



## Sensationalisation in Nigerian Newspaper Reviews: Impact and Ethical Implications

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**Abstract.** This research letter sheds light on sensationalisation in Nigerian newspaper reviews—their impact and the ethics which they distort. Newspaper reviews in broadcast programming have made news more accessible, convenient, and catchy with the current trend. However, exposing such trends raises serious ethical and journalism concerns and also requires comprehensive analysis of biases and credibility issues. Sensationalizing newspaper reviews on broadcast media could essentially make up for the creation of fake news national security problems. Thus, by prioritizing sensationalism above the factual elements, such programs inadvertently glorify the different kinds of fake news that could well skyrocket into the society through other media channels, particularly social media. The research calls for a wide range of stakeholders from media practitioners, and policymakers to civil society organizations to appreciate the adverse effects of Sensationalisation in Nigerian newspaper reviews and take action to advance responsible and ethical journalism practice. To this end, it calls for serious and intensive academic discourse and fieldwork on the processes of Sensationalisation in Nigerian newspaper reviews to thoroughly understand all nuances and possible means of mitigating its effects.

**Keywords:** Sensationalisation, Newspaper reviews, Ethical Implications, Credibility, Bias.

### 1. Introduction

A staple feature of broadcast media reviewing newspaper headlines has come to be a daily addiction for television and radio audiences. According to Busa (2013), the language of instruction is highly relevant in ensuring reader participation with the contents of newspaper reviews. Newspaper reviews give updates on current affairs and the general happenings of the environment, which the populace wants. The programs consist of the reading of daily publications' headlines, and various radio stations run programs like "Press Reviews," "From the Newspapers," and "Review of Editorials" (Edegoh et al., 2015). These broadcastings have become the

very cement of broadcasting organizations in attracting audiences daily and covering the information gap of those who cannot afford to buy or access newspapers regularly.

Thereafter, the preparation and review of newspaper reviews have in most instances given rise to issues of bias and credibility due to anchoring bias in media presentations, jumping to sensationalism, and institutional biases. The introduction of different biases erodes the essence of journalism; therefore, credibility is one of the measures for maintaining trust between the media and the public. This work critically investigates biases and concerns regarding reliability in newspaper reviews in an effort that aims to enhance conceptual understanding of the phenomenon (Adeduntan, A. (2017).

Sensationalisation in Nigerian newspaper reviews is a pressing concern that threatens the credibility and integrity of journalism. It means that newsmen exaggerate issues deliberately in order to provoke an emotional response from the audience, which, in turn, guarantees viewership. Sensationalisation is then encouraged in an environment characterized by excessive competition among media houses to gain audience attention and news commercialization. This damaging practice has a multiplied effect on the loss of people's trust in journalism and distorted perception of significant issues in our society. This will create a situation where, from this perspective, news of high imaginativeness overwhelms the Australian public's consciousness while other equally important issues, which are not very dramatic, move far away from the public gaze. Besides that, sensationalism can misinform fearful paranoia and trivialize relevant matters to the effect of the general media losing credence in the public eye (Oladosu, Sanni, & Tanimowo, 2021).

The Nigerian context has negative implications for Sensationalisation, such as the dissemination of misinformation and the aggravated social and political consequences. The ethical implications are also serious and include the fact that sensationalism runs counter to the cherished tenets of journalism which emphasize objectivity, accuracy, and fairness.

Sensationalization of reviews on broadcast programs can harmfully erode trust in a legitimate source of news, polarize the communities, and endanger national security by promoting false information through sensationalism. It places importance on reporting factually accurately, verifying credible sources, refraining from sensationalism, and providing contextual information to increase audience comprehension of complex issues that all can combine to mitigate Borecek's words into an enriched citizenry empowered by reduced proliferation of fake news (Nyarko, 2016).

**Cue to action:** We urge broadcast programs to undertake proactive fact-checking, avoid sensationalism, and foster responsible media through contextualization and background information that will assist audiences in comprehending complicated information. In doing so, we will accomplish a double objective: the curbing of fake news and the creation of an informed citizenry and culture of responsible journalism.

The paper establishes a strong urgency for collective action to combat the harmful effects of Sensationalisation in Nigerian newspaper reviews. Accordingly, this paper prescribes a multi-stakeholder mechanism involving media practitioners, policymakers, and civil society organizations to advocate for sustainable and ethical journalism practice.

To curb the adverse effects of Sensationalisation, the paper recommends strictly enforcing and implementing fact-checking, encouraging accurate and balanced reporting, and giving maximum exposure to academic discourse through in-depth research and critical inquiry. Eventually, it is through the implementation of such practices that a better-informed and more active citizenry can grow, thereby aiding in the development of a responsible and accountable media culture.

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