



**EFFICACY OF MEDIA TRAINING  
ON EXTRACTIVE SECTOR  
REPORTING IN NIGERIA**



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## **Efficacy of Media Training on Extractive Sector Reporting in Nigeria**

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### About CJID

The Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID), formerly the Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (PTCIJ), is a West African media innovation and development think (and do) tank. Founded in 2014 as a non-governmental organisation in Nigeria. The Centre has been a leader in investigative journalism, civic technology, open data, verification, safety of journalists, elections and freedom of information and expression. It has a presence in Nigeria, Ghana, Sierra Leone, Liberia and The Gambia.

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## Executive Summary

Nigeria is Africa's largest oil producer, the world's eighth-largest crude oil exporter, and one of the top 11 oil-producing countries. This has led to increased poverty among vulnerable groups across the country, a problem that scholars and policy researchers continue investigating. For many years, the country has faced significant management challenges in the sector, such as unaccountable revenue use and corruption. Civil Society Organisations (CSOs), the media, and citizens are constrained and demoralised in their demands for reforms due to the pervasiveness of corruption and the opacity of the sector. There is a need to improve reformation feedback strategies, which include reporting, tracking, and accountability.

This study aims to investigate media intervention in the extractive sector, like media training for journalists, and investigative reporting in the sector, to improve innovations designed to drive transparency and accountability. It also aims to understand the experiences of journalists and media organisations in the overall mission to ensure a more transparent extractive sector.

The research employed a combination of methods - key informant interviews with 10 media organisations and CSO stakeholders, an online survey for journalists, and focus group discussions with newsroom managers selected from the media institutions identified by respondents to the survey.

Findings revealed that Nigerian journalists had attended media training in the extractive sector, and this training has impacted their delivery and reportage, improved wide-range and sophisticated viewpoints that can direct their reporting methods and choices. Their capacity is built in utilising critical thinking to assess news sources, information, and the motivations of individuals and advancement in journalism. Journalists and media organisations continue to demand more collaborative and action-oriented processes to advance their reportage and generate more impactful stories, especially in the extractive sector.



Since Nigeria's discovery of oil in the 1950s, considerable scholarship has been devoted to the country's troubled path to economic growth and development.<sup>1</sup> Nigeria is extremely resource-abundant, being Africa's largest oil producer, the world's eighth-largest crude oil exporter, and one of the 11 countries with the largest oil reserves<sup>2</sup> in the world. This availability and exploitation of oil have made natural resources the mainstay of the economy for more than 60 years. Today, the oil and gas sector accounts for 65% of government revenue, over 90% of its foreign exchange earnings, and about 9% of GDP.<sup>3</sup>

With a population of about 210 million people,<sup>4</sup> Nigeria is Africa's most populous country, making up nearly half of the West African regional population and nearly a fifth of Sub-Saharan Africa's demography.

However, there is minimal correlation between the country's resource wealth and socio-economic conditions,<sup>5</sup> alongside poverty reduction.<sup>6</sup> The result has been the preponderance of extreme poverty among vulnerable groups across the country, which is a concern that has been the subject of examination by scholars and policy researchers alike. With a high unemployment rate, successive governments at different levels in Nigeria have implemented policies to alleviate poverty and unemployment at various times.<sup>7</sup> According to the World Poverty Clock, the poverty rate in Nigeria today is extremely high, with around half of the population living on less than \$1 per day. Research has shown that the present extreme poverty rate is double that of the first oil boom in the 1970s, when it was about 35%.

1. <http://eprints.gouni.edu.ng/181/>
2. <https://www.investopedia.com/articles/investing/101515/biggest-oil-producers-africa.asp>
3. <https://www.dw.com/en/nigeria-faces-a-tough-time-diversifying-from-oil/a-59494125>
4. <https://www.worldometers.info/population/countries-in-africa-by-population/>
5. [https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w5398/w5398.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w5398/w5398.pdf)
6. [https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file\\_attachments/cr-inequality-in-nigeria-170517-en.pdf](https://www-cdn.oxfam.org/s3fs-public/file_attachments/cr-inequality-in-nigeria-170517-en.pdf)
7. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288799059\\_Rising\\_rate\\_of\\_unemployment\\_in\\_Nigeria\\_the\\_Socio-Economic\\_and\\_political\\_implications](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/288799059_Rising_rate_of_unemployment_in_Nigeria_the_Socio-Economic_and_political_implications)

In 2020, Nigeria's oil production fell due to low demand at the outset of the COVID-19 pandemic. The oil industry contributed 5.9% of total real GDP between October and December 2020 — a decline of approximately three percentage points from the previous quarter.<sup>8</sup> In over 60 years of democracy and massive exploration, oil production and its revenue accruals have yet to result in sustainable socio-economic development in the country.

The rise in poor resource management and corruption in the extractive industry are largely responsible for the disparity between Nigeria's huge oil wealth and its high poverty rate. For many years, the country has faced significant challenges in managing the sector, such as the unaccountable utilisation of revenue and corruption issues.<sup>9</sup> In the last three decades, operations in Nigeria's extractive sector have been largely shrouded in opacity, with little or no transparency on the part of the government, its partners, and stakeholders.<sup>10</sup> This lack of openness has led to zero accountability, mismanagement of funds, revenue leakages, and, above all, the inability of the government to meet its financial obligation.<sup>11</sup>

Some of the big corruption cases in Nigeria in the past few years happened in the extractive sector. In a letter to former President Goodluck Jonathan in late 2013, Nigeria's then Central Bank governor, Sanusi Lamido Sanusi, claimed that the state-owned oil firm, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), had neglected to remit tens of billions of dollars in oil profits due to the country.<sup>12</sup>

With the pervasiveness of corruption and opacity in the oil sector, civil society organisations (CSOs), the media, and citizens have demanded reforms in the sector. This is because the information required by the media and civil society groups to track sectoral operations has been largely unavailable. For instance, licensing and contract information in the natural resource sector is not available to the public. Joint venture deals, contracts, exploratory licences, and other extractive activities have remained media highlights without data or references for verification and review. Likewise, government institutions saddled with the mandate of curbing corruption are also limited by the lack of data and evidence to carry out their regulatory and law enforcement functions effectively.

In response to challenges such as access to information and the media's limited capacity to demand accountability, several organisations have combined the tools of data analysis and technology used to train journalists to improve media oversight in the sector.

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8. <https://nigerianstat.gov.ng/download/1229>

9. <https://eiti.org/nigeria>

10. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/40664239>

11. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/447725-ptcij-commences-oil-and-gas-fellowship.html>

12. <https://www.businessinsider.com/r-special-report-anatomy-of-nigerias-20-billion-leak-2015-2?r=US&IR=T>

## Objective of the study

**W**ith varied training for journalists and continued opacity in the management of the extractive sector in Nigeria, this research project assumes that investigative journalists can do more to push for development and ensure transparency in extractive operations in Nigeria. Only a few studies have examined the effects of journalism training so far in the sector, even though training and professional education are crucial to building the capacity of journalists to communicate difficult subject-based information to the public effectively.<sup>13</sup>

This study offers an overview of journalism training and capacity building for journalists reporting on the extractive sector in Nigeria. This research aims to investigate media intervention in the extractive sector, like media training for journalists, and investigative reporting in the sector, to improve innovations designed to drive transparency and accountability. It also aims to understand the experiences of journalists and media organisations in the overall mission to ensure a more transparent extractive sector.

### Specific Objectives:

- to examine the knowledge and perception of journalists who attend media training in the extractive sector;
- to assess how training has impacted journalists' reportage of the extractive sector
- to examine challenges faced by journalists reporting in the extractive industry;
- to assess the relationship that exists between CSOs and media organisations on investigative journalism in the extractive sector

Specifically, the research sought to answer the following questions:

1. How effective is media training to the understanding of extractive issues by journalists?
2. What are the challenges journalists face in covering the extractive industry?
3. How can partnerships between CSOs and media organisations impact investigative journalism in Nigeria?

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13. [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17512786.2020.1818608?casa\\_token=9-nCk2519ysAAAAA%3AJHgPBxDdO3W3H3-Mpv11fTtWfIB9EicI8h2RFxKxzIzF6hXQc1kgR3OTfDdUJQsZT87ZP9HkC5Ji30](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17512786.2020.1818608?casa_token=9-nCk2519ysAAAAA%3AJHgPBxDdO3W3H3-Mpv11fTtWfIB9EicI8h2RFxKxzIzF6hXQc1kgR3OTfDdUJQsZT87ZP9HkC5Ji30)

## Media Training in Nigeria

The role of the media cannot be overemphasised in building a country. According to Section 22 of Nigeria’s constitution, “The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people.” Sec. 15 [5] further says: “The State shall abolish all corrupt practices and abuse of power.” With the deep opacity in the management of Nigeria’s natural resources<sup>14</sup>, it has become important for the media to develop the technical knowledge to be able to expose corruption. Hence, the central role of capacity building for journalists.

A recent report titled “Mapping Journalism Training Centres in sub-Saharan Africa” shows that journalism training and education in sub-Saharan Africa are flourishing. The report includes 19 countries with at least 127 centres, mostly academic, that offer training for journalists. The report shows that in Nigeria alone, about 66 centres are offering educational opportunities for journalists. This indicates that Nigeria is a hub of journalism training.

The media plays an important role in ensuring transparency and accountability in the extractive sector, with activities such as investigations, stimulation of public debates, discourses on policy reforms, and reporting on the prosecution of corrupt officials. However, more often than not, the media is hindered from doing its job of enabling accountability. They are often challenged on the level of breaking down complex data and, sometimes, due to the lack of response from government officials, among others. Therefore, media training and capacity-building programmes have continued to play a critical role in solving these challenges. Through training, journalists learn from experts who have faced similar challenges and can share their experiences with colleagues. Research has shown that with the use of real-world examples and solid foundations, media training teaches journalists how to stay composed even during the most challenging journalistic practice<sup>15</sup>.

Over the years in Nigeria, the practice of in-depth investigative journalism has witnessed a significant rise due to efforts by reputable organisations to expand the capacity of journalists. The Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development, CJID (formerly known as the Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism), has been highly instrumental in this. BudgIT<sup>16</sup> has organised several media training to upskill, educate and enlighten journalists on ways of contextualising issues of corruption in the extractive sector. It has

14. <https://resourcegovernance.org/analysis-tools/publications/opacity-transparency-challenging-journey-nigerian-extractive-industry>

15. <https://www.adonimedia.com.au/media-training-what-is-it-and-why-is-it-important/>

16. <https://yourbudgit.com/budgit-trains-journalists-on-how-to-spotlight-corruption-issues-in-the-extractive-sector-through-investigative-journalism/>

17. <https://i79media.com/dataphyte-trains-journalists-on-understanding-nnpc-2018-subsidiary-audit-accounts/>



also equipped journalists with storytelling skills using data to induce policy reforms in the extractive industry. Dataphyte has equally trained journalists on understanding the NNPC audit accounts<sup>17</sup>, while the Natural Resource Governance Institute, through its “media for oil reforms” project, has organised master classes for journalists in the oil sector<sup>18</sup>. CJID has, in the last seven years, trained over 500 Nigerian journalists in the oil sector. With the occurrence of these media training across Nigeria, this study aims to interrogate how participants of these training have been empowered to cover corruption linked to the extractive industry.

## Research Methodology

This research deployed a mixed-method design to shape the process of media training and capacity building for extractive sector reporting. This includes a combination of focus group discussions with newsroom managers chosen from the institutions the survey respondents nominated, key informant interviews with 10 media and CSO stakeholders, and an online poll for journalists. The survey was deployed for three weeks and shared across CJID’s social media platforms.

The methodology followed three phases enumerated below:

1. Quantitative research on the impact of media training with journalists and researchers who have attended training on extractive sector-related programmes.
2. In-depth interviews with selected CSOs, newsroom managers, and editors on evidence around the improvement or otherwise on the reporting of staff members who have attended at least one extractive sector-related media training programme.
3. Focus group discussions with managers of media training organisations, journalists, and trainers of journalists in the extractive sector.
4. Insights from CJID’s over five years of capacity building for journalists in Nigeria.

## Data Gathering Phase

We polled Nigerian journalists who covered the extractive industry between October and November 2021. The online survey was distributed to the Nigerian media and a network of journalists. The study received 155 replies from more than 12 newsrooms after five weeks. The analysis from this study is presented through charts.

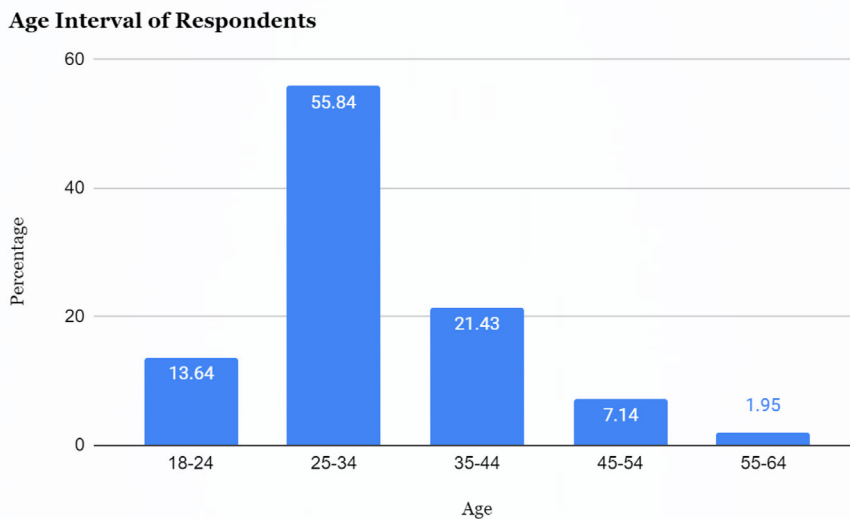
18. <https://resourcegovernance.org/blog/nigerian-journalists-gather-intensive-oil-and-gas-coverage-training>

19. [https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17512786.2022.2065337?casa\\_token=7hWfWv9qPMAAAAAA%3AEfJJe2hA7BSL-](https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/17512786.2022.2065337?casa_token=7hWfWv9qPMAAAAAA%3AEfJJe2hA7BSL-)

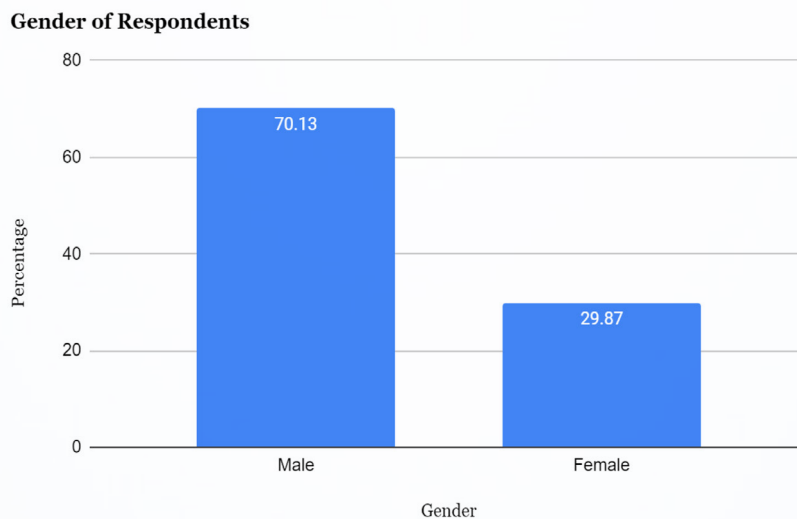
# Analysis and Findings

## Demographic characteristics

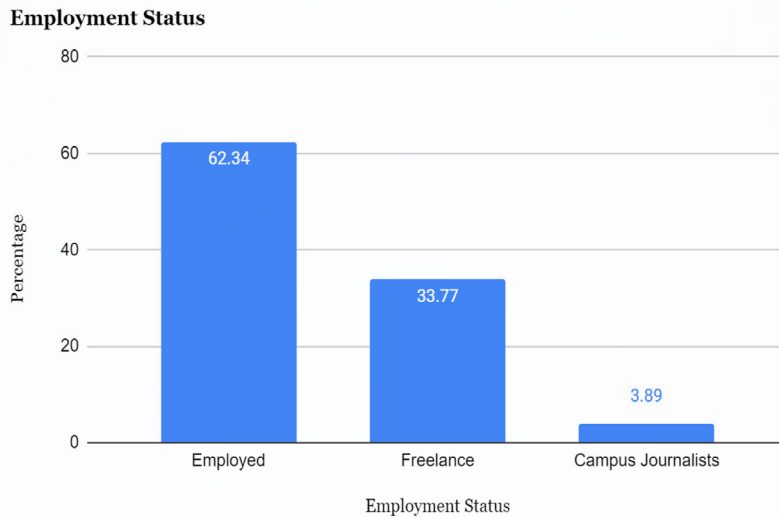
From the graph below, more than half of the respondents polled (56%), are between the ages of 25 and 34, 21% are between the ages of 35 and 44, and 14% are between the ages of 18 and 24. Approximately 7% of respondents are between the ages of 45 and 54, with less than 2% being 55 and older.



The graph below reported that more than two-thirds of respondents are male, with the remaining one-third, female. This indicates a skew in the gender composition of newsrooms, as more male journalists cover the extractive industry than female journalists.

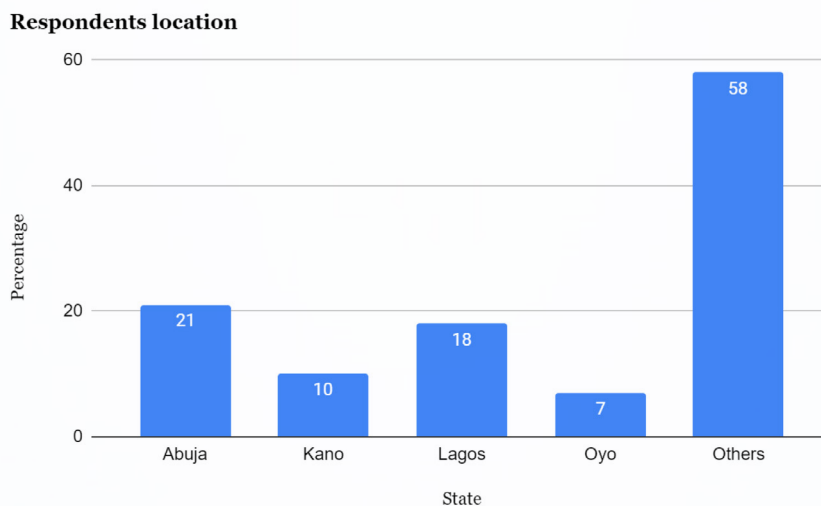


An analysis of employment status showed that more than 60% of respondents were employed, a little over one-third were freelancers, and about 4% were campus journalists.



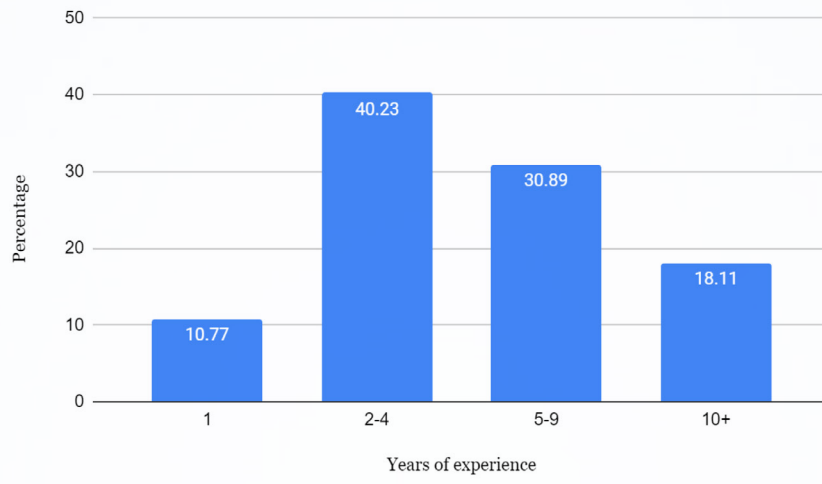
The study also sought information on the respondents' organisations, of which more than three were online newsrooms, with others being radio and television stations. However, in terms of their job descriptions, most respondents are reporters, followed by editors and researchers, with program officers in media organisations constituting the least number of responses.

In addition, respondents indicated that they had come from several states across Nigeria, with the greater number being from Abuja, followed by Lagos, Kano and Oyo, respectively.



Analysis of years of experience shows that a little over 40% of respondents had between two and four years of experience, 31% had spent five to nine years on the job, and 18% had over 10 years of experience. Respondents with only one year of experience on the job made up the lowest percentage of those who participated in the survey.

**Years of Experience**

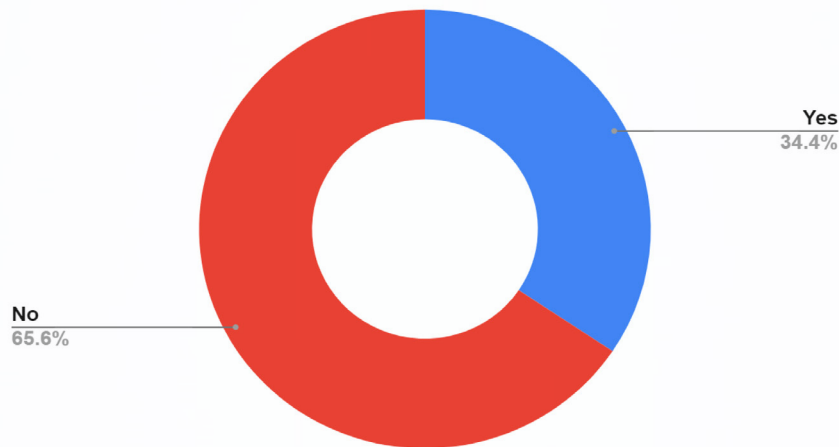


## Knowledge and Perception of Journalists Who Attend Training in the Extractive Sector

This section explains the knowledge and perception of trainees about media training on extractive sector reporting. The survey sought the opinions of the participants on how media training advanced their professional careers.

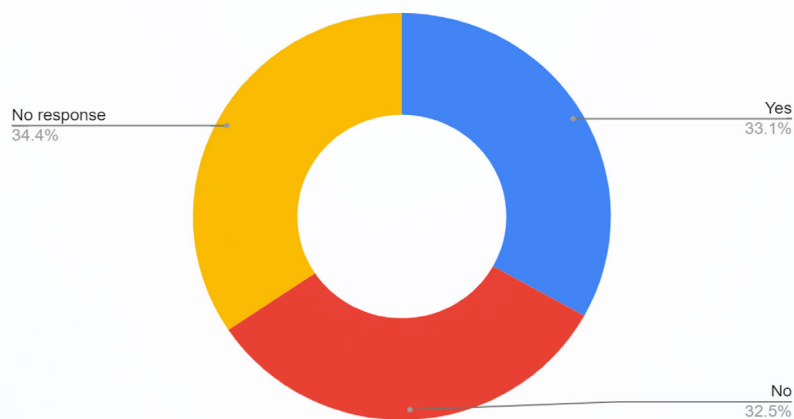
Just over a third of the respondents had previously participated in extractive sector reporting, and nearly a third had previous training in reporting the sector. However, more than one-third of respondents had previously reported on the extractive sector.

Previous reporting on Extractive-linked stories



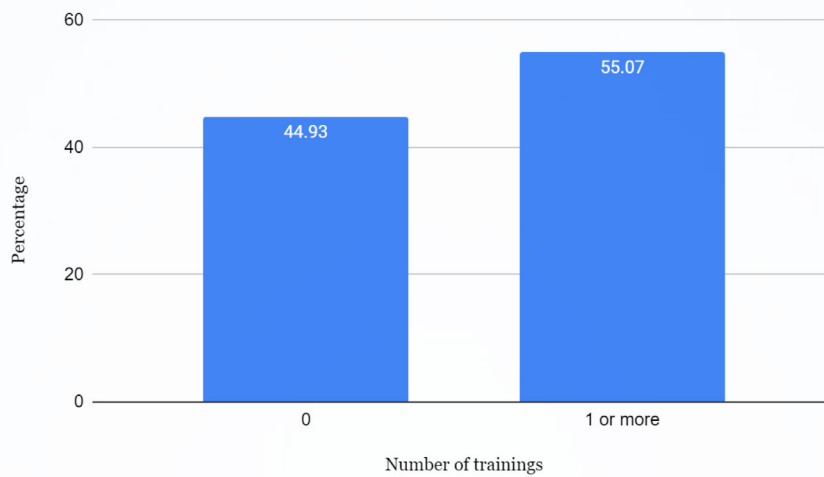
Also, the figures show that slightly over one-third of the respondents had attended an extractive sector-focused training at some point in their careers, while the others had not.

Extractive sector training



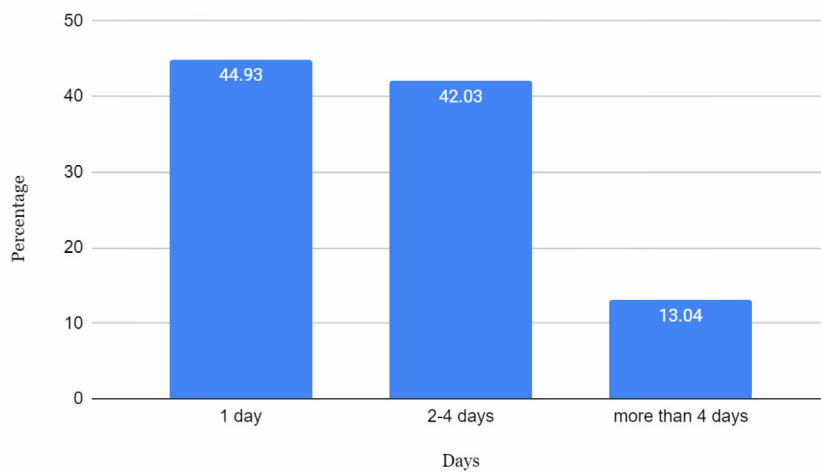
When asked the number of extractive sector training they had attended, 55% of respondents said they had attended up to 1 or more, while 45% said they had not attended any extractive sector training.

**Number of Extractive sector trainings attended**



The chart below showed that about 45% of respondents indicated they participated in training that lasted for only one day, a little above 40% participated in training that lasted for 2–4 days while 13% participated in training that lasted more than 4 days.

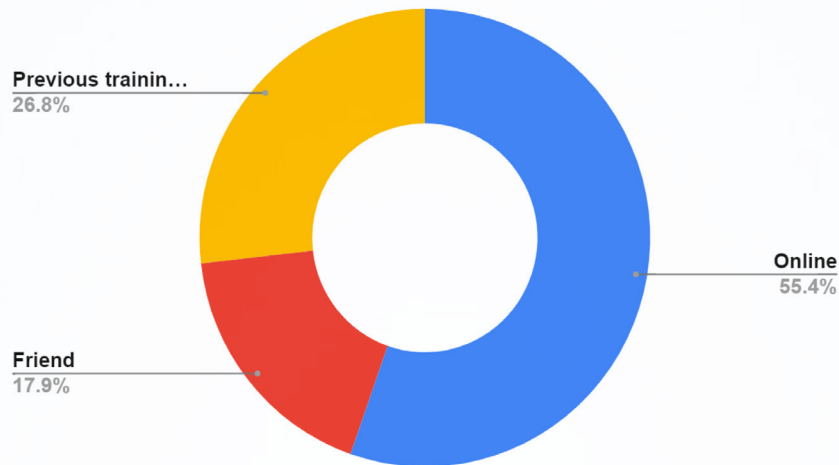
**Average length of Extractive sector trainings**



In response to the question on the number of times they had attended training on the extractive sector, about 53% of the respondents noted having attended up to nine times, while 47% of the respondents claimed not to have attended any extractive sector training.

The survey further showed that the majority of respondents claimed to have seen the training opportunity online, while others noted that the opportunity came to them either through the referral of a friend or through other training they had previously attended.

**How did you know about the training opportunity**



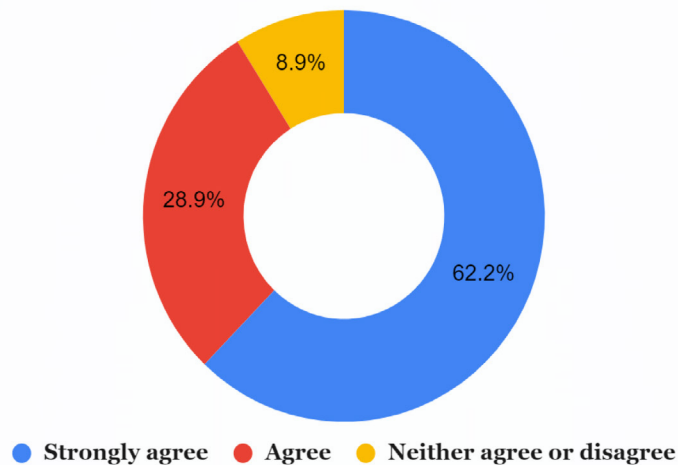
When asked why they were interested in the training, participants explained that they were motivated by the opportunity for more knowledge acquisition, improvement, in understanding the extractive sector, better learning, and the enhancement of their reporting skills.

However, at the end of the training, approximately 43% of those polled stated that they had learned new information. This would have also aided journalists in producing more accurate reports and stories about the extractive industry.

## Perception of Journalists who attend Media training in the extractive sector

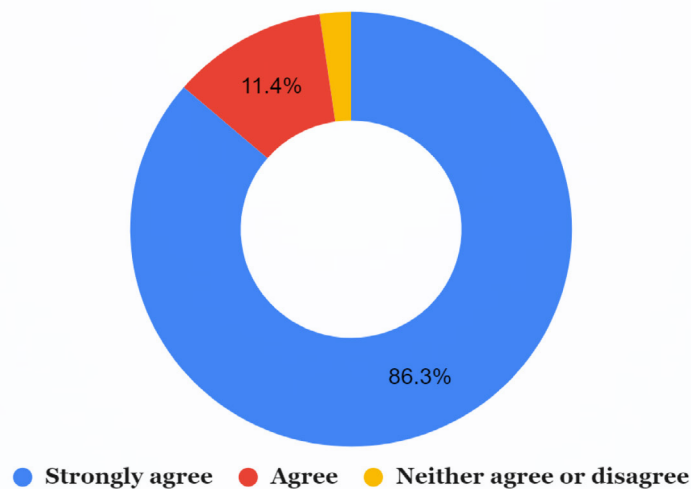
More than 60% of the respondents strongly agreed, while 29% simply agreed that the training in the extractive sector has made them better reporters. This indicates that the training has positively improved the technical skills of the participant's reporting skills.

### Attending a training on extractive sector reporting has made me a better reporter



Also, about 86% of respondents strongly agreed, and 11% of respondents agreed that training in the extractive sector was good for their professional development. This further explains the positive impact of media training.

### Training is good for my professional development

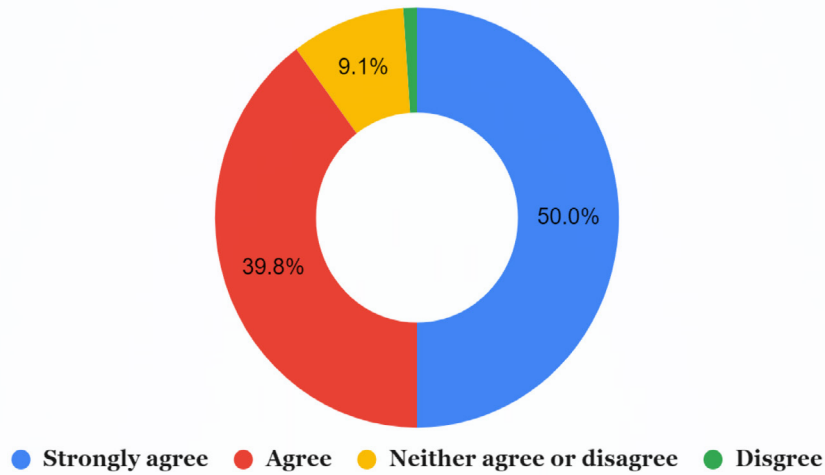


About 95% of respondents agreed that the media training had inspired them to produce stories that exposed corruption.



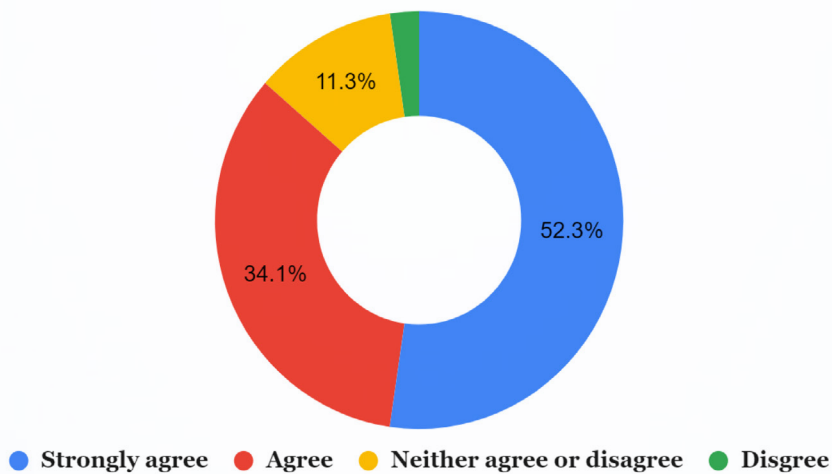
The chart below shows that half of the respondents strongly agreed, while about 40% of respondents agreed that the curriculum used for the media training was professionally designed. Less than 10% of respondents were unsure about how competently designed the curriculum was.

**I think the curriculum used for the trainings I have attended are professionally designed**



Mentors were proven to be important to the training process, as more than 50% of respondents strongly agreed that the mentors assigned to guide them after each training helped improve their capacities, while another 34% of respondents also agreed with this claimed fact. Meanwhile, about 11% of the participants surveyed were unsure about any improvement to their own capacity resulting from the guidance of mentors.

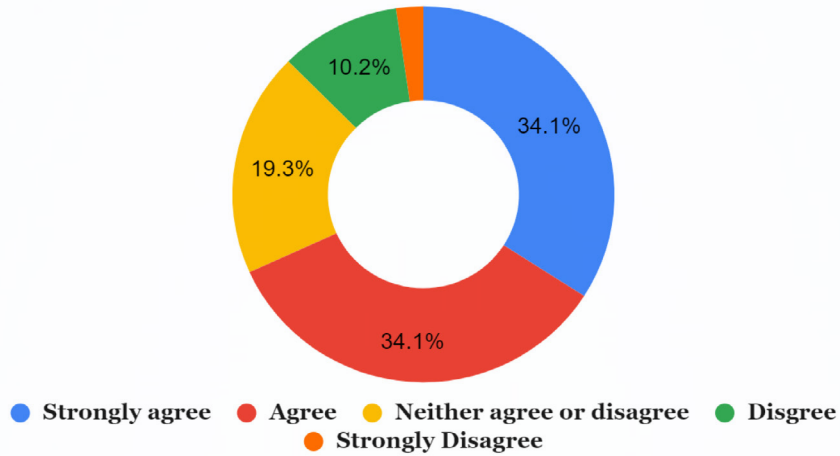
**I think mentors assigned to guide after each trainings has helped to improve my capacity**



An equal percentage of respondents strongly agreed and also agreed that they needed academic qualifications to further improve their skills in extractive sector reporting. With one-quarter of respondents unsure about this, close to 10% of participants disagreed that

they needed academic qualifications to improve their skills at this level of reporting. This means that, from the perspective of many journalists, a lack of formal training is considered a hindrance to successful reporting on the extractive sector.

**I think I need an academic qualification to further improve my skills in extractive sector reporting**



## Impact of media training on extractive sector transparency and accountability

Studies have repeatedly shown that after training, participants feel positive about the experience they have garnered and are more confident in their abilities<sup>19</sup>. Training and capacity development enables organisations to attract and keep top personnel, boost morale and job satisfaction, increase output, and grow profits. The majority of training activities in the extractive sector have different curriculums and sessions, including an overview of Nigeria's extractive sector, the natural resource value chain, the legal and regulatory framework, democratic accountability, and advanced research techniques for journalists, among others. These training sessions lasted an average of five working days. Some of the sessions were residential, with facilitators drawn from across the extractive sector, media, and data science.

The training replicated the selection process for a typical masterclass, which included a call for applications, selection, an interview of shortlisted participants, and then a final selection. A typical training day included the carrying out of a pre-test survey and at least four training sessions. After these sessions, journalists pitched potential stories to pursue with financial support from the organisation. The journalists were then paired with editorial mentors for support from the conceptualisation of their story ideas until the publication of these stories.

Post-training survey are often deployed to assess participants' understanding of the unit and to inform future learning activities that would help to ensure the participant's mastery of the extractive industry. The elements of this survey included the experiences of participants with previous reporting in the extractive sector, alongside the training, frequency, mastery, and perceptions of the training.

While many respondents agreed to have accessed new information during the training, more than one-third of them pointed out that the training organisation did not provide small grants for them to pursue deep dives into the sector.

In post-training engagements, small grants are a form of financial support that media development organisations make available to journalists for travelling and conducting investigative reports on the extractive sector. This support aims to ensure that talented journalists with impactful story ideas are not stuck while seeking to give expression to their professional ideas.

The lack of grants for trained journalists could prevent them from putting their newly acquired knowledge to practical use. This may be because the lack of financial resources in most newsrooms in Nigeria might not allow them to prioritise stories they did not initiate for their funding support. According to reports, some media businesses in Nigeria have resorted

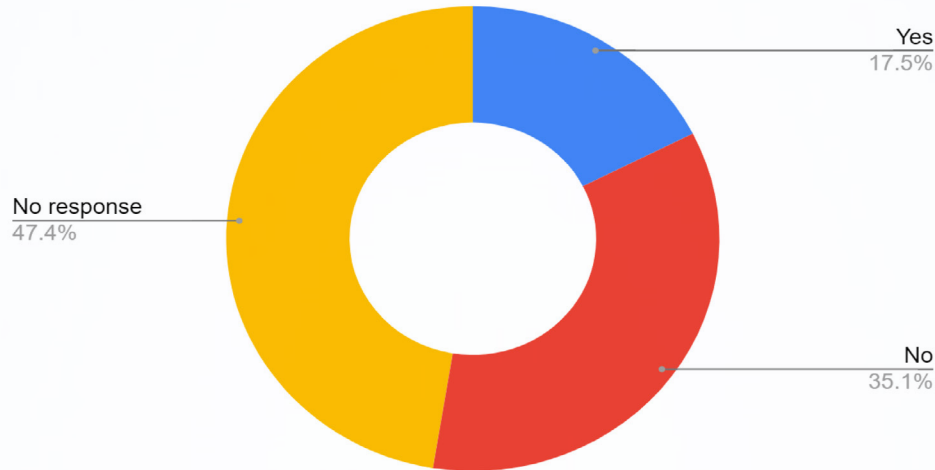
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20. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fenvs.2017.00094/full#h4>

to salary cuts for employees (as much as 20–40% of the actual salaries), while they also sent staff on three-month mandatory leaves as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic.

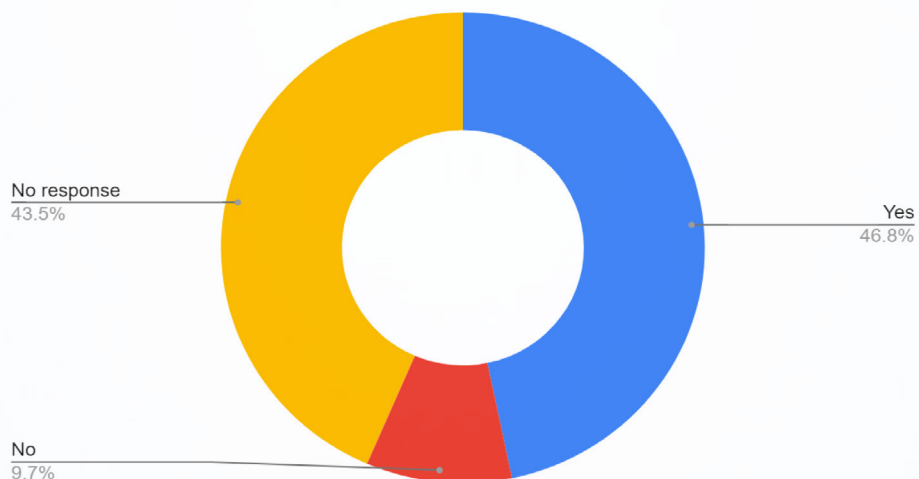
### Training providing grants



Prior to training on extractive sector reporting, about 30% of respondents claimed to have published one or more stories per month. In contrast, about 27% of the respondents declared that they had not published any stories.

The graph below shows that almost half of the respondents have ever attended training without the provision of incentives and have also never been paid to attend any training.

### Ever attended training without incentives



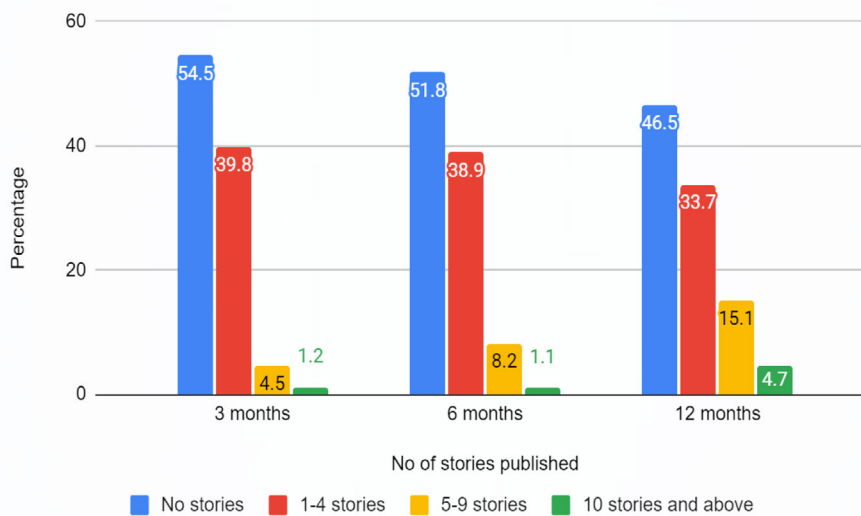
A number of respondents noted that training in the extractive sector has positively impacted their careers through the acquisition of new knowledge, access to opportunities for development, and acquaintance with strategies for professional improvement. However,

participants stated that better support, grants, etc., would further enhance the training received by journalists.

About 33% of respondents said they learned about the training opportunity from an online advertisement, while 21% learned about it from a website posting. Others responded, being introduced to the training through referrals and other means.

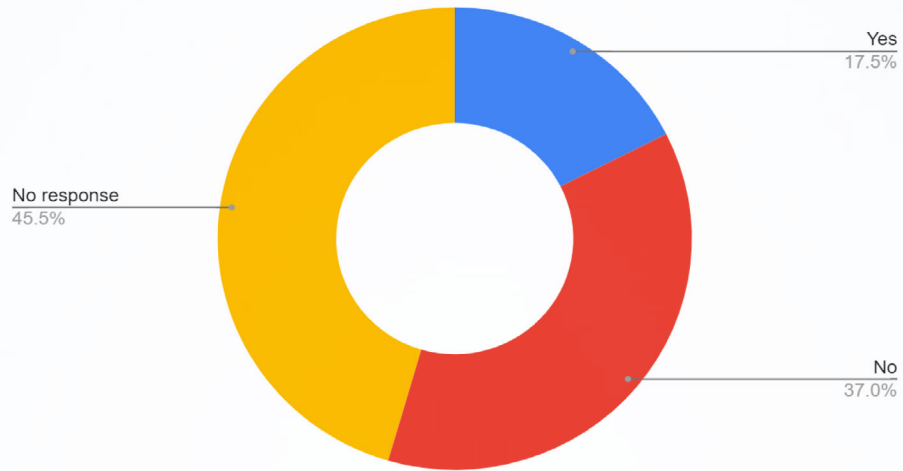
The analysis also showed that three months after media training, about 45% of respondents still published stories in the extractive sector. There was, however, a 17.2% reduction in the number of respondents who did not publish any stories between 3 and 12 months after the training. This means that the training gave journalists more reasons to write stories on the subject area on the basis of the identified gaps. This frequency in story writing increased to about two-thirds after 6 months, with a 45% increase in trainees who published between 5 and 9 stories. At the end of 12 months, there was a 46% and 76% increase in the number of participants that published between 5-9 stories and those that published 10 or more stories, respectively.

**Extractive stories published after training**



An improvement in story writing can be gleaned through the analyses of how journalists document the impacts of their stories. The chart below shows that about 17% of the respondents recorded the impacts of the stories they published after the training, as opposed to 37% who did not.

### Impact of published report after training



## Extracted Insights from the Survey

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Nigerian journalists believed that the extractive sector training they have attended so far made them better reporters. Approximately 43% of respondents were convinced that they learned new information during their training experience, while nearly half of all respondents agreed that training is important and necessary for professional development. More than half of the respondents also confirmed that they were inspired after every training experience to produce stories that exposed corruption in the extractive sector.

Over 50% of the respondents also considered the curriculum used in the training sessions they attended as being professionally designed. Another 51% of the participants surveyed regarded the trainers as adequately qualified to handle the sessions. However, only a quarter of the respondents believed that the training in the extractive sector made them better reporters. This could be due to the lack of grants to help journalists put their newly acquired knowledge to practical use, as only 17% of the participants confirmed that the training sessions provided grants, while more than a third (35%) confirmed that the session did provide grants.

The standard practice in a number of media training programs in Nigeria is the inclusion of editorial mentors, who are experienced senior editors hired on a fixed-term basis by organisations to help trained journalists pursue and execute their story ideas after being awarded small grants to do deep public dives (such as special investigations to expose corruption). The research revealed that editorial mentors are important to the training process, as almost half (49%) of the respondents believed that the mentors assigned to guide them helped to improve their capacities. Whereas some 39% of the respondents believed that they need an academic qualification in the extractive sector to improve their skills in reporting the sector, a minority of participants (11%) were unsure about the necessity of such a qualification.

This generally means that, from the perspective of a number of journalists, a lack of formal training is also considered a hindrance to successful reporting on the extractive sector.

## **Extracted Insights from the Expert Interview/Focus Group Discussions**

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To validate the results of the survey, individual interviews were conducted with experts and representatives of training organisations. Between December 2021 and January 2022, the Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development (CJID) conducted ten interviews with selected experts from media organisations, civil society organisations (CSOs), newsroom managers, and editors working in the extractive sector. All the interviews were held on CJID's Zoom platform with the full consent of the interviewees. The interviews were conducted to solicit perspectives on extractive sector reporting, the challenges in the sector, and the way forward for impact. Similarly, a focus group discussion with newsroom managers and editors was held on March 2, 2022. In both the expert interviews and FGD, insights and ideas were shared, and the following key messages came through.



## Why training is important

The experts agreed that to effectively report on the extractive sector in Nigeria, upskilling and training journalists is essential. They noted that there have been improvements in the coverage of the extractive sector in the last five to ten years, as a result of training. This reality may be the reason why academic scholars are calling for a turn toward “knowledge-based journalism,” which would apply specialised expertise in relevant subjects to improve reporting related to both the contents and processes of public issues<sup>20</sup>. Research has also shown that professional journalists are supposed to have wide-ranging and sophisticated viewpoints that can guide reporting methods and choices. These include the capacity to use critical thinking to assess news sources, information, and the motivations of individuals<sup>21</sup>.

In 2020, a data journalism and media training organisation, Dataphyte, organised a special training to explain the audited financial reports of the then Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC)—now known as NNPC Limited—as part of its fiscal transparency and accountability program. This was conducted in line with the Nigerian Open Government Partnership (OGP) campaigns<sup>22</sup>. The decision stemmed from Dataphyte’s vested interest in public sector accountability and good governance in Nigeria. One of the interviewees stated that the way the media approached reporting on the NNPC audit reports was evidence of the improvement in knowledge and reporting available to them. This view was corroborated by another expert, who stated that today, almost every capacity-building workshop for journalists has led to a number of investigative or exploratory issues in Nigeria, including subsidy payments, revenue collection, and distribution, licensing, and even deals in the oil sector.

To quote the expert, “almost everything that Nigerians know about Baru, Diezani, Adoke; about Jonathan and Obasanjo’s involvement in the Malabu scandal was because journalists, after some amount of training, were able to understand the sector better and do critical reporting of what was happening.” He further said that in a space of ten years, extractive sector reporters have evolved from reporting stories through simple textual narratives alone to using computers for visualisation, carrying out special analysis, and the overall use of data in storytelling. The experts agreed when interviewed that the advancement in the practice of journalism, generally, has also helped progress in how extractive sector reporting is done now, in comparison to how it was done ten years ago. One of the experts mentioned that the use of infographics and visualisation in oil and gas stories was usually reserved for select media organisations earlier on. However, today, there are multiple dissemination strategies in the form of documentaries and data visualisations by the media, while fact-checking is equally used in extractive reporting.

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21. <https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fenvs.2017.00094/full#h4>

22. <https://www.dataphyte.com/latest-reports/special-report/press-release/>

## **Training has impacted the capacity of journalists to effectively report the extractive sector**

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From the information gathered, it is noted that newsroom managers believe that allowing their journalists to attend training has positively impacted newsroom operations in multiple ways. As shown in the survey report above, a number of journalists were able to produce extractive sector-focused reports a few months after they attended media training.

One newsroom manager observed that after journalists were trained, they understood the principles, processes, and policies driving the extractive sector better, which was fundamental to holding the government accountable. He pointed out that moving from theory to application improved the kind of reporting they were able to do after the training. This explained the shift from how stories were conceived to the final product after editorial guidance and training. He said that the training has also helped to shape the initial storylines of most journalists into better ones, which has been very helpful over the last five years of their work.

## Why journalists delay in producing extractive sector reports after being trained

From the research survey and CJID's experience dealing with journalists, it has been observed that a number of journalists who get funded to pursue story ideas often delay or default on delivering on these. Many times, they cite newsroom policy or the heavy workload of newsroom managers as the reason for their delays or defaults. In the course of this research, newsroom managers were asked about this, and they gave insights into what could be responsible for the delay.

One newsroom manager said it was possible that there were conflicting schedules in the newsrooms, thus causing delays in deliverables. Also, due to the lack of financial resources to hire more hands, journalists might be assigned multiple stories to work on at the same time. Another factor responsible for this level of tardiness in delivering supported stories could be the inability of journalists to access data, documents, and resources needed to prosecute stories in the extractive sector. Skilled journalists are expected to examine every perspective and source to make their reporting objective and comprehensive. A journalist should be professional in portraying facts objectively, if following the ethics of journalism, and this takes additional time to get done properly.<sup>23</sup>

The extractive sector in Nigeria is one that thrives on secrecy, as many of the contracts awarded therein are not available for public information. This obstacle prevents journalists from having insights into the industry or knowing how its resources or revenues are being utilised, which limits the scope of reporting on it. This ultimately delays the timely production of investigative stories in the sector.

Also, during the validation of this research, discussions were held among major stakeholders, including journalists and editors of newsrooms, where other problems were identified. It was noted that the location of these mineral resources are situated in remote places, thereby making it difficult for journalists to access these sites.

They further noted that Newsrooms do not hire professionals to produce credible explainers to foster more engagement in the extractive sector reports. It was also identified that there is a lack of communication between reporters and newsroom managers. Journalists do not inform their manager about grants received to get on stories. They therefore tend to run the risk of multiple workloads, making it difficult for them to deliver as expected.

Another problem identified is the fact that there is a disconnect between outside trainers and media organisations. They further noted that politics in newsrooms is another major problem. They pointed out that sometimes, journalists who merit getting on a story may not be able to do so due to political maneuverings within the newsroom.

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23. <https://blog.storyhunter.com/why-we-need-professional-journalism-in-the-age-of-social-media-89ede39d4682>

It was also identified that, although capacity development is central, newsrooms face challenges with finances. There is however a pushback from newsroom managers thinking that training institutions are trying to teach them how to run their newsrooms. It was also pointed out that sometimes editors do not show up for training like this, making it difficult to really measure the impact of these training programs on the output of stories produced. This is because these stories have to go through editors before being published.

## Collaboration as the future of impactful journalism

The expansion of local and international investigative journalism, including the establishment of numerous local organisations, was an unanticipated bright spot pointed out in this environment. These organisations are frequently staffed by veterans of journalism looking for work after their previous organisations collapsed or were taken over by political partisans.<sup>24</sup>

The interview with media experts showed that efforts to train journalists on extractive sector reporting should consider collaborative reporting, rather than having journalists work in silos. Experts posited that the issues in the extractive sector are mostly very intensive when it comes to finances, especially reporting on air pollution caused by the mining of coal or any other natural resource, which will require verification through some other tools beyond the fact that people are coughing and dying. Hence, other practices like administering tests on about 20 to 50 residents of such a community being reported, to see if there is content in their blood that really shows a correlation or not between the kinds of ailment they are having and the kinds of occupation or solid minerals exploitation that's going on in the community, is necessary.

Another expert agreed that collaborations and partnerships were some of the ways to improve consequential reporting on the extractive sector. "At different forums, I have talked about collaborating and partnering more. As newsrooms, we tend to work independently most of the time and also like to own our project alone, we don't want to share the credit" (Interviewee, December 2021). According to this interviewee, newsrooms and training organisations should collaborate and pool resources because short-term funding for these interventions is not exactly sustainable. Experts agreed that newsrooms and civil society organisations need to collaborate more because it is easier to progress collectively rather than as individual entities.

Some noted that in order for this level of collaboration to extend to CSOs, citizens, and others, the themes of investigations would need to be truly highlighted and focused on. This would ensure that people are aware of the issues while pushing for change.

More so, others commented that it would be important to understand the interests of CSOs and to identify those who would be helpful in amplifying the stories involved in the collaborations. In this sense, the potential partnerships were considered as being mutually beneficial to both the CSOs and the journalists. "So close relationships/close engagements and consistent interactions are very important to get CSOs. It's easy to say they are not doing enough, but from their end, they also feel we're not interacting with them." (Interviewee, December 2021).

Still in collaboration, stakeholders from the validation workshop noted that the relationship between reporters and other newsrooms is quite important for wider reach. They also noted that there is a need for an interface by trainers with newsrooms based on their realities.

24. <http://ellenhume.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/12/Hume-Investigative-Journalism-Survey.pdf>

## Recommendations and Insights from the Validation Workshop

On the basis of research and insights gathered from players in the ecosystem, these other recommendations were suggested as ways of improving the reporting of the extractive sector in Nigeria.

### Action-oriented training

According to interviewees, the decade of reporting solely on the extractive sector's accountability is over. Many people believe that it is now time to focus on action-oriented training for not only journalists but also newsroom managers, editors, and publishers, if at all possible.

The principle is that in order to have more comprehensive reporting on the sector by journalists, there needs to be a higher level of understanding of the need for this at the level of newsroom management. According to the interviewees, more emphasis should be placed on the capacity development of newsroom managers.

“We need to start scaling up the kind of journalism training we do for editors, newsroom managers, and even publishers. So that's one thing in terms of training we need to start looking at.” (Interviewee 2, December 2021)

During the validation workshop, it was also suggested that editors receive capacity building in order to understand the registers for reporting on the extractive sector, and that journalists, in turn, involve editors in these commissioned reports for a smooth editorial process.

### Incidence of Time in Investigation/Storytelling

Another expert suggested that in order to achieve maximum impact, the duration of time allotted for a story should be reviewed. Given the opacity and volatility of the extractive sector, more time is needed to infiltrate, penetrate, and become knowledgeable about the system that journalists are looking into. One participant wondered: “How many newsrooms can allow a journalist one to three months away from work just to do one story?” Yet, there are certain stories that need more dedicated time. But there is often also a crux of how to use their capacities in other ways, rather than solely focusing on one story.

### Diversification in sub-Sector reporting

Analysis of the interviews also showed that over the years, extractive sector reporting in Nigeria has only focused on the “oil and gas sector,” which is actually just one sub-sector. Other sectors are even more difficult to report on. There should therefore be an expanded training on other sub-sectors beyond the oil and gas sub-sector.

### Collaboration

It was also noted that training institutions should work collaboratively with newsrooms to

market training to newsroom managers, asking them to nominate appropriate people for the workshop. They also noted that there should be step-down training organised by journalists who attended these trainings.

Also, in the area of partnership between the media and CSOs, it was noted that the ‘opacity’ of the sector itself is a limitation, and documents are not easily available. However, that should spur reporters to do their investigations to unravel such hidden reports. In addition to focusing on corruption in the extractive sector, reporters could also look at other angles for coverage, such as impacts on the environment. While CSOs can provide the missing data, funding, leads/experts, etc. for the development of consequential stories, sustained relationships would need to be developed and not just one-offs. This synergy will allow both parties to share information and access other resources after the engagement constantly. CSOs/organisers must also dedicate resources to the amplification of stories by participants/reporters in order to motivate them in turn.

### **Journalists’ Accountability**

Training institutions have to know the journalists they are dealing with and ensure that they are constantly engaged and followed up to ensure that they are accountable. Also, there is a need to verify that the letterhead submitted for recommendation is valid by contacting the organisation. To further establish journalists’ accountability, it is important to engage the gate-keepers. This can be done by reaching out to the journalist’s organisation, and having them sign an MOU.

## Other Deliberations:

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- Training, in themselves, may not be sufficient as there is marginal coverage of the sector in the news today, with this apathy being traceable to newsrooms. There is hardly any newsroom in the country with a dedicated Extractive Sector Desk, making it difficult to deploy resources to cover the sector. Hence, the structural re-organisation of the newsroom is very important in finding a lasting solution to this, as reporters have little or no role in influencing this. It is therefore recommended that for the effective reporting of the extractive sector, it is important to create dedicated desks in newsrooms solely for extractive sector reporting. Training organisations should work with newsroom managers and get them involved from the start of training, in order to show them the need for this level of sectoral coverage. This will also help to sustain their engagements after the end of the grant phase. This way, it will be easier to ensure the creation of extractive sector desks in newsrooms.
- It is important to note that training might not be enough, because there could be individuals who receive the training but are not interested in reporting on the sector. Trainers must look for those interested in the extractive sector and check their previous experiences in the sector before inviting them to apply for training. It is also important for new entrants to be trained and mentored by training organisations. One way to make training inclusive is by dividing the curriculum into modules, from those that are for Beginners to those that are for Advanced levels. The Beginners level could look at the more simple reporting of issues in the sector before advancing to major investigations.
- Allocate funding to newsrooms: Funding is a critical issue and the inconsistency in funding makes it difficult to start investigations that are necessary. It is recommended that training organisations should plan to allocate funding for newsrooms to carry out special reports and investigations, in addition to funding for individual journalists. Funding for the newsroom is important and will deepen extractive reporting.
- A need to start looking for comparisons beyond the traditional newsrooms, that is, going global to adopt innovations.
- There is a need to understand the dynamics and politics of media organisations, in order to relate well.
- There is a need to start rethinking the position of journalists and start seeing them as knowledge producers and training them for knowledge management.
- It is important to bring the newsroom managers on board, but the passion of the reporters must first be established.



## Appendices

### **Representatives of the following organisations were interviewed for this research:**

- BudgIT
- Business Day Media
- Centre for Journalism Innovation and Development
- Dataphyte
- International Centre for Investigative reporting
- Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism
- The Cable Newspaper

### **Representatives of the following organisations were present at the research validation workshop;**

- Daily Trust Foundation
- BudgiT Foundation
- The Cable Paradigm Leadership Support Initiative (PLSI)
- Civil Society Legislative Advocacy Centre (CISLAC)
- Daily Trust Newspaper
- Vanguard Newspaper
- People's Daily Reporter
- Blueprint Newspaper
- Daily Sun
- The Guardian
- The Authority
- New Telegraph
- Advocate for Health and Development Initiative
- African Centre for Leadership Strategy and Development
- The Punch
- Daily Post
- Per Second News
- This Day
- The Insight
- Centre for Fiscal Transparency and Integrity Watch
- News Agency of Nigeria
- Emandes Social Development Network
- Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria
- Hot FM
- Nigerian Tribune
- News Digest
- Michael Adedotun Oke Foundation

- Nigeria Observer
- Kapital FM
- Tasshi Development Limited
- The Whistler Communications
- Trust Television
- Voice of Nigeria

## **Stakeholder Interview Questions:**

- What is your perspective of the reporting of the extractives sector in Nigeria?
- Do you think the media reporting of the extractives sector is currently sufficient to inform the public?
- Do you think it's sufficient to expose corruption or do you think over time the media has been instrumental to exposing corruption in the extractives sector in Nigeria?
- What is your organisation's experience with training journalists in the extractives sector and how has it been?
- Sometimes when you train journalists to conduct stories, at the end of training engagements, you sometimes get to find journalists not being able to deliver because they say they have conflicting engagements in their newsrooms or that their editors are not going to publish their stories, and this has affected the proper reporting of this sector.
- We have issues of the lack of deep understanding of the issues on the part of journalists, what do you think can be done? Also, have you had this experience before at the centre? If yes, what have you done to improve that process or what do you think can be done generally to get journalists who attend training in the extractives sector to be productive after every training?
- Do you think the extractive sector is more transparent than before?
- Do you think we need a holistic appraisal of the media impact of reporting the sector or how do we measure institutional response to media reporting of the sector?
- Sometimes we train journalists, and sometimes we intervene, but we can't take it forward beyond the timeframe that the project allows because most of the processes are funded. What do you think of the future of extractive reporting in Nigeria without long-term donor support, finances to support journalists to pursue stories and all that?
- What do you think of the future of the sector?

