**THE INFLUENCE OF GRATIFICATION**

**ON JOURNALISM PRACTICE**

**(A SURVEY OF JOURNALIST IN UYO)**

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

1.1 **Background of the Study**

As a profession that serves the interest of the public. Journalist has degree responsibilities in the society. Every day, journalist face challenges that test their ethical values and responsibility to truth telling despite professional code of ethics, journalist may violates the rules by accepting bribes white covering news or features. this is some cases lowers the journalists credibility and undermines a professional career. corruption is dangerous to society and can be extremely devastating to media.

Therefore while acknowledging the attempt by the federal government to fight corruption and economic and stake holder to adopt zero tolerance attitude to corruption in the media and indeed in the society at large. Some protagonists of African tradition have argued seriously that corruption in its presents would and character is part of our colonial heritage. According to Sanni (2009. P.39) assert that gratification is the greatest albatross and the most virulent log militating against good governance and national development in Nigeria. it remain anal pervading vivid afflicting all tiers of government in agreement with this point of views. It has been observe that bribery and corruption as a form of anti-social behavior by individual and social group which confers unjust or fraudulent is a big problem in Nigeria society affirms that “effects of bribery” or “brown envelope” in Nigeria society cannot be overemphasized.

Gratification is indeed a conkeralorm that has eaten deep into the fabric of Nigeria society. It is a moster that all sundry blame for the economic woe facing the country. This is because bribery and corruption is seen as one of the major impediments of the economic development of the nation. It is perhaps, the only feasan why nothing seems to be working.

Journalist may use the media for their personal ends or for greater social good to serve the public. As human needs are insatiable, there are chances were some may sacrifice the public interest for their selfish motives ignoring the social responsibility. Such miss behavior damages journalists and the profession’s integrity and reputations. According to Crider (1983, P.422) in this view poised that journalism practice involves the gathering packing and disseminating of news to general public, general in today’s society the mass media are seem as veritable instruments of information dissemination, social mobilization and control. It is one of the means through which the public is educated and sensitized about important issues affecting the live of people. And as such our ethical pitfails like “brown envelope” money and favour journalist collect their source to journalists in the hope of attracting or shaping information. Such reporting may colour news content or brighter stories with hidden agenda. However, journalism practice as noble profession demands for discipline and ethical behaviour to uphold the crucial and dependency of the society on the mass media for survivals. The public requirement information according to UNESCO (1981, P.432) this is indeed in order to react knowledgeably to personal conditions, as well as be in a position to take appropriate decision. Through numerous educational programmes, Such as quizzes, debates and document arises the public can be concretized on the need to accord people their proper position. Unfortunate due to government pressure on the journalism, poverty and lack of training, may cause journalist to engage on some unethical practices such as sensationalism, invasion of privacy particularly brown envelop. It also observed that the development affects credibility media audience, listeners, readers viewers etc. has lost confidence on mass media content owing to influence of gratification on journalist news judgement and objectivity. As opposed to the journalist ethics of the professional that should guide practitioners at all times.

Ukozor (2002, P.133) poised the ethics should give the journalist a standard by which he can judge action to right or wrong, good or bed, responsible that journalist today needs to know their limitation so as not to abuse the power of the media in coronation of this view. Okunna (200, P.76) describe ethical journalist as in Bastion of democracy.

Regrettably, communication in Nigeria is mainly influence by economic extremism on one hand and government pressure on the other hand, in developing nation like Nigeria, poverty debases human dignity and causes the scale of honour and trust for money through gratification to influence news as opposed to editors of sense of too poor considering their enormous task they perform in sociality thereby making him or her to compromise. According to Godwin and Ron (1994, P.83) there are a lot of which this is against ethics in broadcasting. Ethics according to Dominik (1994, P.434) are rules of conducts or principles of morality that point us towards the right or best way to act in a situation. Despite the consistent exhortation of the ethics codes against gifts, favours, free travel, special treatment and privileges, there is nothing rendered. the problem with favour is more than a practical one than one of ethics. Taking a four may or may not be bad but mind of the person offering on what is ion the mind of the person offering it and journalist.  
 Some media organization places a monetary limit on accepting these gifts; to other this practice may seem in hypocritical. There are those who feel that any gift regardless of how small should not be accepted on the other hand, nothing more than more politeness may be involved. Sambe and Ikoni (2004, P.182) points out that many media organization forbid their journalists from receiving gifts, free tickets and there are also free admission to theatre or cinema, or exhibition, show or paid events. Such rewards sometimes get journalist emotionally entangled and present conflict of interest situations. More so, media institutions therefore, prefer to adequate provision of finance for their journalist so that they would not be in want and are independent at all times, contributing to this issue by saying that some Nigerian journalist demand gratification for services provided in the guise of transport fare or honorarium, as a result, the journalist twists facts to suits the client it must be noted that brown envelopes are not same with tips. The collection of rewards and this gratification from source some time make reporters to write their stories in favour of their source. some reports reveals that some time they collect this envelops but do not wants to write in favour of their sources but when getting to the offices their editors edit the sources in a way and brings pressure on him to modify the performance of the communicator. reporter may be offered gratification praise and rewards such gifts meanly chip away at the ethical sensitive by explaining why they permissible. It could also take another form of a frontal and public attack aimed at drawing sympathy from the audience and discrediting the communicators.

Contributing to this issue Okey, A. (2003, P.148) says that: thus injunction is not for the journalist to keep It is also a clear message to the publisher to sees his medium as anteapon of access to mouth-watering contracts from government.

Bittner (1989, P.396) adds that at time he never thought much about it , but there are those who would say that personal ethics should prevent this amount of gratuity. Other would argue that collecting brown envelope because nothing goes for nothing in the sense that the person give you the envelope something attach meaning to it, If you have conscience you have to write your story in such a way that will suit them. Journalists agreed that it is unethical to accept any gifts period. Tim Wood in Bruce and Douglas (1997, P. 452) content that accepting gifts usually is a judgement call for example several organization brings food to the office during the holding season.

It is unethical to accept this food, because it has little monetary value. Turning it down could be interpreted as an insult, the people who bring this rewards sometimes do not expect anything in return.

Black (1995: p.103) pointed out that reporter should accept nothing of value from news source outside the profession. All these rewards and issues which characterize the mass media, infact, the mass media have thorny issues characterizing their content as well their socio-political and economic relationship with the society. The acceptance of reward, and gratification have a lot of implication on new reportage because every human being that has conscience after collecting this will not want to offend his source, so he will have to write his news in such a way this source will be pleased with him because of his bribe he has collected. Thus the reporter should have in mind that this is against his profession. This is causing serious affecting in this news reportage of which journalism practices is based on fairness, objectivity and accuracy among others, so such issues like brown envelop should be avoided. These gifts can compromise the integrity of journalist and their employers. These rewards seduce the reporter. These gift are giving with the intention to create a relationship where the journalist will fail to support facts that would tend to hurt his benefactor. This lead to puffing, over ups, omissions and outright manipulation of facts of the news story Igboanusi E. C. 2006 , p.211). Accepting payment from source is not a new phenomenon in journalism. It was common place in seventieth and eightieth century western journalism according to Sadners (2003. p.199). More intricate is the issue of acceptance of gifts from source, which is still occurring in Nigerian journalistic practice, although the ethical norm appear to differ some what from country to country and from institution. According to Klitgazard R. (March 1998, p.213) the two International codes of ethics include the international federation of journalists declaration of principle on the conduct of journalists (1986, p.1956) and the UNESCO - Initiated International Principles of Professional ethics in journalism (1983), both warn against the acceptance of bribe many form. There is not necessary a correlation between the issues mentioned in the codes of ethics and the most serious issues in actual journalist practice. However, it would be awkward of well – functioning codes of ethics failed to mention bribery if the it was considered it is serious problem in daily journalistic conduct. Several countries excluding the issues in their codes are therefore a strong indication that they consider it less of a problem. Turning to Nigeria reports of gratification in journalism are manifold. The phenomenon of brown envelops has been identified. The use of freebies, in countries is the granting of goods dinners for person gain. As indicated above, it is generally more difficult to draw a line as to when freebies represent a breach with ethical codes than brown envelops Nwosu I. E. (1990: p.318).

1.2 **Statement of the Problem**

Reporters face a wide range of ethical challenges in their line of duty.

Paramount among these challenges include the issue of gratification which take various form of inducement mechanisms. It is claimed that journalists in Akwa Ibom State normally demand and receive gratification which take various form of brown envelop’s in the course of their duties. This allegation could prove to be a serious inducement on the journalists as if felt in the face of their ethical injunction that urgently begs for answers, how true is this allegation? Do journalists in Akwa Ibom actually receive gratification in order to effect publication of their news? This is what the work is out to address. Therefore how do gratification influence journalism practice among journalists in Akwa Ibom State?

1.3 **Objectives of the Study**

To further the investigation properly, the study has the following objectives.

1. To determine whether or not journalists in Akwa Ibom State receive gratification as requirement to discharge their duties.
2. To ascertain the forms of gratification journalist in Akwa Ibom State receive in the performance of their duties.
3. To ascertain if acceptance of gratification influence journalists in Akwa Ibom State in the discharge their duties.
4. To identify factors responsible for this practice of gratification among journalist in Uyo

1.4 **Research Questions**

In order to draw conclusion of the study, the following research question were formulated.

1. Do journalists in Akwa Ibom State receive gratification as requirement to discharge their duties?
2. What form of gratification do journalists in Akwa Ibom State receive in the discharge of their duties?
3. Does the acceptance of gratification influences journalist in Akwa Ibom State in discharge of their duties?
4. What factors are responsible for this practices of gratification among journalist in Akwa Ibom State?

1.5 **Scope of the Study**

This Study focused on registered journalists in Uyo both in print and broadcast media with particular reference to gratification and not other aspect of journalism practice. Other journalists outside Uyo, and those not working with print or broadcast medium are not included in this study.

1.6 **Significant of the Study**

The study will be worthless if it adds no value to humanity. The following form significance of this study.

It will help media house to redirect and orientate their staff on the influence of gratification media credibility.

The study will help to stress the need for press freedom and right of people to know sound media practice in Nigeria.

It will also serves as a useful guide for future researches that may be interested in this area of study and policy makers on communication.

Mass communication is the activity of process of expressing ideas and feeling or giving people information and it is the method of sending information, especially telephones, radio, computers etc.

Journalist profession is the work of collecting and writing news stories for news papers, magazines, radio or television.

The public is connected with ordinary people in society in general.

1.7 **Limitation of the Study**

If the work is concerned the staff of journalism practice, the limitation will be also in journalist in Uyo. And it will create the work concerning about journalists.

However, the researcher mustered the support and confidence of the respondents who gave credibly information.

1.8 **Operational Definition of Terms**

In order to do away with ambiguity, some operational terms are here by defined:

1. Gratification: This refers to money, and other incentives given to journalists to media house, newspaper, magazine, radio and television by news makes to influence their news coverage as opposed to ethics of journalism profession.
2. Influence: Is the ability to alter or away and individuals or a groups of thoughts or actions.
3. Journalism Practice: This refers to the process of gathering, processing and dissemination of information to heterogeneous, faceless and diversified audience by the news media.
4. Journalists: Is a person who writes for newspapers or magazines or prepares news to b broadcast on radio or television