, investigation,

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excavation, and operations. However, most news bulletins do not include these items (Miheli, Bajt, & Pankov, 2009). Environmental journalism in Africa has also been criticized for its vacuousness, inaccuracy, and alienation from bigger developmental challenges, according to Kwenda (2013), prompting a call for improved coordination that forms appropriately enlightened and proactive African citizens.

When it comes to sustainable development informational angles, there is a limit to the exposure of journalists in Nigeria to reporting matters around the environment and the climate crisis. Events about the weather are pulled in mostly from the BBC or foreign reports. Climate change activities have been subjected to annual occurrences such as Earth day, Water day, or other days earmarked by the United Nations for such. It is unequivocal that journalists must become well-enlightened in such matters to ensure they understand the magnitude of the need for environmental sustainability as it relates to their sustainability within the industry. Issues about the environment, economics, and politics are interrelated through the way humans interact with their surroundings and with each other (Shah, 2005).

Social Equality

According to Morelli (2011), social sustainability is a good situation alongside an intentional process that exists within communities to reach that condition. On the topic of social equality, (Berglez, Olausson, & Ots, 2017) notes that the world is still beset by various forms of social crises such as poverty (one out of every five people on the planet is still poor); the gap between the rich and the poor has not narrowed, both within Nigeria and globally as there are financial meltdowns and high unemployment rates. In addition, because the country is plagued by armed conflicts, terrorism, banditry, and insurgency, the problem of good governance has become a myth. Even though these are significant news items, unnecessary human misery continues. These crises provide substantial impediments to achieving an environmentally and socially sustainable society, as well as serious challenges to achieving the United Nations' 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which includes seventeen Sustainable Development Goals. The importance of journalism, as defined by (Heikkilä & Ahva, 2015), demonstrates that interpersonal communication practices within social networks are linked to discursive practices and patterns of media consumption. Mustafa and Mir (1999) demonstrate how community participation can be used to support economic development.

This is based on the commonly accepted and recognized truth that development programs, whether in the economic or social sector, have little chance of success/sustainability without community involvement and participation, especially at the grassroots level. According to Olayiwola (2014), targeted programs have been conducted in areas where the bulk of the country's population lives to tackle poverty and inequality. The author observed in a study that Nigeria and the United Kingdom had similar poverty and inequality difficulties as other countries of the world. The polarization of the affluent and poor along quasi-capitalist lines in Nigeria demonstrates how citizens have been impoverished despite immense natural and human resources. Bad nutrition, deficient housing, pitiable clothing, poor health, underfunded education, inadequate transportation, poor communication, indifference to political participation, depressed economy, poor environment, and inadequate social policies have all contributed to the scourge of poverty and inequality. This explains why various governments, non-profit organizations, and government bodies have developed

initiatives such as agricultural and extensive services, educational and vocational training, primary health care delivery, enlightenment awareness programs, and cooperative societies to combat poverty and inequality,

Some of these interventions are displayed in the table below:

Table 1: Showing various socio-economic interventions carried out in Nigeria

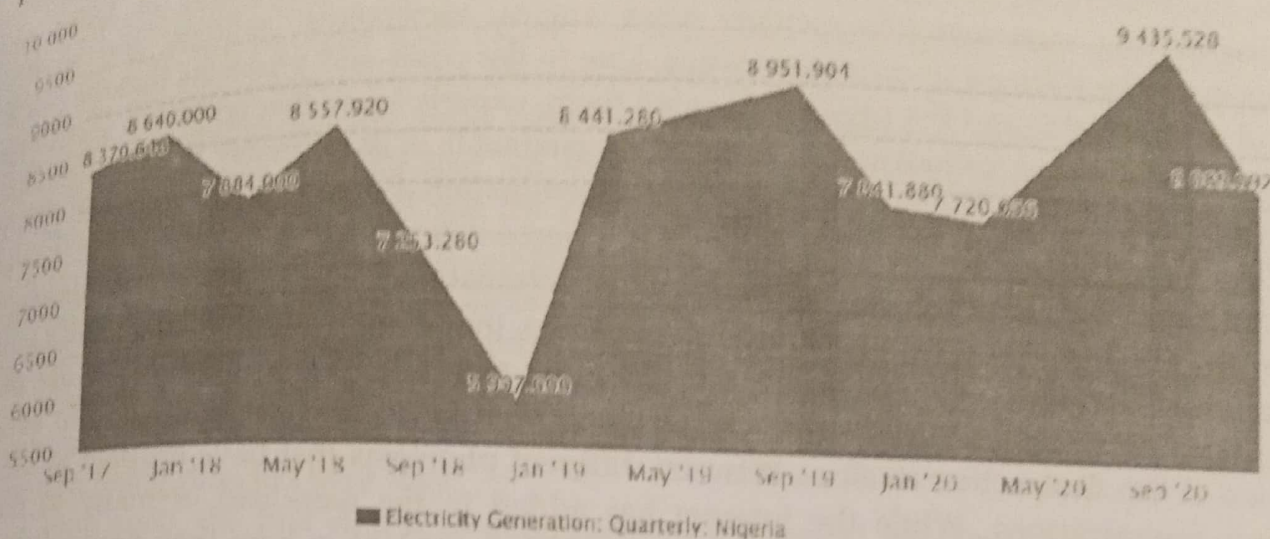
Sector	Socio-economic Intervention Programmes
Community-Based Interventions	National Directorate of Food, Road, and Rural Infrastructure (DFRRI)
	Better Life Programme (BLF)
	Family Support Programme (FSP)
	Family Economic Advancement Programme (FEAP)
	National School Feeding Programme
Health Sector Programs	Primary Health Care Scheme
	Guinea Worm Eradication Project
	Roll Back Malaria
	National Immunization Program
Education sector programs	Nomadic Education Programme
	National Commission for Mass Literacy and Universal Basic Education
Transport and Housing sector program	Urban Mass Transit Programme
	Low-cost housing scheme
	Federal Housing scheme
Financial Sector and Entrepreneurship Schemes	Rural Banking Scheme for Commercial Bank
	YouWin
	NIRSAL Agri-Business/Small and Medium Enterprise Investment Scheme (AGSMEIS)

The public expects news coverage of health issues to convey prevailing national concerns about the epidemic and its social chaos, which includes the economic loss caused by the Coronavirus. Thousands of businesses were forced to close down during the lockdown, with only those that could operate remotely barely surviving. Even though the covid pandemic has caused a big recession throughout Africa, the covid pandemic is reported to have caused a financial meltdown in Nigeria.

Economic Sustainable Development

In Nigeria, there are a variety of economic sustainability challenges, including unemployment, power, energy, and inflation. According to Oyedepo (2012), the African continent's lack of access to contemporary, clean energy services is a major worry because energy is necessary for socioeconomic development and poverty eradication. According to World Bank data, 13.69 percent of unemployed Nigerians with advanced degrees were unemployed in 2016, and 15.3 percent in 2019. Unemployment, despite being a social issue, has a significant economic impact. What about the increase in small-scale enterprises? According to Ogbo and Nwachukwu (2012), they are barely surviving due to limited access to long-term finance. This supports the assertion that the components of sustainable development are interwoven (Adjin-Tettey, et al., 2021). Another area is Nigeria's power sector, which, according to CEIC DATA (2020),

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 produced 8,089 GWh in December 2020 showing a decrease of 9,436 GWh from the previous quarter.



SOURCE: WWW.ECONOMY.COM | IFC Data

The data above compares to an all-time high of 9,936 GWh in September 2015. However, according to a report by PWC (2022), Africa now has 634 million people without electricity, with only one in every five people in Nigeria having access to the energy grid. According to Oyedepo (2012), 60 percent to 70 percent of Nigerians did not have access to power in 2012. Despite this, the Republic of Benin, Togo, and Niger are said to be receiving energy from the country (International Trade Administration, 2021). If such is not adequately reported for redress, then what is pertinent is that the demand for electrical energy will continue to increase as the country's inhabitants and the economy grows. Ultimately a supply shortage is bound to emerge if this demand is not sufficiently met.

In light of the three sustainability pillars, the interdependence of these variables can be traced back to the United Nations-sponsored Brundtland Report of 1987, which identified environmental protection, economic growth, and social equality as three major pillars of sustainable development (The UN Agenda, 2030). It is worth noting that these three factors are heavily intertwined across the 17 sustainability goals. While constructing one aspect, the other two must not be overlooked, as their conscious inclusion is a constant dimension that the nation faces. The other social and economic variables must be incorporated by the journalist for an integrated approach to national development. This means that Nigerian journalists need to highlight activities and create feature stories, and news documentaries that would build a robust and resilient economy which according to Adjin-Tettey, *et al.* (2021) is at the core of sustainability. Each dimension cannot survive independently of the other, and journalism needs to integrate the three sustainability variables for a sustainable reporting approach.

Practicing sustainable journalism and sustaining Journalists in Nigeria

Solving the sustainability challenges could be seen as a prerequisite for the future and sustainability of journalism itself. Such solutions range from high-quality, in-depth coverage, stable economic models, and advanced usage of media systems such as new media. Although conventional media allows firms to target a broad audience via billboards, print advertisements, and television commercials, the resulting advertising

costs make new media, on the other hand, a sustainable platform that allows businesses to target a specific audience through social media, and pay as you go web ads. Professionally, using sustainable journalism in everyday work, in terms of incorporating sustainability-oriented news angles, viewpoints, sources, and so on, appears to be difficult in numerous ways. Due to the crises and problems that the SDGs tend to encounter and the urgency to solve them, experts agree that emphasis should be placed on the need for journalism to become sustainable in its everyday practice from the usage of technology for news gathering to dissemination. For example, Abramson (2010) noted that at the New York Times, there is a fierce determination to protect the core of news gathering by including the most robust international and investigative coverage. As part of a business strategy developed years ago, they have integrated new media tools and print operations via the internet, overcoming a once ingrained internal culture that sprouted from the world of print. He further added that they have been able to avoid some of the destructive rivalries between different platforms that have erupted at other news organizations. While the internet has added to the workload of many in their newsroom, it has also boosted staff morale, which is evident in how they now tell their stories.

Similarly, Channels TV in Nigeria reduced production costs by permitting audience involvement, in which viewers shared breaking news using their smartphones. The news agency was the first in Sub-Saharan Africa to transmit live news and programming 24 hours a day, according to Onali and Sanomat (2018), Channels TV is also the first Nigerian television network to use Twitter in its broadcasting process. This methodology reduces the travel time for journalists and the cost for the organization. Practicing sustainable journalism in Nigeria means that every journalist should be sensitized that the only importance of news is to the degree that it serves as a central means of orientation to society and supports social groups to make sense of the political nature of the public world Heikkilä and Ahva (2015). This agrees with Schmidt (2017) who opines that the environmental reporting gap is bridged by providing specialized training for future journalists.

Some scholars have also observed that the digitization of media and journalism has resulted in the partial dissolution of previously evident boundaries and distinctions, blurring the line between professional journalists and other types of information agents (Carlson & Lewis, 2015; Edström, Kenyon, & Svensson, 2016). Yet the challenge is that many scholars have only prescribed a temporary medication to the seemingly failing business of journalism with emphasis on merely how to transfer the existing business model into a digital world but failing to offer a long-term solution that will transform or renew the business models itself. This would explain why Rourke (2019) believes that many media outfits have not been able to achieve and maintain sustainability, because they lack an innovative mindset. He further adds that if publishers were continuously exploring areas for attractive new revenue streams it could increase funding in diverse ways.

Being inventive necessitates considering the long term. Many media outlets, according to EFJ (2018), must attract their audience and engage with their members in a "consumer-driven" economy, which necessitates innovation. According to Rourke (2019), some business models that respond to this shift rely on the use of publicly available data. Some magazines have even developed a "reward after reading" strategy (EFJ, 2018). In India, for example, the Times Internet Limited awards readers with "time points" for

reading articles, viewing videos, commenting on postings, and sharing them. Readers can redeem these points for travel, cuisine, fashion, or lifestyle deals at a later date.

There are also the environmental costs attached to the business of journalism. Maxwell and Miller (2017) have observed that if these environmental costs cannot be sustained then the business itself cannot be sustained. This means that journalists are needed to contribute to solving the sustainability crisis that is posed to them. The authors note that newspaper houses could contribute to environmental sustainability if they consider the amount of paper that has to be used for their productions. Not only are hundreds of trees being felled but the combination of chemicals for ink and printing contributes to damaging the earth. Going green by moving online will save them the cost and printing manhours. Yet the author goes on to argue that both paper-based and electronic media have significant environmental problems such as energy consumption and emissions, materials sourcing, toxicity, and waste. As our brief historical account illustrates, they have been major polluters for a very long time without much critical attention being directed their way.

Given such, the first step is to determine the ecological liabilities incurred at every stage of news gathering, investigation, reporting, publishing, reading, and recycling. Environmental accountancy shows how to internalize what this will cost and find safer and more sustainable ways to run the business.

Conclusion

As posited by Abramson (2010), journalism is currently in a difficult digital transition stage where the business model for supplying quality journalism is under pressure to stay afloat. This requires an industry-wide approach. Findings show that there are internal and external sustainability gaps that are intertwined, and interdependent, and need to be reconciled for holistic national development. It is also evident that journalists have a major role to play in sustainable development within Nigeria. The challenges give people what they do not already have by providing solutions around various sectors through information gathering and sharing. We live in a world that is characterized by information seekers. There is a need for journalists to do more so to remain sustainable in the next 20 – 30 years.

Seeing news agencies are losing their credibility in the face of varying information online but hearing from local sources will corroborate facts and combat misinformation when news agencies concentrate on research about what is being posted online. In our society, the media plays an important role in every human being's day-to-day life. It can be said that the most important communication gaps presented today affect different forms of sustainable development plans. The mass media have played a major role in shaping perceptions and awareness of Sustainable Development Goals. Just like the socio-economic interventions rolled out by the government and private agencies, mass media campaigns can take a variety of forms to communicate scientific knowledge among the masses to continue to stay relevant.

Among new media, platforms, social media campaigns are an effective medium to prepare the ground for introducing innovativeness and also for reinforcing messages. Just like Channels TV, who are using social media because it is a powerful channel of new media that transmits information very fast. Taking advantage of the medium can contribute to the dissemination of information about Sustainable Development Goals by creating awareness and information among the masses. The media needs to be more

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involved in social media and become the information hub. These could alleviate the pressure of funding which equally impacts their safety. Underfunded journalism can lead to the capture of the media for personal gains by government or private bodies therefore, news agencies even journalists themselves must begin to source for ways to generate their revenue by looking for private individuals or companies out there that want to ensure the independence of media consequently a partnership with them will be a plus.

Finally, for all of these issues threatening the sustainability of journalism to be efficiently addressed, then the journalists must be involved in the sustainability process. That is why it is imperative to remedy the deficiencies in journalism about sustainable development by first addressing the economic, social, and environmental challenges of professional journalism.

Recommendations

1. Journalists need to be more acquainted with reporting and being deliberate about sustainability development dimensions
2. Integrated national development can only be obtained when the sustainable goals are seen as interdependent not independent variables hence government must become deliberate in promoting all areas and not just a part.
3. Environmental policies that are well broken down should be reiterated for the audience and public understanding
4. Scholars, journalists, and the international community should become interested in not just the business crisis of the media industry but also continue to sensitize the media on the social and environmental dimensions through which journalism could contribute to sustainable development overall.

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