



Global Scientific JOURNALS

GSJ: Volume 9, Issue 11, November 2021, Online: ISSN 2320-9186
www.globalscientificjournal.com

SAFETY EDUCATION AND SURVIVAL MECHANISM: LESSONS FOR JOURNALISTS COVERING BOKO HARAM INSURGENCY IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

This paper explored how journalists covering dangerous beats survive in reporting from difficult terrain. Nigerian journalists for instance were caught unaware when the Boko Haram insurgency broke. Nothing prepared them for the type of coverage, reporting and how to survive dangerous beats like terrorism reporting. As a result, so many journalists were caught in the web of conflict of interest between what to report as professional journalists and how to survive after reporting. Many journalists paid the ultimate price. This paper therefore highlights some of the mechanism journalists in Nigeria can deploy to survive dangerous beat. The paper advocate for inclusion of safety training in the curriculum of mass communication and journalism training institutions. This is paramount in order to enlighten journalists on safety threat, how to report terror, environmental awareness, security management strategy, elaborate intervention and protection strategy, incident reporting guideline, among other necessary education that will

safeguard their lives when on the field. This paper therefore recommends for the establishment of agencies that will ensure safety and protection of journalists covering dangerous beats. Also, there should be legislation that cater for journalists in danger zone.

Keywords: Safety Education, Survival mechanism, journalist, Boko Haram, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

The issue of insecurity and lack of safety of journalists globally have become issue of concern to researchers world over (Carlsson & Pöyhtäri, 2017; Cottle, 2017). In the wake of this global terrorism and astronomical rise in insecurity, safety of journalists has become pertinent issue to address and it is gaining more attention among intellectuals, policy makers, activists, government and civil society organizations around the globe (IFJ, 2015; Berger, 2017). This is partly due to the renewed vigour and dedicated interest among international organizations such as the United Nation (UN), European Union (EU) and the African Union (AU). Efforts have been made to develop manuals for safety of journalists covering dangerous beats such as war, terrorism, conflicts, genocide, etc (Article 19, 2017; Cottle, 2017), asides efforts by Temple, Frost, O'Neill and Allan, (2017), the United Nation had also commissioned series of studies aimed at documenting assault on journalists around the globe (Marcesse, 2017; Carlsson & Pöyhtäri, 2017). Marcesse (2017) explores global attempts to promote journalist

safety carried out by the UN system, from its inception in 1945 until 2016. The study found that the 1970s was the beginning of the first serious efforts towards protection of journalists within the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). However, the study found that the safety of journalists issue became a “battle between different views on the role of the press and journalists, exacerbated by Cold War rivalries” (Marcesse, 2017, p. 57). The fracas that shrouds the debates, and the departures of the United States and Great Britain from UNESCO in the 1980s, put an end to the issue of journalists’ safety till the 1990s (Marcesse, 2017).

Key among the efforts is the attempt to educate journalists on safety and provide curriculum on safety education in the institutions of learning where journalism training is being provided. In countries like Nigeria, aside the provisions of Sections 22 and 39 of the 1999 constitution as amended which stipulate the obligation of the press and guarantee freedom of information respectively, and the *Freedom of Information Act* (FOIA) 2011, there are no specific laws guaranteeing the safety of journalists apart from the general laws protecting the citizens despite the enormous professional risks and hazards journalists in the country are exposed to in line of duty. Aside from government, journalism training institutions have done little to prepare journalists for likely risk relating to the field in order to enhance their survival strategies in reporting conflict and dangerous beats. Pate, Oso and Jibril (2017) while studying the nature of journalism education in fifteen West African countries established that journalists in the countries covering conflict “do so with low specialized knowledge and high personal risks because their training hardly prepares them for the realities of reporting conflicts and protecting themselves in volatile environments.” (p. 29). Similarly, Pate and Idris (2017) buttress that the rise of Boko Haram terrorism has revealed the weaknesses in the safety policy and protocols for journalists covering dangerous beats in the insurgency in the country. Also, the media structure and owners do little to ensure the safety of journalists in the country.

By implication, journalists as professionals are exposed to grave situations as they report the occurrences. For instance, from 2011-2015 when the Boko Haram insurgency overwhelmed

North East and other parts of Nigeria, four journalists were brutally killed and many others threatened in the course of work (CPJ, 2018).

There was no time journalists in Nigeria faced grave risk and danger to their lives, professional and institutional security like during the peak of the Boko Haram insurgency from 2009-2015 (Pate & Idris, 2017). The Boko Haram insurgency was reported to have claimed the lives of 4 journalists in different attacks within the period 2012-2016 (Pate & Idris, 2017). Despite the threats and risks, journalists still reported the happenings from the epicentre of the insurgency – the northeast - without any formal training on safety. Against this background, this paper discusses the safety mechanism deployed by journalists covering dangerous beats all around the world and how journalists in Nigeria covering the Boko Haram insurgency can also adopt the same mechanism.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF SAFETY

The concept of safety goes beyond the issue of press freedom. Press freedom deals with freedom of journalists to access information, absence of censorship and repressive laws. Press freedom does not in any way provide safety for journalists against threats, physical and psychological attacks (Carlsson & Pöyhtäri, 2017; Berger, 2017). Berger (2017, p. 37) submits that “the issue in press freedom is about the character of laws limiting the right to free expression, and their application”, meanwhile “the issue in safety is about the rule of law and the protection of the individual’s right to life, liberty and the security of person.” Arguing on press freedom and safety, Berger concludes:

Both rights are per the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and they bring different considerations to bear. Restrictions on the right to free expression do not necessarily impact on the right to life and security. Interconnection should not be mistaken for identity. In other words, it is important to remember the distinctiveness of safety and media freedom, while at the same time also being aware of interconnections between these, and between them and the dimensions of independence, pluralism, gender and digital developments (Berger, 2017, p. 37).

Specifically speaking, there are about nine types of safety challenges faced by journalists in line of duty. These include: physical, psychological, financial, legal, social and emotional, gender-specific, digital, topic-specific, and public risks (UNESCO, 2017). Jamil (2017a) explains that physical risks are risks of being injured and of being subjected to any kind of physical attack that may lead to physical disability and harm. Psychological risks refer to stress and pressure that may affect a journalist's ability to perform his/ her job freely and safely. Financial risks mean the threats of job insecurity, pay-scale disparity and forced job termination. Legal risks include the existence of impunity for crimes against journalists; unfair trial against journalists; manipulation and abuse of laws against journalists and the existence of stringent media laws. Social and emotional risks include the risks of anxiety, fear, depression, offence and lower self-esteem that mainly arise from the country's social context or a journalist's surrounding environment (i.e., workplace's environment and socio-political environment). Gender-specific risks refer to those threats that a journalist may encounter by virtue of his/or her gender such as sexual assault, rape, gender harassment, discrimination and blackmailing. Digital risks refer to online threats that result from hacking, abusive or threatening e-mails or mobile messages and abusive comments on social media. And finally public risks which refer to the threats that result from the violent, unethical and abusive attitudes of local inhabitants towards journalists, such as verbal abuse and physical harm or attacks (Jamil, 2017a).

PERSPECTIVE ON BOKO HARAM ASSAULTS ON MEDIA IN NORTHEAST NIGERIA

Journalism and journalistic practice are risky engagements. Journalists make the business of others their business. This is because the society depends on journalists and the media for information that facilitates decision making and behaviour manifestation. By virtue of its statutory responsibility, journalism as a profession and its practitioners tend to be exposed to danger and risk. McQuail (2010) opines that journalism can be viewed from six different theoretical perspectives: Mass society, functionalism, Marxism and political economy, social constructionism, communication technological determinism and the information society. A society is an interconnection of different systems. The media from a functionalist perspective

is one of the systems in the society and operate to keep the system running. In line with this argument, Lasswell (1947) and Wright (1960) assigned four key functions to the media in the society - surveillance of the environment, correlation of the parts of the society in responding to its environment, the transmission of the cultural heritage, and entertainment. Or, from the Marxian political economy approach (McQail, 2010), which portray the media as part of the capitalist superstructure is used to dominate the proletariats. Contextualizing the media from this perspective, the Marx's German Ideology, argues that:

The class that has the means of material production, has control at the same time over the means of mental production, so that, thereby, generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it (cited in Murdock and Golding, 1977 p. 15).

Arguing from the Marxian perspective, Herman and Chomsky observe that:

The mass media serve as a system for communicating messages and symbols to the general populace. It is their function to amuse, entertain and inform, and to inculcate individuals with the values, beliefs and codes of behaviour that will integrate them into the institutional structures of the larger society. In a world of concentrated wealth and major conflicts of class interest, to fulfil this role requires systematic propaganda (Herman & Chomsky, 1994, p. 1).

The operation of the media is situated within these two theoretical underpinnings to explain the relationship between journalists operating in Northeast Nigeria and the Boko Haram sect. The relationship between the two, as established by Pate and Idris (2017) was based on mutually suspicious understanding at first but turned dangerously sour in the course of time. What is partly responsible for this change could be in the ideology of the media and the sect.

The Boko Haram terrorist group operated with an ideology. Their ideology is enshrined within the name of the sect – Boko Haram, which means, literally, western education is forbidden. Typically, terrorist attacks are carried out to draw attention to a cause, such as promoting a religious agenda or pushing for political goals (e.g., the Boko Haram' fight for an independent

state). Catching people's attention is an important mechanism to promote the terrorists' goals. However, international media coverage of terrorists' incidents varies dramatically (Mu'azu, 2015; Pate, 2017).

Like any other terror group, Boko Haram had from the onset realized the essence of communication and utility of penetrating media channels for publicity, attracting public sympathy and recruiting membership. In its earlier days, the leader of the group, Mohammed Yusuf and his officers used interpersonal contacts to recruit followers particularly "the young, the poor and the dispossessed" (Mu'azu, 2015).

When the group transformed into a full terror cluster:

...it called journalists and media organizations asking them to report attacks it carried out... several journalists have received calls to report the killings of persons. Some correspondents had to be posted out of Maiduguri to ensure their safety. Indeed, the Boko Haram did smidgen how they were covered by the media because they were dictating how the group should be reported (Mu'azu, 2015).

From the above statement, it is clear that Boko Haram insurgents in Nigeria gained from media attention that communicated their goals and grievances to a wider audience. This perspective holds that insurgent and media outlets have a symbiotic relationship in which both can benefit from media attention to insurgency. Igoe (2010) asserted that media do not hype insurgency; professional journalists argue that insurgency is an important public policy issue and deserves substantial coverage from the media. Norms of professional journalism including objectivity and balance limit media outlets' willingness to exploit insurgency to increase their audience share and lead them to devote substantial attention to the views of governments when covering episodes of political violence (Karmon, 2014).

Within the context of this study, it can be argued that the initial romance between journalists in the Northeast and the sect can be attributed to the realisation by the sect that media is central to the actualization of their goal. From a functionalism paradigm, journalists are expected to give coverage to the insurgents, their activities, and successes recorded. This is visible in the

initial connection they had with some top journalists in Borno and Yobe (Pate & Idris, 2017). However, journalism and its ideological underlining are not linear. The subsequent faceoff between the insurgents and the journalists can be attributed to failure of the insurgents to consider the political economy of the media and the Marxian perspective. As Karl Marx argued, the media is part of the superstructure to promote interest of the elites. Since the media is owned by the elites, only the elites have dominant impact on how issues are covered. Since the insurgents don't own the media and are attacking other superstructure of the society, i.e schools, security apparatus and government institutions, the media being an 'ideological state apparatuses' (Althusser, 1971) is expected to wade in. This led to the change in the coverage the insurgent received.

The change in media coverage subjects the journalists in the region to attacks. Pate (2016) in his submission writes that at the beginning of the Boko Haram crisis, journalists in Maiduguri had the non-committal assurances of the terrorists that they will not harm them because they needed journalists, too; but along the way, they reneged, on the excuse that journalists were not treating their stories fairly. Their perception of distortion of facts and misrepresentation of stories from or about them by some journalists attracted their hostile attention. The terrorists issued threats forcing many journalists underground. For instance, the correspondent of the *DailyTrust* Newspapers, perhaps, the most authoritative newspaper in the zone, reported that he was threatened more than 30 times by Boko Haram and the Nigerian military, a development that forced him to relocate his family to a safer location and stayed alone in Borno, the epicenter of the Boko Haram (Pate & Idris, 2017). Aside the threat from the insurgents, media houses and their staff were subjected to multiple and conflicting pressures from the public, the terrorists and the security system (Mu'azu 2015). For instance, Zakariyyah Isa of *Nigeria Television Authority (NTA)* was killed by Boko Haram. The sect claimed that Zakariyyah was killed "because he was spying on us for Nigerian security authorities" (CPJ, 2011). The Boko Haram group identified deliberate misinformation being peddled about it in

Nigerian and foreign media as a major reason for its onslaught on the media (*Premium Times*, 2012).

This shows that the Boko Haram group figure out subjective and unfair reporting of its group's activities as the major reason for its attacks on the media and its practitioners. Qaqa the spokesperson of Boko Haram stated that *ThisDay's* "sins are more grievous", for the newspaper had "once insulted the Prophet Muhammed in 2001 and we have not forgotten. They recently said our Imam executed me which is false. Here I am speaking to you, I am alive and healthy" (Madunagu, 2012). He warned of more attacks on the media that "we have just started this new campaign against the media and we will not stop here, we will hit the media hard since they have refused to listen to our plea for them to be fair in their reportage" (*Premium Times*, 2012).

Similarly, in July 2015, the sect threatened to kill Adeola Akinremi, the Features Editor for *ThisDay*. The death threat was issued after the journalist wrote a piece titled, 'Why Boko Haram don't deserve our amnesty'. The piece was written after the editor returned from the Northeast where he investigated killings by the insurgents. He received a warning email that "we have seen your hand against us. Insha-Allah you will die like other infidels that we have captured" (*Daily Post*, 2015).

Peresin (2007) observes that insurgents, mainly, seek first and foremost to manipulate and exploit the media for their own purposes by sending messages of violence and thus gaining mass publicity. According to Peresin (2007), the majority of experts call contemporary terrorism mass media oriented terrorism. This is because, by analysing insurgent activities, one may notice that in the majority of cases, they are carried out precisely in order to draw the attention of the international media. The modern technologies have made it possible for small insurgent groups to use the mass media as powerful gun, in such ways that the mass media serve the interests of the terrorists, against its own will (Peresin, 2007). With intimidation and threat, Boko Haram were able to change the tone of media coverage they received at least to

an extent. Mustapha-Koiki (2019, p. 241) concludes that the attack on journalists forced the media to “reduce stories that explicitly tied Boko Haram to violence.”

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE ON JOURNALISM AND SAFETY EDUCATION

Literature has shown that attacks on journalists are prevalent in the third world countries of Asia, Africa and Latin America (Krøvel, 2017). Scholars, observe that journalists in these regions mostly lack education of safety measures required in conflict and crisis situation (Krøvel, 2017; Jamil, 2017; Pate, Oso & Jibril, 2017; Murthy, 2018).

For instance, safety training in West Africa is receiving an increasing interest among scholars and international donors. This has however not translated to meaningful safety and protection of journalists in the region (Pate, Oso & Jibril, 2017). With the emergence of terror groups such as Boko Haram in the region and other conflicts, journalists persistently experience threats in line of duty (Pate, 2017). These professional risks can be connected partly to lack of proper training on reporting conflicts and violent extremism, peace journalism and safety education against internal and external threats. Mardaras, Gonzalez and Penin (2017) observed that “there are three factors that primarily condition the work of journalists in the field: professional working conditions, journalists’ training and their professional experience, and safety training and equipment.”

In Nigeria, safety education alone isn’t included in the curriculum of many universities as a course on its own, rather, it is treated as a subtopic under press freedom and rights of journalists. Similarly, in Ghana, safety education isn’t treated as a standalone course. In Sierra Leone, after the civil war it experienced from 1991-2002 it became imperative to have conflict sensitive reporting training. However, there is no specific course bordering on safety education (Pate, Oso & Jibril, 2017). Journalists however received part-time training on aspects of the subject organized by international civil society organizations (Pate, Oso & Jibril, 2017).

In Kenya, Safety Protocol and Manual for Kenyan Journalists has been developed to provide excellent resource for journalists. Aside that, safety education among journalists in Kenya has

been guided by RSF's Safety Guide on all aspects of safety including physical, digital and psycho-social (Reporters Without Borders, 2015).

In Pakistan, being one of the countries in the world facing terrorism attack, majority of the journalists did not receive safety training either by any governmental body, local university, their media organization or the journalist's union (Jamil, 2017). Journalism education in the country is in disarray lacking the global standard. Instead of training students on how to operate within the current reality of the country, the Universities focus on teaching students journalism techniques and ethics within the socio-political reality of a peaceful nation (Jamil, 2017).

Afghanistan's level of safety education shows that there is low level investment of efforts and resources towards safety education for journalists in the country. Journalists in Afghanistan are not only subjected to threats from the terror groups but also their government that is expected to provide safety for them. The failure of government in the provision of safety education to journalists was complemented by the proliferation of journalism training initiatives as part of the international community's reconstruction efforts in the country (Davin et al., 2010, quoted in Mitra, 2017). Cary (2012) observed that "hundreds of millions of dollars" have been expended on journalists' professional development and journalistic capacity building programs by international and regional donor governments, NGOs and other actors (pp. 24-26).

Abu-Fadil (2017) while emphasizing the need for safety education in Arab countries discovered that academics priority in the region, despite the insecurity battling some of the countries, still remain "traditional training methods, giving more weight to theory than practice" (p. 114) while few show interest in learning safety education. The study found that the disconnect between academics and journalists in Arab World is as a result of the fact that many academics teaching journalism in the region have never worked in the newsrooms, in the field or experienced the threat practicing journalists faced in the course of duty.

As a result of the nature of political environment in Kosovo, media operation according to Hoxha and Andresen (2017), stands between 'polarized pluralist journalism' of the Mediterranean and 'democratic corporatist journalism'. Many journalists in Kosovo were trained

during the war in the country. Living through war according to Hoxha and Andresen (2017) study, gave the journalists an unconventional kind of training. Many of the journalists' best war-time journalism training happened 'on the job'. They study found that journalism education center on the issues of human rights and freedoms with peculiar example of Kosovo situation; however, the teaching disappears when journalists are faced with the reality on the field.

In Spain, Mardaras, González and Peñín (2017) stated that from 2003, the Army War College developed the habit of training journalists annually for war coverage and reporting. More than three hundred journalists have received war reporting training and safety education during the period. Aside the military, the tertiary institutions in Spain offering journalism training hardly have any specialized course focusing on safety. Safety education is given on how to navigate hostile zones, health education workshops, procedures in minefields, NBC suits, 4x4 driving, and use of maps and GPSs.

In India, journalists' safety has never been a matter of serious concern for both Indian academy and media industry (CPJ's Report, 2015; IFJ, 2016). In spite of all these safety threats, safety education in India is yet to be designated as a course of study. Despite the committee setup for curriculum development in 2000, the committee didn't include safety of journalists as part of journalism education in its recommended course curriculum. Even though the UNESCO proposed a *Model Curriculum for Journalism Education* in 2007 (UNESCO, 2007) that included a course for the 'safety of journalists' at the university level, none of the media educational institutions, both in public and private institutions, deemed it necessary to Indian journalism education; neither did media houses include safety education as part of training for their journalists despite losing a number of journalists either at war front or in the police-Maoist encounters (Murthy, 2018).

From most of the countries reviewed, safety education at the higher institutions of learning is mostly unavailable. However, contrary is the case in the UK. The British International News Safety Institute (INSI) has trained around 2,000 media workers from 30 different countries since 2004 (INSI, 2017).

Meanwhile, in the United States of America, a body, *the Global Security Journalist*, also offers different training programs/modules to its US journalists to meet the exigencies arising from different environments, climatic conditions and crisis situations (Murthy, 2018).

MECHANISM FOR PROTECTION OF JOURNALISTS

In the wake of series of attacks on journalists, many countries are designing strategies to ensure safety of journalists operating in dangerous terrain. Some important legal process to protect the exercise of journalism and the right to freedom of expression, including the creation of mechanisms for protecting journalists and adopting legal reforms in order to abolish criminal prosecution of crimes committed in response to the exercise of freedom of expression are being put in place.

In Nigeria, the legal basis for journalism practice is enshrined in section 39 (1) and (2) of the 1999 constitution. This provision assigned the media the responsibility of upholding the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy as well as ensuring that the government is held accountable (Soremekun, 2013). However, the constitution did not accord journalists any specified safety and protection framework, except that like every other citizen (Soremekun, 2013). The nearest official position on the safety of journalists is contained in the mandate of the Nigerian Press Council which directs the Council to “ensure the protection of the rights and privileges of journalists in the lawful performance of their duties” (NPC Website, 2021). Likewise, the Freedom of Information (FOI) Act offers an element of protection which is consistent with the public interest and the protection of personal privacy from adverse consequences for disclosing certain kinds of official information without authorization and established procedures for the achievement of those purposes (Pate, 2017).

In a bid to tackle incessant attack on journalists, Mexico adopted a specialized mechanism for the protection of at-risk journalists in 2012 (Marino, 2013). Ministry of Interior [Secretaría de Gobernación] was charged with coordinating the mechanism for the protection of journalists (IACHR, 2011). The Mexican Congress approved a “Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists” in 2012 (Marino, 2013). The implementation of the law and

mechanism was overseen by top government functionaries at the executive, legislative and judicial arm or government in collaboration with the civil society organizations (Marino, 2013). The mechanism ensures that once a journalist feels threatened, he/she can request for protective or preventive measure at the 'Unit for Case Reception and Fast Reaction' the unit will then verifies the threat and provide necessary protection in not more than three hours of receipt of request (cited in Marino, 2013). Also, to obtain financial resources additional to those provided in the federal budget for the mechanism, the law establishes the creation of the "Fund for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists," for the implementation of the mechanism. The fund shall be operated through a public trust.

Some states in the country have also established independent mechanism for prevention and the protection of at-risk journalists i.e the "mechanism for prevention and protection of journalists, journalistic contributors, and human rights defenders facing risk because of their professions." (Marino, 2013).

In Afghanistan, the 2004 constitution strongly enshrines freedom of expression; the Mass Media Law, enacted in 2009, also contains provisions that protect journalists in line with Article 19 of the International Covenant of Human Rights; the 2013 Code of Ethics, a legal document developed in consultation with journalists and media safety groups, contained provisions and guidelines aimed at protecting journalists; Presidential Decree 97276, Decree 107406 and Decree 188172 aimed at ensuring press freedom, collaboration with the security and safety journalists respectively; and the Joint Committee for the Safety and Security of Journalists (JCSSJ) are some of the safety mechanism in the country (Saboory & Inkinen, 2017).

According to Saboory and Inkinen (2017, p. 73), the Afghani journalist safety commission (AJSC) maintains an emergency fund for journalists and a 24-hour hotline. "The funds are used to evacuate journalists and relocate them to safe zones, where they receive financial support for basic needs as well as communication tools." AJSC also offers legal and psychological support through the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Afghanistan Bar to provide free legal assistance to journalists in all provinces of the country.

In Colombia, the passage of Law 418 in 1997 created a protection program under the Ministry of the Interior aimed at people facing situations of risk “due to causes having to do with political or ideological violence, or with the armed internal conflict”; the “Program for the Protection of Journalists and Social Communicators,” run by the General Directorate of Human Rights of the Ministry of the Interior; Decree 1592 also established the Committee for Regulation and the Evaluation of Risks [*Comité de Reglamentación y Evaluación de Riesgos*] (CRER) (Mario, 2013; Bock & Shaw, 2017).

Mario (2013) stressed that the legal framework creates the National Protection Unit (*Unidad Nacional de Protección*) (UNP), a legal body with administrative and financial autonomy and its own budget, under the Ministry of the Interior, with the purpose of “articulating, coordinating and executing the provision of protective services” to those persons facing situations of extraordinary or extreme risk in Colombia – journalists inclusive. It is pertinent to note that the UNP is implemented jointly by ministry of interior, National Unit for Protection (UNP), National Police, ministry of defence, office of the ombudsman, attorney general's office, and Civil Society: Felcoper, Andarios, Asomedios, FLIP etc. (Bock & Shaw, 2017).

Since 2000, about 100 journalists have received protection through the UNP on an annual basis. The nature of the protection varies from the provision of bodyguards, armed agents who stay with the journalist 24 hours a day, to the use of armoured vehicles for transportation (Knightcentre, 2016). The number of journalist killings has dropped in recent years, an encouraging sign (Bock & Shaw, 2017).

The Indonesia's press laws uphold freedom of the press. The Act of Press No. 40/1999 outlaws government from imprisonment of journalists on the basis of their work and up to two years imprisonment and fines of 500 million rupiah (US\$44,000) for perpetrator of physically attacks a journalist (Kristiawan, 2017). However, there appeared to be no concrete mechanism in place to ensure the protection of journalists in the country apart from the laws. Kristiawan (2017) notes that the Alliance of Indonesian Journalists (AJI) and the Press Council and LBH Pers, with support from international organizations, have tackled assaults on journalists in some

strategic ways which include: working with police to prosecute the killers of journalists and training stakeholders in freedom of expression issues. They count on their presence around the country, LBH's legal expertise, and the Press Council's influence within state institutions. Iraq has a weak legal framework for protecting freedom of speech and, by extension, media workers and journalists. Even though the constitution provides freedom of expression and freedom of the press, it also imposes stringent conditions with limits freedom of press (Khursheed & Mohammed, 2017). One mechanism to protect journalists exists within the parliament. Parliament forms fact-finding committees and follows up on the activities of the police and the judiciary, according to Maysoun Al-Damalou, head of the Parliamentary Culture and Media Committee in the Iraqi Parliament (Khursheed & Mohammed, 2017). However, these committees rarely gather conclusive evidence.

Journalists resorts to other strategies such as: dialogue with security forces; reliance on the Network of Volunteer Lawyers for Freedom of Expression (NLFEO); monitoring violations; journalists and Iraqi security forces signed MoU in 2014 affirming the need for better cooperation and understanding; a similar MoU was signed by parties in Kurdistan; organising training courses for 100 security personnel and 20 journalists and additional training for new Ministry of Interior personnel - this project resulted in the Baghdad Operations Command reversing a policy that required the press to obtain prior permission to report on events; and stakeholder meetings with parliamentary committees which accords civil society the opportunity to successfully campaign for the postponement of voting on the Right of Demonstration and Freedom of Expression Law, which fell short in its protections of freedom of expression and assembly (Khursheed & Mohammed, 2017).

In Pakistan, as far back as 2013, the government has agreed to implement the 'UN Action Plan on Safety of Journalists and the issue o Impunity'. However, Din and Rehmat (2017) argued that nothing substantive has been done implement the plan rather than public proclamation by the information minister. Due to inactivity of government, media practitioners and civil society organisations developed series of initiatives to curb assault on journalists.

These initiatives include: Pakistan Journalists Safety Fund (PJSF), Pakistan Coalition on Media Safety (PCOMS), Pakistan Press Clubs Journalist Safety Hubs Network and Editors for Safety (Din & Rehmat, 2017).

Despite the fact that the Pakistan constitution captures media operation in not less than 64 laws, i. e Article 19 on freedom of expression, Article 19-A on right to information, Article 4 on safety and security of all citizens; statues such as the Press Council of Pakistan Ordinance 2002 and the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) Ordinance of 2002, no specific legal framework nor state protect mechanism was set up to ensure safety of journalists. Although a bill on the protection and welfare of journalists was first proposed in 2011 but it has not progressed to a stage where it can be voted on (CPJ, 2013; Aslam, 2015; Din & Rehmat, 2017).

Din and Rehmat (2017) emphasized that in areas where journalist safety is codified place responsibility on media companies. Although, the Newspaper Employees (Conditions of Services) Act of 1973 compels media companies to set up provident fund, medical care and wage board for print media staff, however, the Protection Against Harassment of Women at Workplace Act, promulgated in 2010, didn't target journalism or media as a specific work environment, but women journalists can potentially invoke this law as a protection and redress measure. The Code of Conduct of PEMRA states: "Licensee shall provide necessary protection gear and training to its reporters, cameramen and other crew deployed for coverage of any crime incident or conflict zone" (PERMA, 2015, cited in Din & Rehmat, 2017, p. 201).

In Philippines, the 1987 Constitution, the Writ of Amparo decree 2007, the Anti-Torture Act of 2009, the Cybercrime Prevention Act of 2012 are some of the laws aimed at providing the framework for safety and protection of the press and protect journalists from harm (UNESCO, 2013; San Diego & Tuazon, 2017; IFEX, 2016).

Other safety mechanisms are: Civil society organizations monitoring of violations, advocacy initiatives and provide other forms of support for journalists under threat, government

mechanisms to investigate killings of journalists, training and education programs and academic studies (San Diego & Tuazon, 2017).

One important feature of safety law in Philippines is the Writ of Amparo 2007 which specifically addressed issues of threat and impunity. It ensures legal succour for journalists under threat, families of slain journalists, and witnesses to the killing of journalists and victims of human rights abuses. Some of the interim benefits of the writ are a Temporary Protection Order, Inspection Order, Production Order, and Witness Protection Order. Several journalists have made use of the writ in response to threats (UNESCO, 2013).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

On safety education of journalist, it can be argued that despite the differences in the contexts of the studies, a number of important issues seemed to be common between the contexts: Majority of the studies show the dominance of international NGOs when it comes to providing safety training. There is no doubt that journalists are subject to assault globally. Most of these assaults are done with high level of impunity. Journalists most times resort to self-help to avoid threats. Despite the availability of laws protecting journalist, the culture of impunity still prevails in many of the countries. This can be attributed partly to dysfunctional justice system.

It is therefore recommended that journalists in Nigeria come together to form a body such as Nigerian Journalist Safety Commission (NJSC) to maintain an emergency fund for journalists and a 24-hour hotline. The funds are to be used to evacuate journalists and relocate them to safe zones, where they receive financial support for basic needs as well as communication tools. The NJSC should offer legal and psychological support through the signed Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with the Nigerian Bar Association to provide free legal assistance to journalists in all states of the country.

Similarly, Nigeria can also establish a National Media Development Fund (NMDF) which could serve as buffer for media organizations such as such as Asset Management Corporation of Nigeria (AMCON) that will ensure the stabilization and revitalization of media industry in the country. This will not only cover funding of the media organization but also welfare of its staff and safety related issues.

Media owners in Nigeria should collaborate more with the International Community in order to intensify efforts in ensuring media safety in Nigeria. Government and non-government entities should provide financial and technical support and training.

Similarly, Nigeria should set up specialized mechanism for the protection of at-risk journalists through the Ministry of Information and the National Assembly for enactment of Law for the Protection of Human Rights Defenders and Journalists. The implementation of this law and mechanism will be overseen by top government functionaries at the executive, legislative and judicial arm, or government in collaboration with the civil society organizations. This law will ensure that once a journalist feels threatened, he/she can request for protective or preventive measure at the 'Unit for Case Reception and Fast Reaction' the unit will then verifies the threat and provide necessary protection in not more than three hours of receipt of request.



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