

Heating up the Polity: Print Media Handling of Code of Conduct Tribunal Cases

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ABSTRACT

Good governance depends on integrity and the extent public officers are faithful to the social contract and the level of transparency which the officers demonstrate in executing such contract. The Code of Conduct Tribunal is saddled with onerous but sacred duty of ensuring probity in the public service in Nigeria by bringing to book public officers who default in asset declaration to the Code of Conduct Bureau. The overall aim of this study is to examine the influence of print media handling of the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases in Nigeria. The survey used simple random sampling method for a sample population of 200 participants who responded to a set of questionnaire, while 5 national newspapers (Punch Newspaper, Daily Trust Newspaper, This Day Newspaper, Leadership Newspaper and The Nation Newspaper reports were content analysed. Data collected were analysed using simple percentages put in tables. Findings revealed that print media report is a vital tool for information dissemination of Code of Conduct Tribunal cases in the country and it influences people's opinion with regards to issues of national interest. However, media reports of Code of Conduct Tribunal cases are sensational, demonizing and bringing about hatred on the accused before tribunal judgment. In recent years the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases of public officers especially with regards to the Senate President, Dr. Bukola Saraki and the suspension of the Chief Justice of the Federation, Walter Onnoghen by the President on the recommendation of the Code of Conduct Tribunal have heated up the political atmosphere in the country. All these sensational media reports are capable of heating up the polity and may result in conflict in the society. There is the need, therefore, for the Code of Conduct Tribunal to operate without unnecessary negative media interference by ensuring that the media handling of Code of Conduct Tribunal cases is entrusted to unbiased professionals who will adhere to the ethics and rules of engagement of the media profession. Media professionals also need to exercise restraints in reporting cases under trial by using appropriate lexis.

Keywords: Government, Heating up, Polity, Print media and Tribunal

INTRODUCTION

Public Service is the machinery through which the government enhances the general welfare of the citizenry. The whole essence of holding public office, political decisions and actions is not satisfy any abstract ideals but make life better for the citizenry in terms of shelter, food, good health, education and security of lives and properties. Governance depends on the integrity and on the extent public officers are faithful to the social contract and the level of transparency which the officers demonstrate in executing such contract [1]. With the existence of great bureaucracy in twenty century Nigeria,

there are inevitable occasions when through deliberate exercise of power, error or sheer indifference, injustice is done. A man of substance can deal if it chooses to with such situations. He can afford to pursue legal remedies as may be available. But too often, the little man, the ordinary humble citizen, is incapable of asserting himself whether under military or civilian regime, but more so under a military government whether benevolent or dictatorial [2]. Therefore in other to protect the ordinary citizens from undue influence, negligence, error o mal administration by government officials and staff of Ministries, Departments and

Agencies (MDAs), the federal military government decided to set up a number of agencies to bring succor to the ordinary man on the street [3]. One of such bodies to make public officers realized that they are servants of the people and not their master is the Code of Conduct Tribunals. It is also to remind all public officers from the most lowly placed to the president that public office is a public trust held on behalf of the people for the good of all and should not be abused in any form or shape [4].

The Code of Conduct Tribunal is saddled with onerous but sacred duty of ensuring probity in the public service of the most populace country in black Africa, Nigeria. The Concept of code of conduct was drawn from Tanzania and Zambia. The purpose of the code is that a public office holder should not put him in a position where his personal interest conflicts with his responsibility as an officer, or which enable enables him to exploit others. In 1975, the federal government inaugurated a Sub-Committee on National Objectives and Public Accountability under Professor Ben Nwabueze to come up with the modalities for the establishment and operations of CCB/T. The Committee recommended that the CCB/T should be made an Ombudsman, enshrined in the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. In 1979, General Olusegun Obasanjo implanted the Code of Conduct Bureau and the Code of Conduct Tribunal into the 1979 Constitution but jettisoned the creation of Ombudsman. The 1979 constitution provided a list of Codes for public officers but it took CCB/T ten years to get its legal mandate and enabling law in 1989 under Babangida administration [5]. The CCB/T Act 1989 provides for the establishment of the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal to deal with complaints of corruption by the public servants for the breaches of its provisions [6].

The aim of the establishment of the CCB/T is to maintain high standard of morality in the conduct of government business and to ensure that the actions and the behavior of public officers

conform to the highest standards of public morality and accountability (Laws of the Federation of Nigeria Vol. 2: Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, CAP. C15) The Code of Conduct provision has maintained a permanence of some sort, in the 5th schedule of all constitutions of the Federal Republic of Nigeria following thereafter; 1989, 1993, 1995 and the current 1999 constitution as amended. In 1998, a Constitutional panel review under Justice Niki Tobi was appointed by General Abdulsalam Abubakar. The panel lifted word to word, line by line the content of the 1979 constitution on the code of conduct bureau and code of conduct Tribunal to be part of 1999 constitution and they are contained in the fifth schedule of the Constitution from section 1 to section 19. Under the Constitution of Nigeria, the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) is established as a special tribunal for the entire Federation dedicated to combating corruption in all the levels, arms and agencies of the government in the country. The primary mandate of the Code of Conduct Tribunal is to adjudicate on matters concerning the breach of the Code of Conduct enshrined in the Fifth Schedule of the 1999 constitution. The Code of Conduct Tribunal is a court of record and is of co-ordinate jurisdiction with State and the Federal High Court of the Federation. CCT is a special court that has jurisdiction to adjudicate in any matter on the Code of Conduct of public officers across of sphere of government in Nigeria [7].

The president of the federation and vice president, the president and deputy president of the senate, speakers and deputy speakers of the house of representatives and the houses of assembly of the states, and all members and the staff of the legislative members, governors and deputy governors of states, chief justice of Nigeria, justices of the supreme court, presidents and justices of the court of appeal, all other judicial officers and all other staff of courts of law, Attorney of the federation and Attorney General of each state, Ministers of the government of the federation and

the commissioners of government of the states, the Chief of Defence staff, head of Army, Navy, Air Force and all members of the Armed forces of federation. Inspector General of the Police, Deputy Inspector General of Nigerian Police Force and other government security agencies established by law [8]. Secretary to the Government of the Federation, Head of Civil Service, Permanent Secretaries, Director Generals and all other persons in the civil service of the federation or in the state. Ambassadors, High Commissioners and other officers of Nigerian Missions abroad. Chairman and other members as well as all staff of the Code of Conduct Bureau and Code of Conduct Tribunal. Chairmen and other members and staff of Local Government Council. Chairman and members of the Board of other government bodies and staff of statutory corporations and of companies in which the federal or any state government has controlling interest. All staff of the universities, colleges and institutions owned and financed by the federal and state government or local government councils. Chairmen and other members and staff of permanent commissions or councils appointed on full time basis or any other person as the president may from time to time, by order prescribe shall not maintain or operate a bank account in any country outside Nigeria [9].

Laws of Federation of the Federal Republic of Nigeria Cap.15 section 5 -19 provides that a public officer shall not, after retirement from public service and while receiving pension from public funds, accept more than one remunerative position as chairman, director or employee of a company owned or controlled by any government. A public officer shall not put himself in a position where his personal interest conflict with his duties and responsibilities. A public officer shall not receive or be paid emolument of any public office at the same time as he receives or he is paid the emolument of any other public office or except where he is not employed on full time basis, engaged or participate in the management or running of any private

business, profession or trade; but nothing in this paragraph shall prevent a public officer in farming or participating in management or running of any farm [10].

Ex president, vice president, governor, deputy governor of the state and chief justice of the state are prohibited from service or employment in foreign companies or enterprise [11].

A public officer shall not ask for or accept any property or benefit of any kind for himself or any other person on account of anything done or omitted to be done by him in the discharge of his duty (Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, 1989, Section 10) [12].

Section 11 of the Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act provides that a public servant shall not accept loan except from government or any of its agency or a bank, building society or any other financial institutions recognized by law. Any benefit of whatever nature from any company, contractor or business man or the nominee or agent of such person; provided that the head of a public corporation or of university or other parastatal organization may subject to the rules and regulations of any such body public officer any property, accept a loan from any such body [13].

No person shall offer a public officer any property, gift or benefit of any kind as an inducement or bribe for the granting of any favour or the discharge in his favour of the public officers duties. A public officer shall not do or direct to be done, in abuse of his office, any act prejudicial to the rights of any other person, knowing that such act is unlawful or contrary to any government policy. A public officer shall not be a member of or belong to or take part in any society the membership of which is incompatible with the functions or dignity of his office [14].

Every public officer is expected to declare his asset immediately after taking office and thereafter at the end of every four years; at the end of his term of office and in the case of a serving officer within 30 days of the receipt of the form from Bureau or at such intervals as the Bureau may specify. Any statement in any declaration that is found to be false by

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any authority or person authorized in that regards to verify it shall be deemed to be a breach of CCB/T Act [15].

According to section 18 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria as amended, where the Code of Conduct Tribunal finds a public officer guilty of contravening any of the provisions of Code of Conduct for public officers such public officer may be:

- i. Directed to vacate office or seat in any legislative house as the case may be,
Or
- ii. Be disqualified from membership of a legislative house and from holding any public office for a period of ten years
- iii. Seizure and forfeiture to the state of any property acquired in abuse or corruption of office. These above stated penalties are without prejudice to any penalty that may be given by a court if the offense is of criminal nature.

Appeal against the decision or judgment of the tribunal lies with the court of appeal. The provisions of the Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 as amended, relating to prerogative of mercy, does not apply to any punishment imposed by the CCT, as in other court. The CCT consists of a chairman two other persons appointed by the President on recommendation of the National Judicial Council (NJC) [16].

Statement of Problem

The responsibility of the print media in handling of the journey of the controversial 1018 days of Saraki CCT cases cannot be overemphasized in political atmosphere of the nation. According to [17] the media especially print media (newspaper) has played a tremendous role in fighting corruption as well as exposing corrupt politicians and bureaucrats, many of whom have been forced to resign or have been prosecuted over the years.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research are as follows:

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- a. To ascertain the effects of amplified media voice in Nigerian polity.
- b. To determine the effects of media handling of the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases in Nigeria politics.
- c. To find out the extent media is abiding by the code of ethics and rules of engagement in reporting the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases.
- d. To ascertain the extent CCT has enjoyed operation without unnecessary media interference.
- e. To suggest ways of enhancing media handling of CCT cases.

Research Questions

The research questions for this research work are as follows:

What is the role of amplified voice of the media in attainment of peace in Nigerian polity?

What are the effects of media handling the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases in Nigerian politics?

To what extent can we say that the media is abiding by the rules of engagement in reporting cases of the Code of Conduct Tribunals?

To what extent can we say CCT has enjoyed operation without unnecessary media interference?

In what ways can the media better handle CCT cases?

Scope of the Study

The population of this study will comprise of the media, 10 numbers of Codes of Conduct Tribunal cases handled by the media between 2005 and 2019 and Code of Conduct Tribunal as an institution of government. The study is limited to media heating up Nigeria polity in handling of code of conduct tribunal cases. The geographical scope of this study is also limited to Nigeria.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the influence of media in Nigerian polity in handling Code of Conduct Tribunal cases.

Significant of the Study

This study is significant in the sense that the data generated from the study will be of importance to media administrators,

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Population of the Study

Population sample of 200 respondents was used for this study consisting of staff of Code of Conduct Tribunal, Newspaper reporters and staff of Ministries, Parastatals and Government Agencies. Five print media Newspapers- The Punch, Daily Trust, This Day, Leadership and The Nation were used for content analysis.

Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Probability Sampling Method was employed in this research. This would give all members of the sample equal chance of being selected. This means every respondent is qualified and whether he or she is selected is a matter of chance. However, a simple random sampling was adopted for the research. This method adopts randomization to make sure that every element of the population gets an equal chance to be part of the selected sample. According to [18], it is practically impossible to take a complete and comprehensive study of the entire population going by nature and pattern of distribution. Hence a representative sample is essential for a research study [19].

Instrument for Data Collection

The major instruments for data collection during the survey were questionnaires while newspaper reports will be used for content analysis.

Procedure of Data Analysis

Inferential statistics was used to summarize data related to the research questions. The data obtained from the study were analyzed and interpreted by the use of simple percentage and tables through which inference relating to the research work would be established. CSPRO and SPSS will be used for data analysis.

Validity of the Instrument

Validity of an instrument is referring to the appropriateness of the interpretation of the result of a test and it is specific to the intended use [20]. The purpose for which a research is been carried out determine its validity and the main objective of this research study is to determine the effects of media handling of Code of Conduct Tribunal cases in Nigeria politics [21].

Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability means dependability or trustworthiness. It is simply a degree to which an instrument will give similar results for the same individuals at different times. Validity and reliability in qualitative research can be checked by a technique known as respondent's validation. This technique involves testing initial results with participants to see if they still ring true. Although the research has been interpreted, participant should still recognize the results as authentic and, at this stage, may even be able to refine the researcher's understanding.

Data Presentation and Analysis

In the course of this research work, population samples of 200 respondents were drawn from different sectors. The respondents responded to the structured questions (questionnaires) which dealt on the research questions.

The sample population used for the research is presented in a tabular format

using percentage value for easy of understanding. Bar chart would also be used for interpretation and analysis of

collated questionnaires for this research work

Sex of respondents

Table 1: Sex of Respondents

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Male	142	71
Female	58	29
Total	200	100%

Source: Field Survey 2019

Table 1 above shows that a total number of 200 respondents were captured in this research study. 142 out of 200 were male while 58 were female at the ratio of 71:29

percentiles. This shows there is a significant difference between male and female respondents, who responded to the questionnaires.

Educational qualification

Table 2: Educational qualification of the respondents

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
O LEVEL & BELOW	15	7.5
ND/NCE	22	11
HND/B.sc	125	62.5
Masters and above	38	19
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

It was observed in the field at the course of the research study that the educational qualifications of the respondents have direct effect on the understanding of the research topic. The details of educational qualification of the respondents are as shown in the table below. The table shows that 92.5% of the over whelming majority

of the total respondents in this research have National Diploma (ND) and above. Only insignificant 7.5% of the respondents had O' Level (Secondary School Certificate) and below. This shows that majority of the respondents are well educated, better informed with high knowledge of CCT.

Years of Experience

Table 3: Years of Experience

Responses	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
0-5 years	18	9
6-10 years	113	56.5
11 years and above	69	34.5
Total	200	100

Source: Field Survey 2019

The number of years the respondents put in public service is another factor that could affect their knowledge and impact of print media on CCT trial. It is generally believed that the longer the length of serve the better their understanding of the research topic. The table above shows

that 9% representing 18 respondents have worked in public service between 0 - 5 years, 56.5% representing 113 respondents has also worked for 6 to 10 years in the public service while 34.5% representing 69 respondents have worked for 11 years and above in the public

Answers to Research Questions
 Table 4: The Role of Amplified Media Voice in Nigeria

The Role of Amplified Media Voice in Nigeria												
S/n	Response	SA	%	A	%	UD	%	D	%	SD	%	Total
1.	Print media is a vital tool for information dissemination of CCT cases in Nigeria.	109	54.5%	43	21.5%	2	1.0%	24	12.0%	22	11.0%	200 (100%)
2.	The print media has helped CCT in exposing corrupt politicians and Bureaucrats in the country.	194	97.0%	-	-	-	-	6	3.0%	-	-	200 (100%)
3.	The role of print media in opinion formulation is highly indispensable in Nigeria Polity	111	55.5%	75	37.5%	-	-	12	6.0%	2	1.0%	200 (100%)
4.	The amplified voice of the media has a vital role in attainment of peace in Nigeria polity.	142	71.0%	50	25%	-	-	6	3.0%	2	1.0%	200 (100%)

The research clearly showed that print media is a vital tool for information dissemination of CCT cases in Nigeria. In the course of interaction with the respondents in the field it was affirmed by majority of the respondents as shown in the table above that a total of 109 (54.5%) out of 200 respondents strongly agree on the assertion that media is a vital tool for information dissemination. In the same vein 43 (21.5%) respondents agree that the print media is a vital tool for information dissemination of CCT trials in Nigeria while only 24 (12.0%), 22 (11.0%) respondents strongly disagree and

disagree respectively that print media is a vital tool for information dissemination of CCT trials in Nigeria. This simply means that the role of print media in dissemination of information on CCT trials in Nigeria cannot be over emphasized. Overwhelming majority of respondents strongly agree that the print media has helped CCT in exposing corrupt politicians and bureaucrats in the country. Out of 200 respondents interacted with in the course of the research 194 representing 97% of the total research population for the study. Only 6 respondents representing 3% disagree on

the assertion. This shows that the print media has tremendously helped the helped CCT in exposing corrupt politicians and bureaucrats in the country. The response on the role of print media in opinion formulation in the Nigerian polity is in support of what Gray and Kaufmann (1998) reiterated that the printed media has great audience that is made up of literate and illiterate population; the illiterate population read all published information and believed all the news whether right or wrong. 111(55.5%) out of a total of 200 respondents strongly agree that the role of print media in opinion formulation is highly indispensable in the Nigerian polity, 75(37.5%) agree, while 12(6%) and

2(1%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively that the role of print media in opinion formulation is highly indispensable in the Nigerian polity. The response from the research showed that a total number of 142 (71.0%) out of 200 research population strongly agree and agree respectively that the amplified voice of the media has a vital role in attainment of peace in Nigerian polity. Only 6 respondents representing insignificant 3% and 2 (1%) of the population disagree and strongly disagree on the assertion respectively. This shows that the media voice has great influence on the attainment of peace in Nigerian polity.

Table 5: Effects of Media Handling of the Code of Conduct Tribunal Cases in Nigeria

S/n	Response	SA	%	A	%	UD	%	D	%	SD	%	Total
1.	The attention given to CCT activities by the media determines the importance readers attach to fight against corruption in public offices	98	49.0%	94	47.0%	-	-	6	3.0%	2	1.0%	200 (100%)
2.	Information about CCT is highly indispensable noting that it can shape the opinion of the citizens and the entire populace,	81	40.5%	116	58%	-	-	-	-	3	1.50%	200 (100%)
3.	The media adulterated news about CCT has harmful effect to the political atmosphere of the country	81	40.5%	116	58.0%	-	-	-	-	3	1.5%	200 (100%)
4.	The media reportage of CCT cases heat up the polity	81	40.5%	119	58%	-	-	-	-	1	1.0%	200 (100%)

5.	Media reportage of CCT cases politicized issue	112	56.0%	68	34.0%	5	2.5%	2	1%	13	6.5%	200 (100%)
6.	Media handling of the CCT cases in Nigeria has great effect on politics of the nation	112	56.0%	68	34.0%	5	2.5%	2	1.0%	13	6.5%	200 (100%)
7.	Media handling of CCT bring hatred for the people	40	20,0%	59	29.5%	-	-	88	44.0%	13	6.5%	200 (100%)
8.	Media reportage of CCT cases makes people to lose confidence and respect in the political class	40	20.0%	59	29.5%	-	-	88	44.0%	13	6.5%	200 (100%)
9.	Media reportage of CCT cases may confuse the Tribunal	109	54.5%	43	21.5%	2	1,0%	24	12.0%	22	11.0%	200 (100%)
10.	Media reportage of CCT cases may influence public opinion	63	31.5%	97	48.0%	5	2.5%	32	16.0%	3	1.5%	200 (100%)

In the course of this study, it was observed that the attention given to CCT activities by the media does have correlation with the importance readers attach to fight against corruption in public offices. Table shows that only 49% and 47% of the research population agree and strongly agree respectively that the attention given to CCT activities by the media determines the importance readers attach to fight against corruption in public offices while 3.0% and 1% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree on the assertion. This simply means that there is correlation between the attention given to CCT activities by the media and the importance readers attach to fight against corruption in public offices. The data collated on the importance of awareness creation on CCT shows that the overwhelming majority of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that information about CCT is highly indispensable noting that it can

shape the opinion of the citizens and the entire populace. A total of 197(98.5%) out of 200 respondent agree and strongly agree on the assertion while only 3(1.5%) respondents. This shows that awareness creation on the role of CCT is correlated with fight against corruption.

Almost 100 % of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that media adulterated news about CCT has harmful effect to the political atmosphere of a country. This means that political atmosphere can be heated up if the populace is misinformed about CCT. Misinformation or adulterated news by the media about CCT has harmful effect to the political atmosphere of a country.

From the data collated in the field, it is obvious that overwhelming majority of 199 respondents out of 200 representing 99.5 of the research population strongly agrees and agrees respectively that media reportage heat up the polity. This shows that there is a correlation between media

report and polity in the nation. Absolutely 90% respondents strongly agree that media reportage politicized issues in Nigeria

In the course of this research, 112 representing 56% respondents strongly agree that the media handling of the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases in Nigerian has great effect on politics of the nation. 68 (34%) of the respondents agree on the assertion while 5 respondents were undecided. However, 2 and 13 of the respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively. The responses underscore high level awareness on the effect of CCT cases on the politics of the nation. It also shows that there is a correlation between the level of education and the role of the media since most of the respondents were educated.

The responses showed that 40 (20.0%) and 59 (29.5%) respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that media handling of CCT cases bring hatred for the people. 88 out of 200 representing 44.0% and 13 (6.5%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree that media handling of CCT cases bring hatred for the people. This means that the respondents have divergent opinions on the assertion.

The responses from the table showed that 40 (20%) respondents strongly agree that the media reportage of CCT cases makes people to lose confidence and respect in the political class, 59 respondents representing 29% of the study population agree on the assertion. However, 88(44%) and 13 (6.5%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively on the

assertion media reportage of CCT cases makes people to lose confidence and respect in the political class.

The data collated during the field visit showed that 109(54.5%) respondents strongly agree that media reportage of CCT cases may confuse the tribunal, 43 respondents representing 21.5% of the study population also agree that media reportage of CCT cases may confuse the tribunal while 2(1%) were undecided. However, 24 (12%) and 22 (11%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively on the assertion. This showed that majority of the respondents strongly agree that media reportage of CCT cases may confuse the tribunal. Sometimes members of the tribunal are persuaded to respond to public opinion even when the law may be at variance with the opinion.

In the course of the research, the data collated showed that 63 (31.50%) and 97 (48.50%) respectively strongly agree and agree that Media reportage of CCT cases may influence public opinion, 5(2.5%) respondents were undecided while 32(16%) and 3(1.5%) of the respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively on the assertion.

The data collated during this research reveals that majority of respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that Media reportage of CCT cases may influence public opinion.

The Media is Abiding with the Rules of Engagement in Reporting Cases of the Code of Conduct Tribunal

Table 6: The Media is abiding with the Rules of Engagement in Reporting Cases of the Code of Conduct Tribunal

S/n	Response	SA	%	A	%	UD	%	D	%	SD	%	Total
1.	The media reportage of CCT cases is sensational	87	43.5%	76	38.0%	29	14.5%	8	4.0%	-	-	200 (100%)
2.	The media reportage of CCT cases is prejudiced	164	82%	36	18.0%	-	-	-	-	-	-	200 (100%)
3.	The media is abiding by their rules of engagement and code of ethics in reportage of CCT cases	32	16.0%	16	8%	90	45%	60	30%	2	1.0%	200 (100%)
4.	The media reportage of CCT cases is judgmental	200	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	200 (100%)
5.	The media exhibits the sense of professionalism in the way it handles CCT cases in Nigeria	122	61.0%	57	28.5%	-	-	12	6.0%	9	4.5%	200 (100%)
6.	The media preempt judgments of the CCT	56	28.0%	73	36.5%	12	6.0%	33	16.5%	26	13%	200 (100%)
7.	Media report of the CCT trials has been denied by the Tribunal	32	16.0%	46	23%	33	16.5%	42	21.0%	47	23.5%	200 (100%)
8.	The media has been objective in their reportage of CCT cases	33	16.5%	16	8%	45	22.5%	98	49%	8	4%	200 (100%)

Table above showed that 87 and 76 strongly agree and agree respectively that media reportage is sensational. 29 out of the total number of 200 respondents were indecisive while only 8 respondents disagree that the media reportage is sensational. This shows that media

reportage on CCT cases provoked interest of the masses.

164 respondents representing 82% of the study population strongly agree that media reportage of CCT is prejudice while 36 representing 18% of the respondents also agree on the assertion. This means that the absolute majority of the entire

study population believe that media has been unfair in their reportage on CCT cases.

In the course of this research work, interactions with respondents as shown in table above showed 90 (45%) that majority of respondents were undecided on whether the media is abiding by their rules of engagement and code of ethics in reporting cases of the Code of Conduct Tribunal. 32(16%) and 16(8%) strongly agree and agree respectively while 60(30%) and 2 (1.0%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively. This showed that majority of the respondents were undecided on the assertion that the media is abiding by their rules of engagement and code of ethics in reporting cases of the Code of Conduct Tribunals.

This research study affirmed that media reportage is judgmental. The data collated during the field visit shows that 100% respondents strongly agree that reportage is judgmental. This means that the media usually gives verdict on CCT trails before actual court ruling on the matter.

32(16%) and 46(23%) of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that media exhibits the sense of professionalism in the way it handles CCT cases in Nigeria. 33(16.5%) of the study population were decisive while 42(21%) and 47 (23.5%) respectively strongly

disagree and disagree respectively on the assertion.

The data shows that a good number of respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively that media exhibit the sense of professionalism in the way it handles CCT cases in Nigeria.

56 (28.00%) and 73(36.50%) strongly agree and agree respectively that the media preempt judgment of the CCT trials. 12 (6%) were undecided while 33(16.50%) and 26 (13%) disagree and strongly disagree respectively on the assertion.

A total number of 78 out of 200 respondents interacted with in the course of the study strongly agree and agree respectively that media report of the CCT trails has been denied by the Tribunal while 33 respondent representing 16.50% Of the study population were indecisive on the assertion. However, a total number of 89 respondent representing 44.50% of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree on the assertion.

Table above shows that 33(16.5%) and 16 (8%) strongly agree and agree respectively that media has been objective in their reportage. 45 (22.5%) of the respondents were indecisive while 98 (22.5%) and 8 (4%) respectively strongly disagree and disagree on the assertion. Overwhelming majority of the respondents strongly agree and agree respectively that media has been objective in their reportage.

The Extent CCT has Enjoyed Operation without Unnecessary Media Interference.

Table 7: The Extent CCT has enjoyed Operation without unnecessary media interference

S/n	Response	SA	%	A	%	UD	%	D	%	SD	%	Total
1.	CCT has enjoyed operation without unnecessary media interference	32	16%	12	6%	1	0.5%	106	53%	49	24.5%	200 (100%)
2.	The media has not been fair to CCT in their reportage of their activities	56	28.0%	78	39.0%	2	1.0%	45	22.5%	19	9.5%	200 (100%)
3.	The media has demonized CCT	24	12%	19	9.5%	-	-	112	56.0	45	22.5%	200 (100%)

32 (16%) strongly agree that CCT has enjoyed operation without unnecessary media interference. 12 (6%) also agree that CCT has enjoyed operation without unnecessary media interference. 106 (53%) and 49 (24.5%) of the respondents disagree and strongly disagree respectively on the assertion. Since the majority of respondents strongly disagree and agree respectively that CCT has enjoyed operation without unnecessary media interference.

56 respondents representing 28% of the population strongly agree that the media has not been fair to CCT as against what [22] [23] recommended in his 10 Commandments of Code of Ethics which says that Media should be fair in

presenting all relevant facts in a balanced way; of which 78 representing 39% of the respondents agree on the assertion. While 2 respondents out of the entire population were undecided. 45 and 19 strongly disagree and disagree respectively on the assertion [24].

From the data collated from the research, 24 and 19 respondents respectively strongly agree and agree respectively that the media demonized CCT. However, 112 and 45 respondents strongly disagree and disagree respectively that the media has demonized CCT. This simply means that the media does not demonize CCT since the majority of the respondents disagree on the assertion.

Table 8: Ways the Media can better handle CCT cases

S/n	Response	SA	%	A	%	UD	%	D	%	SD	%	Total
1.	The media should be courteous in their reportage of CCT cases	111	55.5%	75	37.5%	-	-	12	6.0	2	1.0	200 (100%)
2.	The media should apply high sense of responsibility & professionalism in the reportage of CCT cases	56	28.0%	78	39.0%	2	1.0%	45	22.5%	19	9.5	200 (100%)
3.	CCT should have a well-trained information officer that will disseminate the correct information on the print media	76	38.0%	80	40.0%	-	-	2	1.0%	42	21.0%	200 (100%)

The effect of media in the national unity cannot be over emphasized. The data collated on the assertion that the media should be courteous in their reportage showed that 111 respondent representing 55.5% of the study population strongly agrees that the media should be courteous in their reportage to avoid heating up the polity of the nation. In the same vein, 75 respondents representing

37.5% respondents agree that the media should be courteous in their reportage. Only a total of 14 respondents representing 7% of the study population strongly disagree and disagree respectively [25] [26].

In the course of interaction with the respondents in the field, the data collated showed that 56 and 78 respondents respectively strongly agree and agree

respectively on the assertion that the media should apply high sense of responsibility and professionalism in the reportage of CCT cases. 2 of the respondents disagree on the assertion while 42 strongly disagree that the media should apply high sense of responsibility and professionalism in the reportage of CCT cases. This simply means that there is need for high sense of responsibility and professionalism by the media in the reportage of an issue of national interest. A trained information officer who is saddled with the dissemination of CCT

information is highly indispensable. During the interaction with the respondents in the field, 76 respondents strongly agree that CCT should have a well-trained information officer that will disseminate the correct information on the print media [27]. In the same vein 80 of the respondents also agree on the assertion. However, a total number of 44 respondents strongly disagree and agree respectively CCT should have a well-trained information officer that will disseminate the correct information on the print media [28].

Table 9:Content Analysis of Some Media Reportage of CCT Cases

S/N	DATE	TITLE OF PAPER	CONTENT	ANALYSIS
1	23/1/2019	The Nation, page 6	CCT rejects orders stopping CJN's trial: The Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) on 5 th January, 2019 stated that it is not under obligation to obey the four orders issues by the Federal High Court, The National Industrial Court and the High Court of Federal Capital Territory restraining it from conducting further proceedings in relation to the non- declaration of assets charge pending against the Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN) Walter Onnoghen.	This is factual reportage though it raised concern by the majority. This raised a concern by the majority of citizens, noting that the CJN's case was politically motivated.
2	31/1/2019	The Nation, page 6	Onnoghen at CCT: Appeal Court refuses to stay proceedings: The Court of Appeal in Abuja has rejected the request by suspended Chief Justice of Nigeria (CJN) Walter Onnoghen to stay proceedings in the charge pending against him before the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) pending the determination of the Court of Appeal.	This heated up political atmosphere of the nation. Some Nigerians believe that Onnoghen case is instigated by political force/ interest.
3	14/12/2017	Daily Trust 7	The CCT discharged and acquitted the Senate President: The CCT in Abuja on Wednesday discharged and acquitted the senate president, Dr. Bukola Saraki of all 18 charges of false asset declaration and other related offences preferred against him. The two man panel of the CCT led by its chairman Danladi Umar, Unanimously upheld the no-case submission which Saraki filed after the prosecution closed its case with 48 exhibits tendered and the fourth and last prosecution witness testified on May 4, 2017.	People believed the case was a trumped up in the first instance because of his emergence as the president of the senate against the wishes of the leadership of the APC.
4	15/6/2017	The punch, pages 1& 7	Presidency kicks as CCT discharges, acquits Saraki: The presidency, on Wednesday, described outrageous and travesty of justice the acquittal of senate president Bukola Saraki by the code of conduct Tribunal, which	It was a balanced reportage as all sides of the story were covered.

upheld the no-case submission of the senate president.

5	22/12/2017	Daily Trust, pages 1, 12 & 13	<p>Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Sylvester Ngwuta was arraigned in 2017 at the Code of Conduct Tribunal for an allegation boarding on false declaration of assets:</p> <p>Justice of the Supreme Court, Justice Sylvester Ngwuta was arraigned in 2017 at the Code of Conduct Tribunal for an allegation boarding on false declaration of assets contrary to section 15 of Code of Conduct Bureau and Tribunal Act, Cap C15 Laws of the Federation of Nigeria punishable under Section 23 (2) of the same Act.</p>	<p>The media report had condemned and presumed Justice Ngwuta guilty even before the verdict of a court of competent jurisdiction hence the reportage was judgmental.</p>
6	19/3/2016	Leadership Newspaper	<p>Code of Conduct Tribunal Freed Bola Tinubu in Error – Rotimi Jacobs:</p> <p>Rotimi Jacobs, a senior advocate of Nigeria and the Federal Government prosecuting counsel in the 13 count charge of false assets declaration trial of Senate President Bukola Saraki on Thursday said the Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) was misled to discharge former Governor of Lagos State Bola Ahmed Tinubu when he was arraigned before it in November 2011.</p>	<p>The heading of the Newspaper heated up the polity as Bola Tinubu's case was a controversial one because even when he was acquitted most Nigerians believed it was in an error.</p>
7	21/2/2018	This Day, pages 12, & 13	<p>Justice Ngwuta to Know Fate March 21:</p> <p>The Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) will on March 21 deliver ruling on the competence of the criminal charge brought against the Supreme Court Justice, Sylvester Ngwuta, by the federal government on charges of false assets declaration.</p>	<p>The CCT prosecuting a serving justice of the supreme court without due process is a strong issue in the country thus heating up the polity of the nation.</p>
8.	4/10/2016	Daily Trust Pages 1 & 7	<p>Code of Conduct Tribunal Finda Ex-Minister Orubebe Guilty of False Declaration of Assets.</p> <p>The Code Of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) has found Godsdays Orubebe, former minister of Niger Delta affairs, guilty of false declaration of assets. Danladi Umar, chairman of the Tribunal delivered the judgement convicting Orubebe of the offence. However, he gave him a light sentence. "I hereby seize on behalf of the federal government the property known as Plot 2057," he ruled. "The prosecution proved its case beyond reasonable doubt and all evidence tendered are admitted."</p>	<p>It was believed that the government was after him because of the role he played in the coalition of the 2015 national election result</p>
9	5/10/2016	Leadership Newspaper, pages 1 & 8	<p>False Assets Declaration: CCT convicts Godsdays Orubebe:</p> <p>The Code of Conduct Tribunal on Tuesday October 4, 2016, convicted a former Minister of Niger Delta Affairs, Godsdays Peter Orubebe, for failure to declare his property plot 2057 at Asokoro District,</p>	<p>This heated up the polity as people saw this as a punishment/vindictive for Orubebe because of his action during election coalition.</p>

10	21/7/2017	The Punch page 7	Abuja. FG appeals, says Saraki's acquittal unreasonable	The CCT, in Abuja, had, on June 14, 2017, discharge and acquitted Sarakki of all the 18 charges. The two man panel of the CCT, led by its Chairman, Danladi Umar, unanimously upheld the no-case submission which Saraki filed after the prosecution closed its case with the fourth and the last prosecution witnesses testifying on May, 2017. There were 48 documentary exhibits tendered in the course of the trial.
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The contents of all the newspapers reviewed show that the media reportage of cases forms opinion of the readers and

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study investigated newspaper (print media) handling of Code of Conduct Tribunal (CCT) cases in Heating up the Polity. The study ex-rayed the historical background of the CCT, critically examined the justification as well as objective of the study which are: To ascertain the effects of amplified media voice in Nigerian polity. To determine the effects of media handling of the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases in Nigeria polity, To find out the extent media is abiding by the code of ethics and rules of engagement in reporting the Code of Conduct Tribunal cases, To ascertain the extent CCT has enjoyed operation without unnecessary media interference, To suggest ways of enhancing media handling of CCT cases.

The study used both questionnaire and content analysis. The data used were sampled randomly from staff of CCT, Newspaper Reporters, staff of other government Ministries, Parastatals and

CONCLUSION

Nigeria has important policy framework for fighting corruption and there is growing awareness of the need for independence of CCT in its operation without media interference. The role of amplified voice of media cannot be over emphasized in the reportage of CCT trials. Rules of engagement and professional ethics should be adhered to by the media in handling of CCT cases.

the entire populace. It also shows that media has influence on the polity of a nation.

Agencies. The study also carried out content analyses of some newspapers report on the CCT. Related literatures were also examined.

The key findings from this research include the following:

- The media can influence people's opinion as regards to issue of national interest.
- The Print media is a vital tool for information dissemination of CCT cases in Nigeria
- The media adulterated news about CCT has harmful effect to the political atmosphere of the nation.
- The media reportage of CCT cases makes people to lose confidence and respect in the political class. Therefore, to ensure accurate dissemination of information, CCT should train information personnel that will give out information from CCT perspective.

The reportage of CCT Cases are sensational, it may cause mental and psychological conflict for the alleged defaulter, his/her family and friends. Society may become biased against the accused; it may equally give rise to regional conflict as in the case of the ousted Chief Justice of Nigeria. Therefore, for peace in the polity of the nation, CCT trials should not be preemptive by the

media to enable justice be served. There is need for the media to handle CCT cases

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with high sense of professionalism.

RECOMMENDATIONS

In furtherance with the findings of this study in mind and the reality of the effect of CCT in fights against corruption.

- ❖ The media should exhibit high sense of professionalism in their operations
- ❖ There should be censorship and thorough gate-keeping on all printed information before dissemination.

- ❖ The CCT should have trained personnel that will always disseminate information on their activities.
- ❖ Media professionals also need to exercise restraints in reporting cases under trial by using appropriate lexis.

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