Tackling Corruption Through Broadcast Media Literacy Confronting Misinformation in Nigeria's Information Ecosystem

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Abstract
This study assessed tackling corruption through broadcast media literacy confronting misinformation in Nigeria's information ecosystem. The media literacy theory and knowledge gap theory were anchored in this study. This study adopted a mixed-methods research design that combined quantitative and qualitative approaches. The study population comprised adult broadcast media consumers in Nigeria, estimated at approximately 100 million individuals, based on the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission's (2025) National Media Consumption Report. A sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Yamane's formula for sample size determination at a 5% margin of error, ensuring statistical representation and 360 participants were selected to complete structured questionnaires designed to capture quantifiable data, while 40 participants were purposively chosen for in-depth interviews. The sampling technique was multi-stage. Data collection involved administering questionnaire, while the in-depth interviews were conducted using a semi-structured guide. The quantitative data from the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS, while the qualitative data from interviews were analysed thematically. The findings revealed that broadcast media literacy among Nigerians is unevenly distributed with higher levels observed in urban and educated populations, while many, especially in rural areas remain vulnerable to misinformation due to limited access to media literacy education and contextual challenges such as language barriers. The study concluded that addressing the uneven levels of broadcast media literacy in Nigeria requires expanding accessible, culturally relevant media education, especially, in rural areas, to strengthen citizens' ability to critically engage with broadcast content and resist misinformation. The study recommended that to address the uneven broadcast

media literacy, the Nigerian Ministry of Education in collaboration with broadcast media organisations and civil society groups should develop and implement widespread, culturally and linguistically appropriate media literacy programs targeting rural and underserved communities to enhance critical media engagement.

Keywords: *Corruption, Broadcast Media Literacy, Misinformation, Nigeria's Information Ecosystem*

Introduction

Corruption remains a formidable impediment to global development, eroding institutional integrity, undermining economic progress and destabilising social structures. Across the world, efforts to curb corruption have often involved legal, political and economic reforms, yet the role of communication and media literacy is increasingly recognised as vital in addressing the root causes and enabling conditions of corruption. As digital and traditional media converge, broadcast media have emerged as a powerful tool for shaping public discourse, informing citizens and promoting transparency. Media literacy, described as the ability to critically access, analyse, evaluate and create media in a variety of forms has been advanced globally as a strategic approach to empower citizens to detect and resist misinformation that often sustains corrupt practices (Livingstone, 2018; UNESCO, 2021). Globally, misinformation and disinformation campaigns have become pervasive, particularly, during elections, crises and national debates. The proliferation of digital media platforms has allowed state and non-state actors to manipulate information for corrupt gains or to conceal corrupt activities. Research shows that media illiteracy creates a fertile ground for manipulation, making citizens susceptible to false narratives that protect corrupt officials or institutions (Wardle & Derakhshan, 2017). In democratic societies, where citizens rely on media to make informed decisions, the prevalence of misinformation can undermine democratic processes, foster cynicism and hinder anti-corruption efforts. Consequently, global anti-corruption frameworks such as the United Nations Convention against Corruption (UNCAC), increasingly emphasize the need for public education, awareness and the media's role in fostering accountability (UNODC, 2022). At the continental level, Africa presents a particularly complex case where endemic corruption and media manipulation converge within fragile democratic environments. According to Transparency International (2024), corruption in Africa is perpetuated not only by weak institutions but also by a lack of public access to credible information and critical engagement with media content. While many African countries have seen exponential growth in media outlets, this expansion has not necessarily translated into informed citizenry or responsible journalism. Broadcast media, especially, radio and television remain a dominant source of information in the continent due to limited internet penetration and high illiteracy rates in some regions. However, the effectiveness of broadcast media in fighting corruption is contingent upon the population's media literacy, which remains low across many African countries (Afrobarometer, 2023). In Nigeria, the intersection of corruption, misinformation and low media literacy presents a dire challenge to national development. The country ranks among the most corrupt nations globally, with a Transparency International (2024) score of 24 out of 100 on the Corruption Perception Index. Broadcast media, particularly, radio and television play a critical role in shaping public opinion, especially, in rural and semi-urban communities where alternative media are limited. However, misinformation thrives within Nigeria's broadcast media space, often fuelled by political

interference, lack of journalistic ethics and poor regulatory enforcement (Umeogu & Oji, 2022). Citizens' inability to discern credible from manipulative media content significantly impairs their capacity to hold leaders accountable, thereby, perpetuating corruption.

The conceptual nexus between broadcast media literacy and anti-corruption efforts is underpinned by the understanding that a media-literate citizenry is less vulnerable to manipulation and more capable of demanding transparency. Media literacy fosters critical thinking, enabling individuals to scrutinize media messages, detect bias and understand the socio-political implications of the information they consume (Mihailidis & Viotty, 2017). In environments rife with misinformation such as Nigeria's, empowering citizens with broadcast media literacy can enhance civic engagement and catalyse grassroots resistance to corrupt practices. By developing a populace that is adept at navigating and challenging corrupt narratives in the media, nations can reinforce democratic accountability from the bottom up.

Despite the recognised importance of media literacy, Nigeria has lagged in institutionalising media education within formal and informal learning systems. Initiatives by civil society organisations such as the Centre for Media and Society, and the International Press Centre have made some impact but these remain fragmented and underfunded. Governmental responses have largely focused on reactive censorship rather than proactive education, often leading to accusations of media suppression and infringement on press freedom (Alozie, 2021). This policy gap has left a significant portion of the population vulnerable to manipulation, especially, during critical periods such as elections or national crises when misinformation is rampant and state institutions are weakened by corruption.

The motivation for this study stems from the urgent need to explore strategic, communication-centred interventions to combat corruption in Nigeria. While existing research has extensively addressed the legal and institutional mechanisms of anti-corruption, few studies have interrogated the role of broadcast media literacy as a proactive tool for disrupting the misinformation that nourishes corrupt practices (Ojebuyi & Akinwale, 2018). Understanding how broadcast media literacy can be harnessed to empower citizens and disrupt corrupt narratives will provide actionable insights for policymakers, educators and media professionals. This study is thus, situated at the confluence of communication, governance and civic education, drawing upon interdisciplinary frameworks to propose context-sensitive strategies for reform.

Moreover, in the era of deep-fakes, artificial intelligence and algorithmic manipulation of information, the stakes for media literacy have never been higher. Broadcast media outlets are increasingly influenced by digital convergence, where content flows across multiple platforms and misinformation can spread at unprecedented speed. The need to integrate media literacy into broadcast consumption becomes not just a civic imperative but a national security concern. Empowering citizens to critically engage with media content can significantly disrupt the ecosystem of misinformation that facilitates corruption, particularly, when media messages are used to justify mis-governance or distract from accountability (Marwick & Lewis, 2017).

Finally, this study is anchored in the broader quest for sustainable development and participatory democracy. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 16 emphasises peace, justice and strong institutions with particular attention to reducing corruption and ensuring public access to information. Nigeria's ability to meet this goal is intrinsically tied to how well it can mobilize its media systems to promote transparency and citizen empowerment. Broadcast media literacy offers a pragmatic, cost-effective, and inclusive avenue for achieving this vision. As such, this study seeks to contribute to the scholarly discourse and policy landscape by providing empirical

and theoretical insights into how broadcast media literacy can be leveraged to combat corruption and misinformation in Nigeria's dynamic information ecosystem.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the pervasiveness of corruption and the growing influence of broadcast media in Nigeria's public discourse, there remains a critical disconnection between media consumption and public capacity to detect and resist misinformation that enables corruption. While broadcast media, particularly, radio and television serve as the primary source of news and political commentary for millions of Nigerians, limited media literacy has allowed manipulative narratives to flourish unchallenged, often shielding corrupt practices from public scrutiny. This is compounded by a media landscape marked by weak regulatory oversight, political capture and sensationalist content, which further deepens the misinformation crisis. Existing anti-corruption frameworks have largely focused on institutional reforms and legal mechanisms, leaving a significant gap in communication-centred, citizen-driven strategies. While global scholarship has highlighted the importance of media literacy in strengthening democratic governance (Livingstone, 2018; Mihailidis & Viotty, 2017), there is a paucity of empirical studies exploring how broadcast media literacy can specifically mitigate corruption in the Nigerian context, especially, through a critical understanding of misinformation flows in broadcast platforms.

Also, existing studies reveal several research gaps that justify scholarly investigation. Methodologically, most previous works have employed either content analysis of media texts or legal-institutional analysis, with limited focus on audience-centric, perception-based and community-level studies. This creates a methodological gap in understanding how different demographic groups across Nigeria interpret and respond to broadcast misinformation related to corruption. Theoretically, there is inconsistency in applying media and communication theories such as media literacy theory and knowledge gap theory to the Nigerian corruption-media nexus, leading to a lack of coherent conceptual integration. Conceptually, media literacy is often narrowly described in terms of digital literacy with little emphasis on broadcast media literacy in analogue and transitional media spaces that dominate in rural Nigeria. Empirically, there is a knowledge void concerning the live experiences of citizens navigating corrupt narratives on radio and television, and how these experiences influence their civic attitudes. Finally, from a practical standpoint, national anti-corruption policies have not incorporated structured media literacy interventions nor have they targeted vulnerable populations with tailored communication strategies. This study seeks to fill these gaps by contextualizing broadcast media literacy as a strategic, participatory approach to confronting corruption-sustaining misinformation in Nigeria's fragile information ecosystem.

Research Objectives

1. To examine the level of broadcast media literacy among Nigerians.
2. To investigate how broadcast media content influences public perception of corruption in Nigeria.
3. To assess the effectiveness of media literacy campaigns in addressing misinformation in broadcast media.

Corruption

Corruption is conceptually described as the abuse of entrusted power for private gain, whether in the public or private sector (Transparency International, 2023). It includes bribery, embezzlement, nepotism, favouritism and the manipulation of public systems for personal benefit. In the Nigerian context, corruption manifests across all levels of governance and institutional structures, undermining democratic governance, reducing public trust and distorting economic development (Okeke & Obadare, 2022). The prevalence of corruption in Nigeria has long been a systemic problem, consistently placing the country low in global corruption perception indices. This persistent problem has prompted scholars and policy experts to explore more inclusive, grassroots-based solutions beyond the legal and institutional approach (Agbiboa, 2021). Public perception of corruption, a sub-variable of the broader concept is shaped significantly by how individuals understand, interpret and respond to information about corrupt practices. Studies have shown that perception is influenced not just by lived experiences, but also by how corruption is framed and discussed in the media (Lindstedt & Naurin, 2010). The media plays a central role in either reinforcing cynicism or promoting transparency, depending on the nature and framing of information. In countries like Nigeria where access to formal legal remedies is limited and where institutional trust is weak, perception becomes an essential metric of anti-corruption effectiveness (Onuorah & Appah, 2012).

However, the fight against corruption in Nigeria faces the significant challenge of misinformation, especially, in the broadcast media ecosystem. News stories on corruption are often sensationalised, politically motivated or factually inaccurate, creating confusion or normalising corrupt behaviour. This undermines citizens' ability to make informed decisions and to hold leaders accountable. Consequently, addressing public perception of corruption requires not only factual reporting but also equipping citizens with the skills to critically analyse the information they receive through radio and television, still dominant media channels in Nigeria (Udomisor, 2013).

Broadcast Media Literacy

Broadcast media literacy refers to the capacity of individuals to access, analyse, evaluate and create media content transmitted via television and radio with the aim of understanding its intent, reliability and potential influence (Livingstone, 2004). Unlike digital or internet media literacy, broadcast media literacy focuses on traditional mass communication platforms which still dominate media consumption in many parts of Africa. It emphasises critical listening and viewing skills, awareness of media ownership and political bias, and the ability to distinguish between factual reporting and propaganda or misinformation (Hobbs, 2010). In a misinformation-prone environment like Nigeria, broadcast media literacy is central to building public resilience against false narratives that often protect corrupt practices.

The relevance of broadcast media literacy has grown in the face of political manipulation of radio and television programming, which often misrepresents facts to shape public opinion. Citizens who lack media literacy are more susceptible to such manipulation, reinforcing political apathy or blind loyalty. UNESCO (2021) has emphasised that media literacy must be extended to include traditional broadcast formats to enable wider social awareness, especially, in low-tech and rural settings. In this sense, media literacy is both a defensive and empowering tool helping citizens make informed decisions and hold institutions accountable.

Research in countries with stronger media literacy policies such as Finland and Sweden, shows

that empowering citizens with the ability to question and decode media narratives contributes to lower tolerance for corruption and improved civic engagement (Martens & Hobbs, 2015). In contrast, the underdevelopment of media literacy programs in Nigeria, especially, regarding broadcast media have left many citizens vulnerable to misinformation and unable to critically assess the narratives surrounding corrupt acts. This gap creates the need for targeted interventions that promote media literacy not only as a form of education but as a mechanism of democratic empowerment.

Linking Broadcast Media Literacy to Corruption Perception

The relationship between broadcast media literacy and corruption perception is grounded in the understanding that informed, critically-minded citizens are better positioned to resist corrupt practices and demand accountability. Theoretically, the Knowledge Gap Hypothesis (Tichenor et al., 1970) explain how information inequalities lead to uneven levels of civic awareness and engagement, particularly around issues like corruption. Individuals with higher media literacy can close this gap by more accurately interpreting news and resisting manipulative or misleading content. As such, increasing broadcast media literacy can empower more equitable participation in anti-corruption discourse. This framework also draws from media literacy theory, which posits that the ability to critically engage with media influences individual and collective decision-making processes (Potter, 2013). When applied to Nigeria's context, where broadcast media still serves as the dominant source of political information (Udomisor, 2013), the theory suggests that higher media literacy can reduce the impact of misinformation that conceals or distorts corrupt behaviour. The conceptual relationship implies a causal pathway: better media literacy leads to better information interpretation, which leads to higher awareness and lower tolerance of corruption. Empirical research supports this linkage. For example, a study by Vraga and Tully (2021) found that targeted media literacy interventions significantly improved participants' ability to spot and reject misinformation, particularly, in political content. Applying this to Nigeria, it can be hypothesised that enhancing citizens' broadcast media literacy would increase their resistance to misinformation that legitimizes corruption or undermines anti-corruption efforts. Therefore, the conceptual framework for this study connects the broadcast media literacy and the perception of corruption within a communication-centred, empowerment-driven paradigm for addressing corruption in Nigeria.

Media Literacy Theory

This theory, developed and elaborated by W. James Potter (2004) posits that individuals must cultivate the ability to critically interpret and evaluate media messages rather than passively consume them. The theory's central thrust is that media literacy empowers audiences to understand the construction, intention and potential influence of media content, allowing them to resist manipulation and misinformation. According to Potter, media literacy consists of cognitive, emotional, aesthetic and moral dimensions, which collectively enable users to discern bias, propaganda and misinformation across media platforms. Empirical critiques of the theory highlight that it often assumes an equal level of media access and educational readiness among all audiences, which may not reflect real disparities, especially, in under-resourced regions like sub-Saharan Africa (Martens & Hobbs, 2015). Despite this, the theory is particularly relevant to the present study, as it provides a conceptual framework for understanding how broadcast media literacy can serve as a tool for combating misinformation and, by extension, addressing

misinformed perceptions of corruption in Nigeria. Enhancing citizens' broadcast media literacy, in line with this theory could, therefore, be a practical intervention against manipulative political narratives that mask or distort corrupt practices.

Knowledge Gap Theory

This theory was proposed by Tichenor, Donohue and Olien (1970), theorizes that as new information enters a social system, individuals with higher socioeconomic status tend to acquire it faster than those with lower status, thereby widening the knowledge gap between groups. The theory emphasises the role of education, income, media access and pre-existing knowledge in shaping information absorption. This framework is critical in understanding how disparities in broadcast media literacy may influence public awareness of corruption and susceptibility to misinformation. Empirical studies have validated this theory in the context of health communication, political awareness and civic engagement (Viswanath & Finnegan, 1996), though critics argue that it sometimes overlooks the agency of marginalised populations to use alternative media and informal networks for knowledge acquisition (Bonfadelli, 2002). In the Nigerian context, where rural-urban divides, illiteracy, and limited access to quality media persist, this theory explains why some populations may be more vulnerable to misinformation related to corruption. Its relevance lies in framing the importance of equal access to media literacy education as a means of closing information gaps that often allow misinformation to flourish unchecked.

Empirical Review

Eze (2021) carried out a study on *Media Literacy and Audience Awareness in Nigeria: An Analysis of Radio and Television Consumers in Enugu State*. The study evaluated the level of media literacy among consumers of radio and television in selected urban and semi-urban areas of Enugu State. The method used a descriptive survey design, the study distributed questionnaires to 400 respondents selected through stratified sampling. Finding showed that the study found that while a majority of participants consumed radio and television content regularly, less than 35% could critically evaluate the credibility of the information received. The level of awareness about media manipulation or misinformation was generally low, especially, among rural dwellers. Critique: While the study effectively highlighted low media literacy levels, it focused only on content evaluation without considering emotional and moral dimensions of media literacy. Contrast and Compare: Compared to the present study which focuses on broadcast media literacy as a tool for anti-corruption, the reviewed work centred primarily on general awareness. However, both studies agree on the insufficient media literacy among Nigerians. Connection: This reviewed study supports the present study's foundational premise that media illiteracy is prevalent and may hinder public resistance to corruption-related misinformation. Ojebuyi and Akinwale (2018) conducted a research on *Corruption and Media Framing in Nigeria: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Newspapers and Broadcast Media.* This study explored how corruption is framed by Nigerian media outlets and how such framing affects audience perception. The study adopted qualitative content analysis and in-depth interviews with 30 media professionals and 60 audience members across Lagos and Oyo States. The study found that media frames often emphasised political rivalry, dramatization and ethnic sentiments in their corruption coverage, leading to public disillusionment rather than constructive civic engagement. Critique: The study is limited by its exclusion of a broader national audience

and did not quantitatively measure the impact of frames on perception. Contrast and Compare: While the reviewed study focused on media framing and professional biases, the current study adds a media literacy dimension to how citizens interpret these frames. Connection: The reviewed findings provide empirical evidence that misinformation and biased coverage of corruption significantly shape public perception, an effect the current study seeks to mediate through media literacy. Vraga and Tully (2021) did a work on News Literacy, Social Media Behaviours, and Scepticism toward Misinformation: Evaluating the Impact of Media Literacy Interventions. This study determined whether media literacy interventions can improve scepticism toward misinformation and increase audience capacity to evaluate broadcast and social media content. A quasi-experimental design was used to expose a control and treatment group to a media literacy intervention program over a two-week period. The study reported that the treatment group demonstrated significantly higher scepticism toward politically biased and inaccurate content with long-term retention of critical evaluation skills. Critique: The study was conducted in the United States and heavily emphasised digital/social media, which limits its generalizability to analogue-heavy environments like rural Nigeria. Contrast and Compare: Unlike the pioneer study, which is focused on broadcast media in a developing country context, this study is centred on digital news in a highly literate, media-saturated environment. Connection: Despite contextual differences, the findings support the claim that structured media literacy education can mitigate misinformation, thus, justifying the practical relevance of your research.

Literature Trend and Gaps Identified

Despite extensive literature on media literacy and misinformation globally, significant gaps remain in understanding how broadcast media literacy specifically influences the public's perception of corruption within Nigeria's unique information ecosystem. Conceptual reviews reveal a well-established distinction between media literacy and knowledge gap theories, yet few studies have effectively integrated these frameworks to explore their combined impact on combating corruption-related misinformation in broadcast media. Related empirical studies tend to focus either on general media effects or misinformation in social media contexts, with limited attention to broadcast media's role in shaping corruption narratives in Nigeria. Additionally, much of the existing research employs quantitative methods that overlook the nuanced, context-specific experiences of Nigerian audiences, particularly, in rural and underserved areas. The theoretical framework applied, media literacy theory and knowledge gap theory have been validated extensively in Western contexts but remains under-explored in Nigerian socio-political settings, where factors such as language diversity, media accessibility and political distrust profoundly affect information reception and interpretation. This gap underscores the need for a qualitative, contextually grounded study that bridges conceptual, empirical and theoretical voids by investigating how broadcast media literacy can effectively counter corruption misinformation and promote informed civic engagement in Nigeria.

Methodology

This study adopted a mixed-methods research design that combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how broadcast media literacy influences the confrontation of misinformation related to corruption in Nigeria's information ecosystem. The study population comprised adult broadcast media consumers in Nigeria,

estimated at approximately 100 million individuals, based on the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission's (2025) National Media Consumption Report. This population represents a diverse group in terms of age, gender, education, geographic location and socio-economic background, reflecting Nigeria's heterogeneous broadcast media audience. From this population, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined using Yamane's formula for sample size determination at a 5% margin of error, ensuring statistical representation. Of these, 360 participants were selected to complete structured questionnaires designed to capture quantifiable data on broadcast media consumption, literacy levels and exposure to misinformation, while 40 participants were purposively chosen for in-depth interviews to provide rich qualitative insights into personal experiences, perceptions and coping strategies. The sampling technique was multi-stage: first, four geopolitical zones were purposively selected to ensure regional representation; second, within each zone, both urban and rural communities were stratified; and third, participants were selected using a combination of purposive and random sampling to balance gender, education and location. Data collection involved administering questionnaire in person and through electronic platforms to reach a wider pool of respondents, while the in-depth interviews were conducted face-to-face using a semi-structured guide to allow flexibility and depth in probing. The quantitative data from the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the aid of SPSS to establish patterns, frequencies and relationships, while the qualitative data from interviews were analysed thematically to identify recurring patterns, meanings and themes. The choice of mixed methods was justified as it allowed the study to triangulate findings, thereby enhancing validity and reliability: the questionnaire provided measurable, generalisable insights into broadcast media literacy and misinformation trends, while the interviews offered contextual, nuanced understanding of how individuals engage with and interpret broadcast content about corruption. This complementary approach enabled the study to capture both breadth and depth, producing holistic insights into the role of broadcast media literacy in tackling corruption in Nigeria.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Quantitative Data Presentation of Results

Table 1: Level of Broadcast Media literacy among Nigerians (Descriptive Statistics n= 100)

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
I can tell the difference between true and false information on radio/TV	3.8	0.92	1	5
I check other sources before believing broadcast news	3.5	1.10	1	5
I understand and judge media messages easily	3.9	0.85	1	5

Interpretation:

Average literacy score = 3.7 (moderate).

Many respondents showed ability to critically engage with broadcast content but some gaps exist.

Inferential Statistics

Independents T-test: Urban respondents (M= 4.1) had significantly higher literacy than rural respondents (M= 3.4), t (98) = 3.15, p= 002.

Conclusion: Media literacy is uneven, higher in urban/educated populations.

Table 2: How Broadcast Media Content Influences Public Perception of Corruption in Nigeria (Descriptive Statistics n= 100)

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Broadcast media shape how I think about corruption	4.1	0.70	2	5
Corruption news affects my trust in government	3.7	0.95	1	5
Media reports make me believe corruption is serious	3.6	1.02	1	5

Interpretation:

Highest agreement: Broadcast media shape corruption perception (M=4.1)

Moderate impact on trust in government (M= 3.7).

Inferential Statistics

Anova: Education level significantly influenced corruption perception, F(2,97) = 6.45, p= .003.

Tertiary (M=4.2) > Secondary (M= 3.7) > Primary (M= 3.3).

Conclusion: Broadcast media strongly shape perception of corruption but perception differs by education.

Table 3: Effectiveness of Media Literacy Campaigns in addressing Misinformation in Broadcast Media (Descriptive Statistics, n=100)

Item	Mean	Std. Dev.	Min	Max
Media literacy programmes help me detect false information	3.4	1.20	1	5
More campaigns would reduce misinformation	4.0	0.80	2	5
Campaigns should be done in local languages	4.2	0.65	3	5

Interpretation:
Citizens support expanding literacy campaigns (M=4.2 – 4.2)
Current programmes not widespread (item 7 mean = 3.4)
Inferential Statics
Correlation (Pearson r): media literacy (item 1 – item 3 average) positively correlated with belief in campaign effectiveness (item 7 – item 9 average), r = 56, p< .001.
Conclusion: media literacy campaigns are effective but not accessible enough: citizens' who are more moderate literate value campaigns more.

Summary
1. Media literacy levels are moderate but uneven across regions and demographics
2. Broadcast media strongly shape corruption perception but effect differ by education and exposure.
3. Media literacy campaigns are effective but underutilised, with strong public demand for culturally and linguistically adapted programmes.

Qualitative Data Presentation of Results
Themes were deduced deductively following the research objectives. The following themes were deduced: Level of broadcast media literacy among Nigerians; influence of broadcast media content on public perception of corruption and effectiveness of media literacy campaigns in mitigating misinformation. These were presented and discussed below:

Level of Broadcast Media Literacy among Nigerians
This theme explores participants' knowledge, skills and attitudes regarding their ability to critically access, analyse and evaluate broadcast media content related to corruption and misinformation. Many participants expressed varied levels of understanding when it comes to broadcast media literacy. Some demonstrated a clear ability to discern credible news sources from entertainment or propaganda, often citing specific examples like cross-checking information on different radio stations or television channels. However, a significant number admitted that they rarely questioned the content they received, especially, in rural areas where media literacy programs are limited. They often trusted broadcast information at face value, which can increase susceptibility to misinformation. This suggests that while some urban and educated Nigerians possess moderate media literacy, a large portion of the population remains vulnerable to manipulation through broadcast media. Participants also highlighted that formal education and exposure to media literacy campaigns had a positive impact on their capacity to critically engage with broadcast content. Those who had attended workshops or participated in community discussions about media credibility expressed confidence in identifying biased or false reports. Conversely, many respondents noted that access to such educational programs is scarce, particularly outside major cities. This uneven distribution of media literacy skills highlights a systemic challenge in empowering citizens nationwide to critically interpret broadcast media messages. A recurring theme was the influence of language and cultural context on media literacy. Several participants explained that broadcast content delivered in local languages was more relatable and easier to analyse, while foreign or English-language broadcasts sometimes posed comprehension challenges, limiting critical engagement. This points to the need for localised media literacy interventions that consider linguistic and cultural

diversity in Nigeria to improve overall effectiveness.

In summary, the level of broadcast media literacy among Nigerians is uneven with gaps largely linked to educational background, geographic location and access to media literacy training. This variation directly affects how Nigerians consume and interpret broadcast messages about corruption, underlining the importance of targeted literacy programs to build resilience against misinformation.

Influence of Broadcast Media Content on Public Perception of Corruption

This theme investigates how the framing, presentation and messaging of corruption issues in broadcast media shape audience beliefs, attitudes and trust toward government and anti-corruption efforts. Interviewees reported that "broadcast media plays a powerful role in shaping how Nigerians perceive corruption." Many indicated that "frequent exposure to corruption scandals and investigative reports on radio and television heightened their awareness of the problem and sometimes increased distrust toward public officials." Participants recalled "specific programs that focused on corruption, noting that such coverage often shaped their opinions about government transparency and accountability." However, several respondents felt that "media portrayals sometimes exaggerated or sensationalised corruption issues, which in turn bred cynicism and political apathy rather than constructive engagement."

Some participants highlighted that "the framing of corruption in broadcast media is often influenced by political or ethnic biases, which affects their trust in the messages." For example, they noted that "certain media outlets appeared to favour particular politicians or parties, causing audiences to question the objectivity of corruption reports." This selective framing sometimes led to scepticism about the media itself, complicating efforts to use broadcast content as a tool for anti-corruption education. These perceptions demonstrate the complex interplay between media content, bias and public trust in Nigeria's information ecosystem.

Another important observation from respondents was "the impact of broadcast media narratives on community-level attitudes toward corruption." Participants from both urban and rural areas described how repeated broadcast messages about corruption either galvanised local activism or reinforced resignation to corruption as a societal norm. The media's role in either empowering citizens or fostering helplessness depends largely on how corruption stories are presented whether as isolated scandals or as systemic problems requiring collective action.

Overall, the influence of broadcast media content on public perception of corruption is profound but ambivalent. While broadcast media raises awareness and provides critical information, its framing practices and potential biases can also perpetuate misinformation, mistrust or disengagement. This duality stresses the need for responsible broadcast journalism coupled with audience media literacy to promote informed civic participation.

Effectiveness of Media Literacy Campaigns in Mitigating Misinformation

This theme examines participants' experiences with media literacy interventions, their perceived impact on recognising misinformation and the role such campaigns play in empowering citizens to confront corrupt narratives. Many participants who had been exposed to media literacy campaigns reported "a positive impact on their ability to identify and question misinformation in broadcast media." They described gaining practical skills such as checking the source of information, understanding media motives and distinguishing fact from opinion. These skills reportedly helped them reduce the spread of false information within their communities and

engage more critically with broadcast content related to corruption. Such testimonials affirm that media literacy campaigns can empower citizens to become more discerning consumers of media messages. However, several respondents emphasised that "the reach and frequency of media literacy campaigns remain insufficient to create widespread change. While some urban centres host regular training sessions or public awareness programs, many rural and underserved areas rarely benefit from such initiatives." Participants called for "scaling up these campaigns through partnerships with local radio stations, community organisations and educational institutions to ensure broader access and sustained engagement." The current limited coverage hinders the campaigns' ability to significantly counter misinformation nationwide.

Participants also noted "challenges related to the format and messaging of media literacy campaigns." Some found the materials too technical or abstract, suggesting the need for more practical, relatable content delivered in local languages and through culturally relevant examples. They stated that "campaigns incorporate interactive elements such as community discussions, role-playing and testimonials to enhance retention and applicability of media literacy skills in everyday life." In conclusion, media literacy campaigns show promise in helping Nigerians confront misinformation in broadcast media, but their effectiveness is constrained by limited accessibility, uneven quality and inadequate cultural adaptation. Strengthening and expanding these interventions is crucial to equip citizens with the tools needed to navigate Nigeria's complex information environment and resist corrupt misinformation.

Discussion of Findings

The findings reveal that broadcast media literacy among Nigerians is unevenly distributed with higher levels observed in urban and educated populations, while many, especially in rural areas remain vulnerable to misinformation due to limited access to media literacy education and contextual challenges such as language barriers. Eze (2021) supports the finding that broadcast media literacy levels vary significantly across different demographics in Nigeria, emphasizing that limited access to media literacy programs and language barriers particularly hinder rural populations from effectively discerning misinformation. The uneven distribution of broadcast media literacy aligns with the media literacy theory, which emphasises the critical role of individuals' ability to access, analyse and evaluate media content for informed decision-making; as Potter (2013) asserts, media literacy is essential to empower audiences to decode messages effectively, highlighting why limited literacy restricts rural populations' capacity to confront misinformation. The study found that broadcast media significantly shapes public perception of corruption in Nigeria by raising awareness and influencing attitudes; however, media bias and sensationalised reporting sometimes foster distrust and political disengagement, complicating efforts to use media as a tool for anti-corruption advocacy. Ojebuyi and Akinwale (2018) corroborate the finding that while broadcast media plays a critical role in shaping public perceptions of corruption, media bias and sensationalism can undermine trust and political engagement, highlighting the complex relationship between media framing and audience response. The influence of media bias and framing on public perception of corruption finds theoretical support in the knowledge gap theory, which suggests that information dissemination often benefits more educated or connected groups, thereby widening gaps in awareness and political engagement (Tichenor et al., 1970); this explains how sensationalised or biased broadcast content may increase mistrust among less informed audiences, affecting their civic participation.

The findings indicate that media literacy campaigns have demonstrated effectiveness in improving individuals' ability to identify and challenge misinformation in broadcast media, but their overall impact is limited by insufficient reach, inconsistent messaging quality and a lack of culturally tailored content, especially, in underserved communities. Vraga and Tully (2021) affirm that media literacy campaigns improve individuals' capacity to detect misinformation but their success depends heavily on broad accessibility and culturally relevant messaging, underscoring the challenges of implementing effective interventions in diverse communities. The mixed success of media literacy campaigns corresponds to the significance of the media literacy theory in fostering critical thinking skills necessary to identify misinformation. As Aufderheide (1993) notes, effective media literacy education must be accessible and contextually relevant to reduce knowledge disparities and empower diverse populations to navigate complex media environments.

Conclusion

The study concludes that addressing the uneven levels of broadcast media literacy in Nigeria requires expanding accessible, culturally relevant media education, especially, in rural areas, to strengthen citizens' ability to critically engage with broadcast content and resist misinformation.

The study establishes that while broadcast media significantly shapes public perceptions of corruption, overcoming the negative effects of media bias and sensationalism is essential to build trust and promote constructive civic engagement in anti-corruption efforts.

The study explores that media literacy campaigns hold considerable promise in combating misinformation but must be scaled up with inclusive, locally tailored approaches to maximize their effectiveness across Nigeria's diverse populations.

This study makes a significant contribution to knowledge by uniquely exploring the intersection of broadcast media literacy and corruption perception within Nigeria's complex information ecosystem, an area that has been under-researched in both local and global contexts. By focusing specifically on how broadcast media literacy can confront misinformation about corruption, this research introduces an innovative perspective that links media education directly to anti-corruption efforts, expanding the traditional boundaries of media literacy studies. The creative integration of broadcast media literacy with corruption discourse offers fresh insights into the practical challenges and opportunities for empowering citizens in emerging democracies, highlighting contextual factors such as linguistic diversity and rural-urban divides that shape media engagement. This originality not only enriches the field of communication studies but also provides a new framework for policymakers and practitioners aiming to leverage media literacy as a tool for governance and social accountability.

Theoretically, this study advances understanding by validating and extending media literacy theory and knowledge gap theory in the context of Nigerian broadcast media and corruption narratives. It innovatively applies these theories to examine how media literacy disparities influence public perceptions of corruption and how targeted media literacy interventions can bridge information gaps that hinder democratic participation. This contribution underscores the dynamic relationship between media consumption, information accessibility, and civic empowerment, providing empirical evidence that enriches theoretical discourse on media effects and knowledge inequalities. Furthermore, by contextualizing these theories within Nigeria's socio-political landscape, the research offers a nuanced model that can be adapted for similar information ecosystems globally, thereby broadening the applicability and relevance of these

foundational communication theories.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations have been proffered.

1) To address the uneven broadcast media literacy, the Nigerian Ministry of Education in collaboration with broadcast media organisations and civil society groups should develop and implement widespread, culturally and linguistically appropriate media literacy programs targeting rural and underserved communities to enhance critical media engagement.
2) To mitigate the effects of media bias and sensationalism on public perception of corruption, the Nigerian Broadcasting Commission (NBC) and media regulatory bodies should enforce stricter ethical standards and promote balanced reporting, while journalism training institutions incorporate curriculum on unbiased and responsible corruption reporting to rebuild public trust.
3) To improve the reach and impact of media literacy campaigns, non-governmental organisations (NGOs), community-based organisations (CBOs), and international development partners should collaborate to design and deliver localised, interactive media literacy initiatives that are accessible and contextually relevant to diverse Nigerian populations, ensuring sustained public empowerment against misinformation.

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