

CHALLENGES OF JOURNALISTS IN NEWS GATHERING AND BUILDING WORKING RELATIONS WITH THE MEDIA

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Introduction

The work of the journalist is very interesting because practitioners have the opportunity to meet, interact and work with a wide range of people whether professionals or otherwise in all walks of life.

On the other hand, the profession tends to be a daunting one exposing practitioners to abuses and other hectic routines to deliver on their information gathering mandates. On the ground, if not all, most journalists would attest to the mixed feelings and experiences they have been subjected to by this noble profession.

Introduction cont'd

The profession opens the doors for journalists to travel both home and abroad in discharging their duty sometimes under very difficult conditions. Journalists do this through:

- Educating
- Informing and
- Entertaining their readership and audience.

Most often than not, journalists resort to advocacy to bring out issues of the vulnerable, deprived and underprivileged to create awareness and draw the attention of Policy makers and State Authorities.

Challenges

A. Lack of equipment /working tools

- Modern gadgets, computers, cameras, recorders etc

B. Financial constraints resulting in poor remuneration/allowances/ motivation

- Lack of transportation to event centres

C. Abuse

- Verbal threats, insults, lack of respect
- Physical – personal attacks/ destruction of equipment/gadgets/ Arrest

Challenges cont'd

A. Poor Leadership/staff Strength

- Lack of continuous Training
- Lack of understanding of specialized fields/issues
- Failure to do follow-ups
- Lack of briefing for interviews

B. Influence of people in higher Authority

- From Institutional to national levels
- Societal Pressure

Building Relations

This can be done through The establishment of a constant engagement to explain issues through:

- A. Visits to media officials
- B. Workshops to brief journalist on upcoming events
- C. Create a media list for easy contact

Conclusion

These are just a few of the problems journalists encounter in the day to day activities trying to shape the society in which they live.

We therefore appeal for support whether financial or material to help keep the practitioners in line of duty.