



News Verification Practices and the Speed Versus Accuracy Dilemma among Journalists in Lagos State, Nigeria

¹Oluwatosin Adesile, ²Joshua Olatunji OLADAPO, ³Daniel Pere Kunde & ⁴Abiola Ojuroye

^{1&2}Department of Mass Communication, National Open University of Nigeria

^{3&4}Department of Mass Communication, Gateway Polytechnic, Saapade, Ogun State

¹<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-2160-1465>

²<https://orcid.org/0009-0002-4676-6784>

³<https://orcid.org/0009-0004-9121-3999>

⁴<https://orcid.org/0009-0000-2176-8738>

*Corresponding Author: oadesile@noun.edu.ng

ABSTRACT

Background: Digital technologies have disrupted traditional journalistic verification, creating an ecosystem where speed increasingly supersedes accuracy. Despite existing scholarship in this direction, there remains a gap in understanding how editors negotiate these competing imperatives, especially in developing systems like Nigeria.

Objective: This study examined how the demand for immediacy influences journalistic judgment, verification routines, and credibility in Nigeria's digital media environment.

Method: Using a qualitative descriptive design, semi-structured interviews were conducted with six purposively selected Nigerian legacy and online newspaper editors based in Lagos, Nigeria. Data were analysed using thematic analysis.

Results: The speed-accuracy paradox compromises verification and weakens gatekeeping. Algorithms act as "shadow editors," prioritising virality and commercial survival over factual depth. A gap exists between awareness of digital verification tools and operational proficiency, leading editors to rely on traditional, human-centric methods. This speed-oriented culture erodes professional ethics and identity.

Conclusion: The accuracy-first mandate remains a non-negotiable requirement for journalistic survival. Operating with a "publish now, correct later" mentality compromises journalism's social contract, making it indistinguishable from digital noise.

Unique Contribution: The study integrates Speed-Accuracy Tradeoff and Gatekeeping theories to demonstrate that verification failures are institutional and structural, not just individual lapses.

Key Recommendation: Media houses must transition from tool awareness to operational proficiency, establish independent quality assurance firewalls, and prioritise factual sovereignty over chronological dominance.

Keywords: Accuracy, Digital Age, Misinformation, News, Speed, Verification



INTRODUCTION

In today's digital world, the transformation of verification and newsroom decision-making is currently transforming journalism (Al-Saqaf & Nygren, 2021). Traditionally, journalistic practice operated under rigorous editorial structures that emphasised verification, balance, and factual accuracy prior to dissemination (Rahman, 2023). However, the advent of digital technologies and the participatory affordances of the internet have fundamentally disrupted these conventions, ushering in an era in which speed and immediacy increasingly define journalistic relevance and newsworthiness (Izzatli, 2025; Izuogu et al., 2024).

The digital revolution has blurred the boundaries between professional and non-professional reporting (salaudeen, 2024). The rise of citizen journalism driven by mobile technologies and social media has enabled individuals without formal training to publish information in real time (Abichandani & Rai, 2025). While this has democratised information flow and expanded audience participation, it has also intensified concerns regarding the credibility, accuracy, and ethical accountability of online news content (Idiong et al., 2023). As Sultan and Amir (2024) observe, the pressure to publish instantaneously has shifted the journalistic philosophy from "being right" to "being first." Similarly, Jain and Meena (2024) emphasize that social media platforms have altered the temporal dynamics of news production, compelling journalists to adapt to the pace of digital audiences while redefining verification routines. Consequently, mainstream journalists traditionally characterised by editorial gatekeeping and hierarchical oversight now face mounting pressure to match the speed and engagement metrics of citizen journalists. In this accelerated ecosystem, immediacy often supersedes accuracy, leading to compromised verification and declining trust in news institutions (Achonwa & Adedeji, 2025; Wang, 2015; Usher, 2023; Okoro, Diri, & Odii, 2022).

This growing crisis of verification constitutes one of the most critical ethical problems in contemporary journalism. The proliferation of user-generated content and participatory media has disrupted established verification routines and complicated source validation processes. As Pan (2022) notes, the increasing reliance of journalists on social media for information-gathering exposes them to misinformation, eroding traditional safeguards against inaccuracy. (Mahmood et al., 2023) similarly contend that in many developing contexts, mainstream journalists have adopted the rapid dissemination patterns of citizen reporters, producing a convergence that blurs professional boundaries and threatens the integrity of factual reporting. Furthermore, the algorithmic logic of digital platforms driven by engagement metrics such as clicks, shares, and virality prioritizes immediacy over verification, prompting journalists to value speed above accuracy (Hastuti et al., 2025). These developments have collectively strained the ethical pillars of journalism verification, fairness, and credibility within a media environment dominated by technological immediacy and audience pressure.

Although substantial scholars have explored misinformation, media credibility, and journalistic ethics, there remains a critical gap in understanding how journalists practically negotiate the competing imperatives of timeliness and verification within convergent digital environments.



This knowledge deficit is particularly evident in developing media systems such as Nigeria, where limited regulatory frameworks, technological expansion, and competitive news markets worsen the struggle to balance speed with credibility. The acceleration of news production propelled by algorithmic incentives and the audience's expectation for instant updates has undermined traditional verification practices and editorial oversight (Hastuti et al., 2025). Yet, what remains insufficiently explored is how mainstream and citizen journalists interpret, prioritise, and sometimes compromise accuracy under the competitive imperative to “break the news first.” This unresolved gap bears significant implications for public trust, journalistic ethics, and the broader democratic communication process. Understanding the dynamics that drive this trade-off is essential because journalism's legitimacy ultimately rests on its credibility, and credibility, in turn, depends upon the verification of truth (Hermida, 2015). In the absence of systematic inquiry into how journalists navigate the tension between timeliness and verification, interventions aimed at strengthening ethical standards, promoting media literacy, and reinforcing accountability frameworks risk remaining superficial.

This study examined how the pressure for immediacy influences journalistic judgment, verification routines, and the overall credibility of news production within Nigeria's rapidly evolving digital media environment. In doing so, it explores the relationship between the demand for speed and the degree to which journalists adhere to established verification standards. Ultimately, it seeks to offer an empirical foundation for reinforcing ethical resilience and credibility within contemporary journalism practice.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

This following research questions guided the study:

- i. How do Nigerian newspaper editors negotiate the tension between speed and accuracy in news verification?
- ii. How do audience engagement metrics and algorithmic visibility influence editors' decisions about news publication?
- iii. How do editors perceive and use digital verification tools in their news production practices?
- iv. In what way does the pressure for rapid publication affect verification routines and professional ethical standards?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Speed–Accuracy Paradox in Digital Journalism

The reconfiguration of journalism in the digital era has generated an enduring paradox between speed and accuracy a tension that defines modern news production. Izuogu et al., (2025) emphasize that digital convergence has not merely altered newsroom routines but has transformed professional values, elevating immediacy as a defining measure of journalistic



competence. The acceleration of information flow and the imperative of constant updates have institutionalised a “publish now, verify later” culture (Himma-Kadakas, 2017; Agoma, 2026), where factual rigor is frequently deferred in pursuit of temporal advantage. Achonwa and Adedeji (2025) further demonstrate that the compression of production timeframes undermines the depth of editorial scrutiny once integral to credible reporting. Their comparative analysis of newsroom practices reveals that the shrinking window for verification compromises journalistic accountability and weakens internal gatekeeping processes (Hastuti et al., 2025; Agoma, 2025). Within algorithm-driven news ecosystems, visibility and audience engagement have become new currencies of relevance, subtly displacing accuracy as journalism’s ethical core.

This structural transformation signifies a classic shift in journalistic responsibility. The moral authority of the press has historically rested on its capacity to balance timeliness with truth. However, the evolving digital order privileges velocity over verification, visibility over validation (Izuogu et al., 2025). The resulting professional dilemma is not merely procedural but philosophical challenging the epistemic foundation upon which journalism’s credibility is built. In this sense, the speed–accuracy paradox encapsulates the contemporary struggle to preserve ethical integrity within an economy of attention that rewards immediacy.

News Verification and Misinformation

Verification remains the ethical cornerstone of journalism, yet it now operates within an environment characterized by volatility, fragmentation, and participatory distortion. Ugo et al., (2023) observe that the proliferation of user-generated content and the blurring of professional boundaries have destabilized traditional hierarchies of information validation. The democratization of reporting has expanded the range of voices but simultaneously introduced an epistemic fragility, as the mechanisms that once authenticated truth are weakened by the volume and velocity of digital communication.

Okoro et al., (2022) caution that during fast-moving news cycles especially in moments of crisis speed is often mistaken for credibility. In such contexts, both professional and citizen journalists risk reproducing unverified content, creating self-reinforcing misinformation loops that erode public trust (Thomson et al., 2020). This convergence between professional and participatory reporting further complicates accountability, as editorial corrections rarely travel as fast as initial inaccuracies. Izuogu et al. (2025) add another dimension by underscoring the algorithmic determinants of news visibility. A Hastuti et al (2025) finding indicates that Metrics such as clicks, shares, and engagement duration have become invisible arbiters of editorial relevance. These quantifiable indicators encourage journalists to privilege stories that sustain audience interaction, thereby privileging virality over verification. The result is an implicit ethical recalibration where the journalist’s responsibility to truth is mediated by digital popularity rather than public interest. Consequently, the contemporary crisis of verification is not merely a technical or procedural deficit but an epistemological one. Journalism now operates within a digital environment that conflates immediacy with legitimacy, compelling practitioners to navigate between the moral imperative of accuracy and the systemic demand for velocity (Diekerhof, 2021). The profession’s future credibility thus hinges on how effectively it can



reconcile these competing pressures, reasserting verification not as an optional ritual but as the defining principle of responsible journalism.

Speed Accuracy Tradeoff and Contemporary Gatekeeping

Gatekeeping Theory initially conceptualised by social psychologist Kurt Lewin (1947) and later adapted for journalism by David Manning White (1950) explains how information is filtered through “gates” before reaching the public. In communication contexts, gatekeepers (editors, journalists, media organisations) decide which among many potential items become published news, based on criteria like newsworthiness, organisational policy, audience preference, and resource constraints (Shoemaker & Vos, 2009).

Under this theoretical lens, verification becomes a critical gate: only information that passes the verification gate checked for authenticity, source credibility, factual accuracy should be allowed to become public. However, when gatekeeping is weakened (because of staff shortages, time pressures, resource constraints, or organisational priorities), the verification gate may be bypassed or rendered ineffective, enabling unverified or inaccurate information to be published.

Applied to this study, Gatekeeping Theory helps frame the patterns being uncovered: flexible gatekeeping practices, minimal quality assurance, and rapid publication under online-news institutional pressures. These reflect a compromised gate structure, where speed and monetization may override traditional gatekeeping and verification norms. Consequently, the theory supports the argument that verification failures are not simply individual lapses but institutional/gate-structure failures. It also underscores the need for robust institutional gatekeeping mechanisms not just individual responsibility to ensure verification integrity.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a qualitative descriptive design to explore the tension between news immediacy and verification among Nigerian newspaper editors based in Lagos. The study focused on editors working across legacy and online newspaper platforms, with particular attention to their experiences of editorial gatekeeping, verification routines and pressures associated with rapid news production. Purposive sampling was used to select six editors based on their direct involvement in editorial decision-making and news verification. The selection included editors from both legacy and online newspapers to capture experiences across different news production environments. Sampling continued until thematic saturation was achieved.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews designed to examine participants' experiences with news immediacy, verification practices and algorithmic pressures in contemporary news production. The interviews explored how editors managed the need to publish news quickly while maintaining verification standards, as well as how digital and algorithmic pressures influenced editorial decisions. Interviews were audio-recorded with participants' consent and subsequently transcribed for analysis. Participant identities were protected through anonymity throughout the research process.



The interview transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis. Analysis involved repeated engagement with the transcripts, identification of meaningful segments, generation of initial codes, grouping of related codes, and synthesis of recurring patterns into broader themes. The coding process focused on participants' accounts of verification practices, pressures for rapid publication, editorial judgement and the influence of algorithmic news environments. Emerging themes were reviewed and refined to ensure that they accurately represented the participants' professional experiences and addressed the study's research focus. Selected interview extracts were used to illustrate the themes and provide direct evidence from participants' accounts.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

To establish the baseline of this investigation, Table 1 presents the detailed profiles of the nine primary interviewees (Participants 1 to 6) recruited across different legacy and online newspaper organisations in Nigeria. Purposive sampling was deployed to select editors with experiences of editorial gatekeeping, verification routines and pressures in news production.

Table 1. Profiles of the Interviewees

S/N	Names	Media Organisation	Media Type	Role
1	Mr Samson Folarin	<i>The Punch Newspaper</i>	Legacy	Weekend Editor
2	Mr Sunday Oguntola	<i>The Nation</i>	Legacy	Online Editor
3	Mr Gregory Nwakunor	<i>Guardian Newspaper</i>	Legacy	Deputy Editor Weekend
4	Ms. Ebele Orakpo	<i>Vanguard Newspaper</i>	Legacy	Associate Editor
5	Mr Segun Ikugbadi	<i>The Sparklight News</i>	Online	Associate Editor
6	Mr. Idris Akinbajo	<i>Premium Times</i>	Online	Managing Editor

Negotiating Speed and Accuracy in News Verification

The findings indicate that Nigerian newspaper editors operate within a continuing tension between the need to publish promptly and the need to verify information before publication. Rather than suggesting that verification is abandoned altogether, the participants' accounts show that the intensity and form of verification can change when editors face pressure to publish quickly. One editor observed that "the failure to verify is frequently the result of flexible gatekeeping", while another questioned the strength of quality assurance mechanisms in newsrooms, asking, "Who is watching to make sure that the right thing is done?" These accounts suggest that the speed of the news cycle can influence how editorial gatekeeping is applied, particularly where there are limited mechanisms for reviewing information before publication.

This finding is consistent with the argument of Du Toit and Lues (2021) that verification is shaped by newsroom practices and professional conditions. It also relates to Shapiro et al. (2013), who found that journalists employ different verification strategies in their efforts to establish accuracy. In the present study, the issue is therefore not simply whether editors value accuracy, but how they manage verification when immediacy becomes an important editorial consideration. The participants' accounts indicate that editors must make practical judgements about how much verification can be undertaken within the available time while still meeting publication demands.



The pressure for speed was also associated with the commercial organisation of online news production. One participant explained that some news organisations have limited staff and operate as breaking-news platforms in which immediacy is important for attracting audiences and generating revenue. This suggests that the speed–accuracy tension is partly connected to the economic conditions under which newsrooms operate. Being among the first to publish can have audience and commercial value, thereby creating an incentive to reduce delays between receiving information and publishing it.

This finding supports Xu and Gutsche’s (2021) emphasis on verification as a continuing component of journalistic practice, even within changing digital news environments. It also provides a useful basis for interpreting the Speed–Accuracy Tradeoff Theory. The participants’ accounts are consistent with the theoretical proposition that increasing pressure for speed can create constraints on the time and resources available for accuracy-oriented practices. However, the findings also show that the relationship is not necessarily a simple choice between speed and accuracy. Editors continue to recognise verification as necessary, but the conditions surrounding publication affect how verification is performed. In this sense, the study illuminates the theory by showing how the trade-off is negotiated through editorial gatekeeping and organisational conditions rather than occurring as an automatic abandonment of accuracy.

Audience Metrics and Algorithmic Visibility in Editorial Decisions

The findings indicate that audience engagement and platform visibility have become additional considerations in editorial decision-making among the editors interviewed. Participants linked the selection and prominence of some stories to their ability to attract audience attention, generate engagement and contribute to the financial sustainability of news organisations. One editor explained that “media houses publish information by popularity”, adding that financially unstable organisations may give greater attention to information that can help sustain the organisation. This account suggests that audience popularity can influence the perceived value of news within commercially pressured newsrooms.

The significance of this finding extends beyond the choice of individual stories. Where audience attention is closely connected to revenue, editors may need to consider not only the public importance of a story but also its potential to attract readers and remain visible within digital distribution systems. This is consistent with scholarship on the quantified audience, which shows how audience metrics can become incorporated into newsroom judgements about news value (Tandoc, 2019). Similarly, Ekström et al. (2021) and Bunce (2019) have examined the ways in which metrics and audience data can influence editorial priorities and understandings of journalistic value.

The participants nevertheless did not describe journalists as having lost responsibility for editorial judgement. Instead, their accounts point to a relationship in which platforms and algorithms influence distribution and visibility while journalists remain responsible for decisions concerning accuracy, fairness and accountability. One participant referred to the influence that owners could exercise over employees, but also questioned the usefulness of coercive approaches to improving verification. This suggests that algorithmic and commercial pressures operate alongside, rather than completely replace, human editorial judgement.



This finding corresponds with the concept of an “algorithmic imperative” discussed by Edung et al. (2025), in which editorial practices can become responsive to platform-based forms of visibility and engagement. However, the present findings suggest a more qualified interpretation. The editors’ accounts do not indicate that algorithms independently determine what is published. Rather, algorithmic visibility, audience response, organisational finances and editorial judgement interact in shaping publication decisions. The Nigerian context is particularly relevant because participants associated these pressures with financial constraints and limited newsroom resources. Thus, audience metrics appear to function as an additional layer of editorial consideration within an already commercially pressured news environment.

Digital Verification Tools and Editorial Practice

The findings reveal a distinction between editors’ awareness of digital verification technologies and their routine use of those technologies in news production. Participants generally recognised the importance and existence of verification tools, but awareness did not necessarily translate into regular operational use. One senior editor stated that practising journalists are generally aware of verification tools, while also noting that some may choose not to use them or may not be sufficiently familiar with the technology. This suggests that the challenge is not simply the availability of verification technologies but their integration into everyday editorial routines.

The participants’ accounts further show that traditional interpersonal forms of verification remain important. Editors referred to direct telephone calls to sources, consultation with field colleagues and the use of trusted WhatsApp networks when checking information. These practices indicate that digital transformation has not displaced established forms of source verification. Instead, editors appear to combine technological resources with forms of verification based on professional contacts, source relationships and newsroom experience.

At the same time, the routine use of specialised verification technologies appeared limited among the participants. Only a small number identified tools such as InVID Verification Plugin, Google Fact-Check Explorer, LexisNexis and OSINT as part of their regular verification practices. Participants were also aware of fact-checking organisations such as Dubawa and Africa Check, but awareness of these resources did not necessarily mean that they were integrated into everyday newsroom workflows. The findings therefore point to a difference between technological awareness and practical adoption.

Training and institutional support appear to be important in explaining this difference. Participants indicated that, without structured training, specialised tools could be experienced as an additional burden rather than as an efficient part of the reporting process. This observation is consistent with Motsaathebe (2025), who identifies weaknesses in verification cultures within African newsrooms, and with Adjinn-Tettey (2022), who discusses the challenges associated with digital-first journalism in the Global South. The findings therefore suggest that strengthening verification practice requires more than making digital tools available. Editors and reporters also need the technical competence, training and organisational conditions required to incorporate those tools into time-sensitive news production.



The findings consequently illuminate an important aspect of contemporary verification practice. Digital verification and traditional verification should not be treated as competing systems in which one necessarily replaces the other. Rather, the participants' accounts suggest that editors draw on familiar interpersonal practices while selectively using specialised digital resources. The extent to which digital tools become part of routine verification appears to depend partly on technical confidence, training and their compatibility with existing newsroom workflows.

Rapid Publication and Professional Ethical Practice

The findings suggest that pressure for rapid publication affects verification routines by reducing the time available for editorial checking, while editors continue to recognise verification as an important professional and ethical responsibility. One senior editor described speed-oriented practice as “the order of the day” but also cautioned that journalists working under such conditions should pause to verify information because failure to do so has ethical implications. This apparent contradiction is important to the findings. Speed is recognised as a normal feature of contemporary news production, but it does not remove the professional expectation that information should be checked before publication.

Participants also connected ethical practice with professional knowledge and newsroom organisation. One editor argued that some journalists who prioritise speed over accuracy may lack sufficient understanding of professional ethics and gatekeeping. While this represents an individual participant's perception and should not be generalised to journalists as a whole, it highlights the role that professional training may play in determining how editors respond to publication pressure. The finding also suggests that ethical practice is influenced by more than individual attitudes; it is connected to the professional knowledge, supervision and organisational expectations within which journalists work.

The relationship between rapid publication and commercial pressure is also reflected in the literature on the quantified audience. Tandoc (2019) explains how audience metrics can introduce commercial considerations into journalistic decision-making, while Umejei (2020) discusses the economic pressures associated with digital journalism in Nigeria. The present findings add to this discussion by showing how these pressures are experienced at the editorial level. Editors must respond simultaneously to demands for speed, audience attention and financial sustainability while maintaining professional responsibilities relating to accuracy and verification.

The findings can also be interpreted through Karlsson's (2011) concept of liquid journalism, which describes news as an evolving and continuously updated form of information. The move towards rapid and continually updated publication can change the temporal character of verification because information may be published while a story is still developing. However, the participants' accounts suggest that this does not necessarily mean that verification is abandoned. Rather, it creates a situation in which verification has to be performed within a shorter and more demanding publication cycle.

The findings therefore point to an ethical tension rather than an established collapse of professional ethics. Editors recognise that rapid publication is increasingly embedded in digital journalism, but they also acknowledge that verification remains part of their professional responsibility. The challenge is consequently both individual and organisational. Continuous training, clear verification



procedures and effective editorial oversight may provide mechanisms through which news organisations can maintain professional standards while responding to the demands of rapid digital publication. This interpretation is consistent with the emphasis placed by Kovach and Rosenstiel (2021) on journalism's responsibility to truth and by Adjin-Tettey (2022) on the continuing importance of verification within digital news environments.

CONCLUSION

This study examined how Nigerian newspaper editors negotiate the tension between news immediacy and verification in an increasingly digital news environment. The findings suggest that the pressure to publish quickly does not necessarily lead editors to abandon verification, but it can reduce the time available for checking information and create difficult editorial choices. Participants described verification as an important professional responsibility, while also reporting pressures associated with breaking-news competition, limited newsroom resources, audience engagement and the need to maintain online visibility.

The findings further indicate that audience metrics and algorithmic visibility have become additional considerations in editorial decision-making. Editors reported that stories capable of attracting audience attention may receive greater priority, particularly within financially constrained news organisations. However, the findings do not suggest that algorithms have replaced editorial judgement. Rather, platform visibility and audience responses operate alongside existing organisational and professional considerations in shaping decisions about what to publish and how quickly to publish it.

The study also found a difference between awareness of digital verification tools and their routine use. Although participants were generally aware of verification resources, some continued to rely heavily on established practices such as contacting sources directly, consulting colleagues and using trusted professional networks. This suggests that the adoption of digital verification tools may depend not only on awareness, but also on practical familiarity, training, workflow compatibility and newsroom support.

Overall, the findings suggest that the central challenge for the newsrooms represented in this study is not simply a choice between speed and accuracy. Rather, editors are required to manage competing demands for timely publication, audience attention, commercial sustainability and responsible verification. Rapid publication can place pressure on established verification routines and ethical practice, but participants continued to recognise accuracy and verification as important professional obligations. Strengthening these practices therefore requires approaches that fit the operational realities of Nigerian newsrooms rather than assuming that verification can be separated from the pressures under which editors work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

To translate these findings into practice, the study offers three critical recommendations for media houses. First, there must be a shift from conceptual awareness to operational proficiency; this requires consistent, hands-on training in advanced digital forensics and verification tools to ensure that verification is as fast as the news cycle itself. Second, newsrooms must establish ethical firewalls independent quality assurance protocols that operate outside the influence of real-time engagement metrics and commercial pressures. Finally, the industry must redefine its



metrics for success, moving away from the metric trap of chronological dominance toward a model that rewards factual sovereignty and audience trust. By institutionalising these measures, journalism can move beyond the publish now, correct later era and reclaim its role as the definitive gatekeeper of truth in a high-speed information ecosystem.

Ethical clearance

Ethical consent was sought and obtained from the participants used in this study. They were made to understand that the exercise was purely for academic purposes, and their participation was voluntary.

Acknowledgements

We acknowledge Olayinka Ajibade and Joshua Oladapo for assisting us with data collection. We equally appreciate the National Open University of Nigeria Library staff for their cooperation and support.

Sources of funding

The study was not funded.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that the research was conducted in the absence of any commercial or financial relationships that could be construed as a potential conflict of interest.

Authors' Contributions

So and so conceived the study, including the design, so and so collated the data, and so and so handled the analysis and interpretation, while so and so wrote the initial manuscript. All authors have critically reviewed and approved the final draft, and are responsible for the content and similarity index of the manuscript.

Data availability statement

The datasets on which conclusions were made for this study are available on reasonable request.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) Use Disclosure

During the preparation of this manuscript, the authors used Grammarly and Quillbot for paraphrasing and restructuring. The authors carefully reviewed, revised, and verified all outputs generated by the tool and take full responsibility for the accuracy, originality, and integrity of the manuscript content.

Citation

Adesile, O., Oladapo, J. O., Kunde, D. P., & Ojuroye, A. (2026). News verification in the age of misinformation: Examining the tension between speed and accuracy among journalists in Lagos, Nigeria. *International Journal of Sub-Saharan African Research*, 4(3), 423-438. <https://doi:10.5281/zenodo.22974738>



REFERENCES

- Abichandani, A., & Rai, S. K. (2025). Participatory journalism and the crisis of credibility in the digital age. *Journal of Advance and Future Research*. <https://doi.org/10.56975/jaafr.v3i11.501308>
- Achonwa, E. C., & Adedeji, A. E. (2025). Speed vs. accuracy in digital journalism: A comparative analysis of Nigeria, the United States, and the United Kingdom. *International Journal of Advanced Multidisciplinary Research and Studies*, 5(4), 1569–1574.
- Adesile, T. (2021). Digital transformation and journalism in Nigeria. *Journal of Innovative Communication and Media Studies*, 3, 138.
- Adjin-Tettey, T. D. (2022). Combatting information disorder in social media: The role of fact-checking sites. *Journal of African Media Studies*, 14(3), 335–351. https://doi.org/10.1386/jams_00084_1
- Agoma, A. (2025). Writing Solo Plays in Nigerian Theatre: Using Sotimirin's Molue, Mbajiorgu's The Prime Minister's Son, and Binebai's Karina's Cross as Paradigms. *Abuja Journal of Humanities*, 6(2), 370-384.
- Agoma, A. (2026). Solo Performance and the Superfluity of Facial Make-Up: A Study of Ipe, as Performed by Daniel Olamide, and Molue, as Performed by Tunji Sotimirin. *Abuja Journal of Humanities*, 7(1), 211-223.
- Ahmad, N. (2023). Journalistic verification practices from the BBC World News and Al Jazeera English. *Howard Journal of Communications*, 35, 1–14. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10646175.2023.2233096>
- Al-Saqaf, W., & Nygren, G. (2021). Verification of Digital Sources in Swedish Newsrooms A Technical Issue or a Question of Newsroom Culture?. *Journalism Practice*, 17, 1678 - 1695. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.2004200>
- Baharom, A. S., Ahmad Ghazali, A., & Zamri Ahmad, Z. (2023). Challenges of journalist verification in the digital age on society: A thematic review. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences*, 12(3), 183–206. <https://www.hrmar.com/index.php/IJARBSS/article/view/18356>
- Brandtzaeg, P. B., Følstad, A., & Chaparro Domínguez, M. (2018). How journalists and citizens deal with information quality online. *New Media & Society*, 20(10), 3640–3660. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444817724167>



- Bunce, M. (2019). Management and resistance in the digital newsroom. *Journalism*, 20, 890–905. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884916688963>
- Dame Adjin-Tettey, T. (2022). Combating fake news, disinformation, and misinformation: Experimental evidence for media literacy education. *Cogent Arts & Humanities*, 9(1). <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311983.2022.2037229>
- Diakopoulos, N. (2020). Algorithmic accountability in newsrooms: From theory to practice. *Digital Journalism*, 8(2), 198–219. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2020.1713231>
- Diekerhof, E. (2021). Changing journalistic information-gathering practices? Reliability in everyday information gathering in high-speed newsrooms. *Journalism Practice*, 17, 411–428. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1922300>
- Du Toit, M., & Lues, L. (2021). Transitioning to sustainable administrative gatekeeping in access to social grants for South African adult persons with disabilities. *Sustainability*. <https://doi.org/10.3390/su13073597>
- Edung, A. A., Okpene, D. E., Ebingha, B. N., & Dibugo, O. A. (2025). The Afrobeats digital diaspora: TikTok, algorithmic curation, and the remaking of Nigerian cultural identity in the global mainstream. *Advances in Law, Pedagogy, and Multidisciplinary Humanities*, 3(3), 79–91.
- Ekström, M., Ramsälv, A., & Westlund, O. (2021). Data-driven news work culture: Reconciling tensions in epistemic values and practices of news journalism. *Journalism*, 23, 755–772. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14648849211052419>
- Hastuti, H., Maulana, H. F., Lawelai, H., & Suherman, A. (2025). Algorithmic influence and media legitimacy: A systematic review of social media's impact on news production. *Frontiers in Communication*, 10, 1667471. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2025.1667471>
- Hermida, A. (2015). Nothing but the truth: Redrafting the journalistic boundary of verification. 37–50. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315727684-3>
- Hermida, A. (2019). Speed, spread, and immediacy: Digital journalism in the age of social media. *Journalism Studies*, 20(11), 1683–1698. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670X.2018.1562555>
- Himma-Kadakas, M. (2017). Alternative facts and fake news entering journalistic content production cycle. *Cosmopolitan Civil Societies: An Interdisciplinary Journal*, 9, 25–40. <https://doi.org/10.5130/ccs.v9i2.5469>



- Idiong, N. S., Igiri, A. B., & Ebong Idiong, E. (2023). Tackling the misconceptions and prejudices surrounding citizen journalism. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 18(3), 1495–1503. <https://doi.org/10.30574/wjarr.2023.18.3.1193>
- Izuogu, K. C., Okpara, O., & Omeonu, D. U. (2024). The paradox of the Internet in journalism in Nigeria: Between flexibility and accuracy challenges. *Baileo: Jurnal Sosial Humaniora*, 2(2), 256–267.
- Izzatli, S. (2025). The theoretical foundations of interactive journalism in the new media era. *Metafizika Journal*, 8(2), 97–108. <https://doi.org/10.33864/2617-751x.2025.v8.i2.97-108>
- Jain, A., & Meena, A. K. (2024). The development of journalism in the face of social media: A study on social media's impact on a journalist's role, method, and relationship to the audience. *Indian Journal of Mass Communication and Journalism*, 4(2), 8–14. <https://doi.org/10.54105/ijmcj.B1111.04021224>
- Karlsson, M. (2011). The immediacy of online news, the visibility of journalistic processes and a restructuring of journalistic authority. *Journalism*, 12(3), 279–295. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884910392852>
- Karlsson, M. (2019). Speed–accuracy tradeoff in digital journalism. *Journalism*, 20(12), 1630–1646. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884918805947>
- Karlsson, M., Conill, R. F., & Örnebring, H. (2023). Recoding journalism: Establishing normative dimensions for a twenty-first century news media. *Journalism Studies*, 24, 553–572. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1461670x.2022.2161929>
- Kolvoort, I. R., Fisher, E. L., Van Rooij, R., Schulz, K., & Van Maanen, L. (2024). Probabilistic causal reasoning under time pressure. *PLOS ONE*, 19. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0297011>
- Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2021). *The elements of journalism: What newspeople should know and the public should expect* (4th ed.). Three Rivers Press.
- Lewin, K. (1947). Frontiers in group dynamics: Concept, method, and reality in social science; social equilibria and social change. *Human Relations*, 1(1), 5–41.
- Mahmood, D. Q., Qureshi, I., & Alam, R. N. (2023). The impact of citizen journalism on mainstream media reporting: A Pakistani journalists' perspective. *Journal of Peace, Development and Communication*, 7(2).



- Mbadiwe, A. M., & Udeze, S. E. (2025). Opinion of practising journalists in Enugu on impact of citizen journalism on mainstream media practice in Nigeria. *Caritas International Journal of Public Administration and Business Management*, 2(1).
- Newman, N., Fletcher, R., Kalogeropoulos, A., & Nielsen, R. K. (2019). *Reuters Institute digital news report 2019*.
- Okoro, N., Diri, E., & Odii, E. A. (2022). The fast-paced nature of citizen journalism and mainstream response. *International Journal of Social Sciences*, 10(1), 112–126.
- Olorunnisola, A. A., & Martin, F. (2021). Ethics and digital news production in Africa: Risks and responsibilities. *Global Media Journal African Edition*, 15(1), 45–63.
- Pan, Z. (2022). Impact of journalists' reliance on social media for news writing and reporting. *Education, Science, Technology, Innovation and Life*, (1). <https://doi.org/10.23977/mediacr.2022.030101>
- Park, S., Fisher, C., Flew, T., & Dulleck, U. (2020). Global mistrust in news: The impact of social media on trust. *International Journal on Media Management*, 22(2), 83–96.
- Queiroz, M., & Wamba, S. F. (2021). A structured literature review on the interplay between emerging technologies and COVID-19: Insights and directions to operations fields. *Annals of Operations Research*, 1–27. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10479-021-04107-y>
- Rahman, M. A. (2023). The future of journalism in the digital age. *International Journal of Science and Business*. <https://doi.org/10.58970/ijsb.2240>
- Salaudeen, M. (2021). From personal to professional: Exploring the influences on journalists' evaluation of citizen journalism credibility. *Journalism Practice*, 16, 2040–2063. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2021.1892517>
- Shapiro, I., Brin, C., Bédard-Brûlé, I., & Mychajlowycz, K. (2013). Verification as a strategic ritual. *Journalism Practice*, 7, 657–673. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2013.765638>
- Shoemaker, P. J., & Vos, T. (2009). *Gatekeeping theory*. Routledge.
- Srivastava, V., & Leonard, N. E. (2014). Collective decision making in ideal networks: The speed accuracy tradeoff. *arXiv*. <https://doi.org/10.48550/arXiv.1402.3634>
- Stencel, M., & Luther, C. (2021). Digital verification in newsrooms: Adoption, practices, and challenges. *Digital Journalism*, 9(7), 982–1000. <https://doi.org/10.1080/21670811.2021.1928974>



- Sultan, M. I., & Amir, A. S. (2024). The evolution of journalism in the digital age: Analyzing the impact of social media on news process and information integrity. *Jurnal Mediakom*, 14(2), 199–207.
- Tandoc, E. C. (2019). Journalism is twerking? How web analytics is changing the newsroom. *New Media & Society*, 21(3), 556–573. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1461444818809392>
- Thomson, T., Angus, D., Dootson, P., Hurcombe, E., & Smith, A. (2020). Visual mis/disinformation in journalism and public communications: Current verification practices, challenges, and future opportunities. *Journalism Practice*, 16, 938–962. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17512786.2020.1832139>
- Ugo, U. S., Peter-Wagbara, A., & Omaka, O. J. (2023). Ethical issues in internet-based journalism practice in Nigeria. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 19(1), 1072–1081.
- Umejei, E. (2020). The Internet and the dilemma of journalistic ethics in Nigeria. In M. N. Ndlela & W. Mano (Eds.), *Social media and elections in Africa, Volume 1* (pp. 165–183). Palgrave Macmillan.
- Usher, N. (2023). *Hybrid verification practices in digital newsrooms*. Oxford University Press.
- Wang, S. (2015). *Reporters' notebook: Accuracy under the new media context*. The Ohio State University.
- White, D. M. (1950). The gate keeper: A case study in the selection of news. *Journalism Quarterly*, 27(4), 383–390.
- Whittaker, X. (2026). Digitalizing newspaper journalism: Instituting and negotiating new temporalities in the digital workplace. *New Technology, Work and Employment*. <https://doi.org/10.1111/ntwe.70018>
- Widholm, A. (2016). The sociality of the scoop: Digital cross-media news in a high-speed environment. *Journalism*, 17(8), 1023–1039. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1464884915593237>
- Xu, N., & Gutsche Jr, R. E. (2021). "Going offline": Social media, source verification, and Chinese investigative journalism during information overload. *Journalism Practice*, 15(8), 1146–1162.