

## Assessment of Nigerian journalists' preparedness for reporting election results and disputes

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### Abstract

Electoral process in Africa especially in Nigeria is a long route which often leads to results being disputed in the courts and sometimes end in crisis. The media play a significant role in this process given their enormous influence on the public. This study examined Nigerian journalists' preparedness for covering election results and disputes with a focus on the 2023 general elections. Anchored on symbolic interactionism theory, the study adopted survey to gauge the opinions of journalists from the six states of southwest Nigeria which form study population. A structured questionnaire was administered on 300 respondents of 50 per state selected through non-proportional quota sampling. Findings revealed that majority of the journalists are well conscious of their role in reporting election results and disputes and that their respective media organisations prepare them for such duties through training and supply of tools with less provision of funds to facilitate their task on the field. Most of the respondents also agreed that other bodies like the Nigerian Press Council, Nigeria Union of Journalists, Civil societies and international organisations, prepare them better for election coverage than their media organisations through training, funding, and tools. The study concludes that Nigerian journalists, being aware of their role in reporting elections, are more prepared for the task by external bodies other than employers and recommends that media organisations should deploy more resources to preparing their reporters for the job.

**Keywords:** Agenda-setting, Election Results, Election Disputes, Nigerian Journalists, Symbolic interactionism

### Introduction:

Elections in Nigeria like many other African countries are characterized by disputes and potential crises making them critical events in the nation's democratic journey. The media's role in this electoral process is of great significance due to its powerful influence on the public's perception and understanding of election results

and disputes. It thus becomes imperative to assess Nigerian journalist' preparedness in effectively covering and reporting the country's 2023 general elections outcomes and related disputes. This study aims to delve into the level of readiness and training journalists received as they navigate the complexities of election reporting in Nigeria.

## **Background To The Study:**

The electoral process in Nigeria has historically been a complex journey, often leading to results being challenged and disputed in courts, sometimes even escalating to crisis situations. The media's role in disseminating information during these critical times cannot be underestimated, as they serve as a bridge between the political sphere and the general public. With the 2023 general elections, understanding the preparedness of Nigerian journalists in reporting election results and disputes becomes pivotal to ensure accurate and unbiased information reaches the citizens. The study focuses on journalists from the six states of southwest Nigeria, which collectively form the study population. The examination of their preparedness offered insights into the challenges and opportunities faced by the media in fulfilling their roles as watchdogs during elections. The theoretical foundation of symbolic interactionism guided the investigation on how the media and external bodies shaped journalists' preparedness for election reporting.

## **Research Objectives:**

The study sought to:

1. Determine the extent to which Nigerian journalists are conscious of their role in election results and election disputes coverage.
2. Find out the extent to which Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by their media organisations.
3. Assess how Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by bodies other than their media organisations.

## **Scope of The Study:**

Journalists in the six states of the southwest of Nigeria.

## **Literature Review:**

### **Media as a Watchdog of Democracy:**

The media, including journalists, are often referred to as the "watchdog of democracy," which

means they act as a critical check on government actions and ensure transparency and accountability in the democratic process. Adegoke, Ojebisi, and Uche (2018) highlight the challenges and prospects of the media in fulfilling this role in Nigeria. Understanding the role of journalists as watchdogs during election reporting is crucial in assessing their preparedness to cover and report election results and disputes accurately. The concept of the media as a watchdog of democracy highlights the critical role of journalists and media organizations in holding those in power accountable and safeguarding democratic principles. Journalists act as a "watchdog," investigating and exposing government actions, corruption, and electoral irregularities to ensure transparency and fairness in the democratic process.

During elections, the media's role as a watchdog becomes especially significant as journalists monitor the electoral process, report on potential irregularities, and provide independent analysis of election results. Their ability to report objectively, fact-check information, and provide accurate coverage is crucial in maintaining the integrity of the electoral process and upholding democratic values. For Nigerian journalists to effectively act as watchdogs during elections, they must be prepared to navigate the challenges of election reporting and remain committed to upholding journalistic ethics and integrity. This includes verifying information from multiple sources, avoiding biases, and providing fair coverage of all political actors.

### **Access to Information and Quality of Reporting:**

The quality of election reporting is closely linked to journalists' access to accurate and timely information. Access to reliable data, official election results, and statements from electoral bodies and candidates is crucial for journalists to provide comprehensive and accurate reporting. However, journalists may face challenges in obtaining such information, especially in politically sensitive environments. Limited access

to information can lead to misinformation, biased reporting, or incomplete coverage, impacting the quality and credibility of election reporting. To ensure high-quality reporting, journalists must have sufficient access to verified information. Media organizations and journalists' commitment to fact-checking and cross-referencing sources can contribute to accurate and trustworthy reporting.

### **Journalists' Training and Preparedness:**

Journalists' preparedness to cover election results and disputes is influenced by their training and professional development. Media organizations and external bodies, such as the Nigerian Press Council, Nigeria Union of Journalists, civil societies, and international organizations, play a crucial role in training and preparing journalists for election reporting. Training programmes that focus on election reporting skills, media ethics, legal frameworks, and conflict-sensitive reporting can equip journalists with the necessary knowledge and tools to navigate the challenges of election reporting in Nigeria. Media organizations that prioritize training and support for their reporters demonstrate their commitment to promoting accurate and responsible election reporting. Investing in training and professional development can enhance journalists' abilities to provide unbiased and objective coverage of election events. Moreover, collaboration with external bodies, such as civil societies and international organizations, can further enhance journalists' preparedness by providing access to resources, expertise, and best practices in election reporting.

### **Empirical Review:**

The study conducted by Mimiko and Idowu (2023) titled "Media and Election Disputes in Nigeria" explores the intricate relationship between the media and election disputes within the context of the Nigerian political landscape. The research, presented as a chapter in the book "Contemporary Issues on Governance, Conflict and Security in Africa," sheds light on the role of the media in influencing the outcome and resolution of electoral disputes in the country.

Using a mixed-methods approach, the researchers employed surveys and interviews to gather data from key stakeholders, including journalists, election officials, political actors, and members of the public. The study focused on recent election cycles in Nigeria to provide relevant and up-to-date insights into the media's impact on election disputes. The findings of Mimiko and Idowu's study reveal that the media play a significant role in shaping the narratives and perceptions surrounding election disputes in Nigeria. Through extensive coverage, the media can either exacerbate or mitigate the tension and conflicts that arise during electoral processes. The study identifies instances where sensationalist reporting and biased coverage have contributed to the escalation of disputes, thereby potentially undermining the credibility of the electoral process. Furthermore, the research highlights the importance of media objectivity and accuracy in reporting election results and disputes. Journalists' adherence to professional standards, such as fact-checking and balanced reporting, was found to be essential in providing the public with reliable information during times of electoral uncertainty. However, the study also points out challenges faced by journalists in obtaining accurate and timely information from electoral bodies and other sources, which can hinder their ability to deliver objective reporting. The study emphasizes the significance of objective and responsible reporting by journalists during elections, which can foster transparency, accountability, and public trust in the electoral process. Additionally, it underscores the need for both media organizations and external bodies to collaborate in providing comprehensive training and resources to journalists, ensuring they are well-prepared to cover election results and disputes with professionalism and integrity.

Also, Akinfemisoye-Adejare (2019) examined the practice of data journalism in the context of Nigeria's 2019 elections. The research, featured in the book "Data Journalism in the Global South," explores the extent to which the Nigerian mainstream media utilized data-driven reporting during the election period. Using a qualitative research approach, Akinfemisoye Adejare

conducted in-depth interviews with journalists and media professionals involved in covering the 2019 elections. The study aimed to understand the adoption and application of data journalism techniques, such as data analysis, visualization, and interactive storytelling, in the reporting of election results and disputes. The findings reveal that data journalism played a pivotal role in the Nigerian mainstream media's coverage of the 2019 elections. Journalists and media organizations harnessed data-driven reporting to provide in-depth insights, analysis, and visual representations of electoral data, enhancing the audience's understanding of the election process. Data visualization, in particular, emerged as a powerful tool used by the media to present complex election data in a more accessible and engaging manner. Infographics, charts, and interactive maps were utilized to illustrate voting patterns, election outcomes, and potential disputes, thereby enabling the public to comprehend the intricacies of the electoral process. Moreover, the research highlights the impact of data journalism on enhancing transparency and accountability in the reporting of election results and disputes. By relying on verifiable data sources and providing evidence-based analysis, journalists contributed to fostering public trust in the credibility of electoral information. However, the study also identifies challenges faced by Nigerian journalists in employing data journalism techniques effectively. Limited access to reliable data sources, inadequate technical skills among some journalists, and resource constraints were cited as obstacles to widespread data-driven reporting. In terms of journalists' preparedness for data journalism, Akinfemisoye Adejare's study indicates that media organizations have made efforts to equip their reporters with the necessary skills and tools for data-driven reporting. Training workshops and collaboration with data experts were some of the initiatives undertaken to enhance journalists' capabilities in data journalism.

Furthermore, Joseph Olusegun Adebayo, investigated the "Training on Journalists' Reportage of the 2015 Elections in Nigeria: An Action Research Case Study." Published in the journal *Communication* in July 2016, the study explores the impact of training programs on journalists' reportage of the 2015 elections in Nigeria. The research aims to assess the

effectiveness of training initiatives in enhancing journalists' preparedness and reporting quality during a critical electoral period. Adebayo's study adopts an action research approach, combining participatory research and intervention strategies. The study involved collaborating with media organizations and journalists to implement training programs focused on election reporting skills, media ethics, and conflict-sensitive reporting. A mixed-methods design was utilized, incorporating surveys, interviews, and content analysis of election-related news articles and broadcasts. The research findings reveal positive outcomes in journalists' reportage of the 2015 elections in Nigeria following the implementation of training programs. Journalists who participated in the training exhibited increased awareness of their roles and responsibilities during the electoral process. They demonstrated improved skills in verifying information, maintaining objectivity, and adhering to professional ethical standards in their reporting. Content analysis of election-related news articles and broadcasts indicated a notable increase in the depth and accuracy of election coverage by trained journalists. The trained journalists were more skilled at providing context, analysis, and balanced reporting, which contributed to a more informed electorate. Additionally, the study identified a shift in the portrayal of election disputes. Trained journalists were less prone to sensationalism and bias in reporting conflicts, thereby reducing the potential for inciting tension or violence. The study's results stressed the significance of training initiatives in improving journalists' preparedness for reporting elections in Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework:**

This study employed the symbolic interactionism, media influence and agenda-setting theories.

### **Symbolic Interactionism Theory:**

Symbolic Interactionism is a sociological theoretical framework that can provide valuable insights into the interactions and meanings that shape individuals' behaviors and perceptions in society. This theory is particularly relevant to the

project topic "Assessment of Nigerian Journalists' Preparedness for Reporting Election Results and Disputes," as it offers a lens through which to understand how journalists' interactions and communication with various stakeholders influence their preparedness and reporting during election processes in Nigeria. Symbolic interactionism is a social theoretical framework associated with George Herbert Mead (1863–1931) and Max Weber (1864–1920). The American philosopher, George Herbert Mead, was the first to present the principles underlying symbolic interactionism in 1934; arguing that people develop their self-image through interactions with other people. (Nickerson, 2023). Blumer was believed to have invented the term “Symbolic Interactionism” and created a theory and methodology to test Mead’s ideas. The key tenets of the theory cover the following aspects (Blumer, 1986, Crossman, 2020 and Nickerson, 2023):

**Meaning:** According to this perspective, individuals assign meanings to symbols, objects, and events based on their interpretations. In the context of election reporting, Nigerian journalists may attach specific meanings to election results, disputes, and the role of the media in covering these events, are influenced by their cultural background, professional values, and interactions with key actors.

**Interaction:** Symbolic Interactionism emphasizes the significance of social interactions in shaping individuals' behaviors and understandings. For journalists covering elections, interactions with political actors, media organizations, training institutions, and the public play a vital role in shaping their perception of their roles, responsibilities, and preparedness in reporting election results and disputes.

**Identity Formation:** The theory posits that individuals construct their identities through social interactions. In the case of Nigerian journalists, their identity as election reporters is influenced by their experiences, interactions with other professionals, and the feedback they receive from

media organizations, the public, and other stakeholders.

Symbolic Interactionism offers a suitable framework for the project topic as it provides a means to examine journalists' preparedness for election reporting in Nigeria by analyzing their interactions, meanings attached to their roles, and identity formation as election reporters. By employing this theoretical lens, the study can gain a deeper understanding of how journalists' perceptions and behaviors are shaped by their interactions with political actors, media organizations and other bodies.

### **Media Influence and Agenda-Setting Theory:**

Media Influence refers to the power of the media in shaping public opinion, attitudes, and beliefs. Journalists, as part of the media, have a significant impact on how the public perceives and interprets election results and disputes. Their coverage can influence the salience and prominence of various election-related issues in the minds of the audience. The Agenda-Setting Theory suggests that the media play a crucial role in determining which issues are considered important by the public. During elections, journalists' decisions on what to cover, how to present information, and the frequency of coverage can influence the issues that voters prioritize and consider relevant. For example, if journalists prioritize reporting on election disputes over substantive policy issues, it may lead the public to focus more on the controversies and conflicts rather than the candidates' platforms. This could have implications for the democratic process by shaping public opinion and affecting voter behavior. Understanding the media's influence and agenda-setting process is essential in evaluating journalists' preparedness to report election results and disputes objectively. Journalists must be aware of the potential impact of their reporting choices on the public's perception of the electoral process and strive to provide balanced and accurate coverage.

### **Methodology:**

This study adopts descriptive survey to gauge the opinions of journalists in the southwest of Nigeria. The population of this study comprised all journalists in the newspapers, magazines, radio

**Raphael Olugbenga ABIMBOLA/** Assessment of Nigerian journalists' preparedness for reporting election results and disputes and television stations in the southwest zone of Nigeria. The sample size for this study are three hundred respondents from six states of southwest Nigeria and non-proportional quota sampling was used to pick 50 respondents from each of the six states of southwest Nigeria. A 19-item structured questionnaire was used to collect data for this research work. Copies of the questionnaire were administered on respondents at the monthly congress of their union (Nigeria Union of

Journalists) at their press center at the various state capitals.

**Data Analysis:**

Data were coded and analysed according to each objective.

**Objective 1:** Extent to which Nigerian journalists are conscious of their role in election results and election disputes coverage.

**Table 1. Nigerian journalists' consciousness of their role in election results and election disputes coverage.**

STATE	VERY CONSCIOUS	CONSCIOUS	MODERATELY CONSCIOUS	LESS CONSCIOUS	TOTAL
EKITI	18	21	11	0	50
LAGOS	19	22	9		50
OGUN	16	21	10	3	50
ONDO	20	22	8		50
OSUN	15	21	11	3	50
OYO	17	22	10	1	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>105 (35%)</b>	<b>129 (43%)</b>	<b>59 (20%)</b>	<b>7 (2%)</b>	<b>300(100%)</b>

Table 1 revealed that majority of Nigerian journalists are conscious of their critical role in reporting election results and disputes with 35%, 43% and 20 % of the respondents very conscious, conscious and moderately conscious while only 2% are less conscious of that role.

**Objective 2:** Extent to which Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by their media organisations.

**Table 2. Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by their media organisations.**

STATE	HIGHLY PREPARED	ADEQUATELY PREPARED	MODERATELY PREPARED	LESS PREPARED	TOTAL
EKITI		19	22	9	50
LAGOS		25	21	4	50
OGUN		20	25	5	50
ONDO		21	25	4	50
OSUN		18	22	10	50
OYO		19	21	10	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	Nil	<b>122 (41%)</b>	<b>136 (45%)</b>	<b>42 (14%)</b>	<b>300(100%)</b>

Data from Table 2 shows that the preparation Nigerian media organisations gave their reporters for election results and disputes coverage is minimal as less than half of the respondents (41%)

agree that they were adequately prepared others say they were moderately prepared (45%) and less prepared (14%).

**Table 3. How Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by their media organisations**

STATE	TRAINING	FUNDING	TOOLS	OTHERS	TOTAL
EKITI	31	4	10	5	50
LAGOS	18	10	12	10	50
OGUN	24	11	11	4	50
ONDO	25	11	10	4	50
OSUN	31	3	12	4	50
OYO	31	6	10	3	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>160 (53%)</b>	<b>45 (15%)</b>	<b>65 (22%)</b>	<b>30 (10%)</b>	<b>300(100%)</b>

Table 3 reveals that Nigerian media organisations mostly prepare their staff for election results and disputes coverage through inhouse training as over half of the respondents (53%) agree to this; but provide less tools and funds for the reporters while on duty. A few of the respondents indicate that their media organisations prepare them

through other means like providing them with sources, linking them up with security agents among others.

**Objective 3:** Extent to which Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by other bodies.

**Table 4. Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by other bodies.**

STATE	HIGHLY PREPARED	ADEQUATELY PREPARED	MODERATELY PREPARED	LESS PREPARED	TOTAL
EKITI	9	22	10	9	50
LAGOS	15	23	11	1	50
OGUN	12	22	10	6	50
ONDO	10	21	11	8	50
OSUN	8	23	10	9	50
OYO	11	22	11	6	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>65 (22%)</b>	<b>133 (44%)</b>	<b>63 (21%)</b>	<b>39 (13%)</b>	<b>300(100%)</b>

Table 4 shows that most Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and disputes coverage by bodies other than their own media organisations as over 80% of the respondents confirmed this with 22% saying they were highly

prepared, 44% saying they were adequately prepared and 21% saying they were moderately prepared while only 13% say they were less prepared.

**Table 5. Other bodies who prepare Nigerian journalists election results and election disputes coverage**

STATE	GOVERNMENT AGENCIES	NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS	PROFESSIONAL BODIES	TOTAL
EKITI	12	31	7	50
LAGOS	5	35	10	50
OGUN	9	34	7	50
ONDO	11	33	6	50
OSUN	9	34	7	50
OYO	8	34	8	50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>54 (18%)</b>	<b>201 (67%)</b>	<b>45 (15%)</b>	<b>300(100%)</b>

Respondents list other bodies that prepared them for elections results as well as election disputes coverage as contained in Table 5. These include the Nigerian Press Council, a federal government agency as the only public agent while non-governmental organisations like International

Press Institute (IPI), Institute for media and Society, YIAGA Africa among others prepared them for the exercise. . The only professional body they listed was the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ).

**Table 6. How other bodies prepare Nigerian journalists election results and election disputes coverage.**

STATE	TRAINING	FUNDING	TOOLS	TOTAL
EKITI	31	10	9	<b>50</b>
LAGOS	27	13	10	<b>50</b>
OGUN	30	11	9	<b>50</b>
ONDO	32	9	9	<b>50</b>
OSUN	33	10	7	<b>50</b>
OYO	33	9	8	<b>50</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>186 (62%)</b>	<b>62 (21%)</b>	<b>52 (17%)</b>	<b>300(100%)</b>

Table 6 shows that just their media houses, external bodies also prepared Nigerian journalists for election results and disputes coverage through training (62%) followed by funding (21%) and supply of tools (17%).

**Discussion Of Findings**

The findings of the study are in relation to the objectives raised in chapter one of this study and linked together with similar studies and theories reviewed in the chapter two of this study. The first objective of this study sought to find out the extent to which Nigerian journalists are conscious of their role in election results and election disputes coverage. The analysis reveal that majority of Nigerian journalists in the six selected states of Nigeria; Lagos, Oyo, Ondo, Ekiti, Ogun and Osun are “conscious” of their role in election results and election disputes coverage, This outcome is in line with the theory of collective consciousness propounded by Emile Durkheim in 1893, that emphasizes the social nature of communication and its impact on shaping peoples’ consciousness within a given community or society. It helps to understand the need for Nigerian journalists to be conscious of their role in election results and election disputes coverage, as their reporting and communication have the power to influence public perception, beliefs and behaviors regarding the electoral process and its

outcomes. As information disseminators, journalists can impact how individuals within a society understand and interpret election results and any disputes that may arise during the period. Hence, the need for them to recognize the significance of their communication in influencing the collective mindset of the public. By understanding the theory and its implications, journalists can actively work towards fostering a shared understanding among the public, promoting dialogue and contributing to the strengthening of collective consciousness during election, this awareness can help fulfill their role as responsible and ethical communicators in shaping public opinion and maintaining societal cohesion during critical moments in the democratic process.

This study also sought to know the extent to which Nigerian journalists are prepared for election results and election disputes coverage by their media organisations. The analysis shows that 53% of Nigerian journalists have been trained in preparation for election result and election disputes coverage by their employers, while 22% of Nigerian journalists have the tools required to prepare them for election results and election disputes coverage, but 15% of them have been funded in preparation for election result and election disputes coverage by their employers,



while only 10% are prepared through other means for election results and election disputes coverage by media organisations. Furthermore, the analysis revealed that 44% of Nigerian journalists are adequately prepared for election results and election disputes coverage, 22% highly prepared, 21% moderately prepared and 13% less prepared by other bodies for election results and election disputes coverage. The involvement of media organisations in preparing their staff for the task was mostly through in-house training with less funds and tools are provided.

Apart from the involvement of media organisations in preparing their staff for election results and disputes coverage, the study also sought to know how external bodies participate in preparing them for the task. Findings revealed that external bodies contributed more to prepare Nigerian journalists for the task. These include both governmental and non-governmental agencies like the Nigerian Press Council, a federal government agency, International Press Institute (IPI), Institute for Media and Society, YIAGA Africa and the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) through training, funding, and supply of tools. These findings are in line with the Agenda setting theory, first introduced by Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw in 1972, which posits that the media have the power to influence the public's perception and understanding of issues by selecting and emphasizing certain topics over others. In essence the media can set the agenda for public discussions by deciding which issues are deemed important and deserving of attention.

In context of Nigerian elections, well trained and funded journalists equipped with appropriate reporting tools play a pivotal role in shaping the public awareness and understanding of the electoral process. When journalists are well trained, they possess the skills to conduct in-depth research, verify information and present balanced and accurate coverage. This level of professionalism helps to ensure that the media's agenda aligns with democratic principles of informing citizens about crucial electoral matters. With adequate funding, journalist can access

necessary resources and technology, enabling them to cover election events extensively and report in a timely manner. The theory of agenda setting emphasizes the role journalists as key players in shaping public opinion and consciousness during elections. By investing in their training, funding and access to reporting tools, Nigerian journalists can contribute significantly to the democratic process by providing accurate, unbiased and comprehensive election coverage that influences the public's agenda in a constructive and informed manner. Similar to this, findings from the study of Mimiko and Idowu 2023 confirms the results of the findings in this research in examining the preparedness of Nigerian journalists for election coverage. While some media houses invest in comprehensive training programs and provide necessary resources, others fall short in adequately preparing their journalist for election reporting. They also emphasises the role of external bodies such as the Nigerian union of Journalists, Civil societies and international organizations in enhancing journalists' preparedness. These organizations efforts and contribute to better coverage.

### **Conclusion:**

From the data analysis, as presented in chapter four of this report, it is found that a high proportion of Nigerian journalists are conscious of their role in election reporting and election disputes coverage. Also, majority of Nigerian journalists have been prepared for election reporting and election disputes coverage, clearly showing that prioritizing training and support, Nigeria can foster a more professional and responsible media landscape in promoting transparent and credible elections. More so, other bodies such as Nigerian Press Council, Nigerian Union of Journalists and other international organisations to a large extent provide training, funding and tools to enhance journalists' preparedness towards election reporting and election disputes coverage. Investing in media training and professional development, Nigeria will have more transparent electoral process.

## Recommendations:

1. Findings revealed that Nigerian journalists are well conscious of their role in covering election results and election disputes and that they needed to be prepared for such an important exercise. Therefore, such consciousness should be sustained through sensitization and collaboration between media outfits and critical stakeholders in the electoral process like the umpire and civil societies.
2. Nigerian media organisations should continue to train their staff for election coverage but should also invest more in providing tools and funds for them while on election duty. This is because findings revealed that the media houses provided less funds and tools for their staff in this regard but concentrated more on in-house training as a way of preparing them, for the task.
3. Since external bodies invest more in preparing Nigerian journalists for election coverage through training, funding and supply of tools, media houses should continue to partner with these bodies for a robust and continued symbiotic relationship that will foster the external bodies' sustained investment in preparing journalists for election results and election disputes' coverage.

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