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**INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM IN AFRICA: AN
EXPLORATORY STUDY OF NON-PROFIT
INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM ORGANIZATIONS IN
AFRICA**

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ABSTRACT

Ten years ago, the first not-for-profit investigative journalism in Africa was established. Following this development, more and more not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations have been set up in more than twenty countries throughout Africa. The question now is, what are the motivating factors behind the proliferation of these organizations in the continent? Who is funding them and how? Are these organizations making an impact in Africa? This exploratory study goes to the heart of these questions and argues that in a continent where traditional media organizations are increasingly failing to hold power to account, not-for-profit organizations are leading by example, setting the agenda and constantly scrutinizing those in power. This study further looks at the motivation behind the formation of three not-for-profit investigative organizations, their funding model, as well as their impact in their respective countries. The following organizations are being studied: South Africa's *Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism*; Nigeria's *Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism*; and Botswana's *INK Centre for Investigative Journalism*. This study also argues that although these organizations are playing a crucial role in keeping power in check, their overreliance on donor organizations may spell doom for some of them.

KEYWORDS: Investigative Journalism, Not-for-profit, Agenda-setting Theory, Media Ownership Theory, Social Responsibility Theory

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 My story, My place

It has always been something that I wanted to do. To be a chronicler of news events. My introduction to journalism came from my parents who were ardent readers newspapers and news magazine. I fell in love with the profession, and before I went for my secondary education all I wanted was to tell stories for a living. As a profession, journalism excited me, it is well romanticized both in film and literature. I grew up in a copper mining town of Selibe-Phikwe, located in the central part of Botswana. In the late 1980s and early 1990s residents got most of their news from newspapers and a state-owned radio station. That was before the advent of the internet and privately-owned radio stations in the country. Newspapers, The *Botswana Gazette*, *Mmegi*, and *Botswana Guardian*, were the major sources of news in the country and were very popular among the working class of which my parents formed a part.

Independent press in Botswana began in the 1980s¹ and immediately enjoyed growing capacity to transmit political information and opinion independently of socially structured lines of communication². As the only alternative to the propaganda filled state radio station, the private press promulgated completely different versions of the truth in their pages every week. They challenged the establishment by exposing incidents of corruption, without fear they questioned government's decisions and asked uncomfortable questions³. As one scholar once commented

¹ Kenneth Good (1996) 'Authoritarian liberalism: A defining characteristic of Botswana', *Journal of Contemporary African Studies*, 14:1, 29-51

² James J. Zaffiro (1989) 'The press and political opposition in an African democracy': *The case of Botswana*, *Journal of Commonwealth & Comparative Politics*, 27:1, 51-73

³ Kenneth Good 'Authoritarian liberalism' 14:1, 29-51

‘the government found it hard to adjust in its presence’⁴. This nonconformist style of journalism encouraged me to desire a career in journalism.

When I finally entered the doors of a newsroom 15 years ago, I wanted to be the catalyst that spoke truth to power; to make a difference in people’s lives. I wanted to be a reporter who asked tough questions, who exposed the next ‘Watergate scandal’, a reporter who fearlessly confronted thieving and corrupt politicians, and forced them to resign in ignominy. I was callow. I guess I had watched too much of the Watergate Scandal’s *All the President’s Men*. The newsroom was a different place all together. There were so many competing interests; good stories were published every day and many more were not. So many factors made it difficult for journalism to thrive and hold power accountable. Apart from the obvious intolerance of the government and shrinking media space in the country, newsrooms faced financial difficulties. The situation deteriorated. In the late 2000s when some publications folded. By 2014, major news organizations had started retrenching media workers including reporters⁵.

In 2018, the government put the spanner in the works by imposing a strict limits on advertising in privately owned media organizations⁶. As a result, the publishers in panic mode assumed the gatekeeping role and started policing reporters and editors, thus influencing media content for purposes of advancing their ideological, political and commercial interests and in the process compromising media pluralism⁷. With the profession under siege from these realities it increasingly became difficult to produce quality investigative and in-depth stories journalism stories. The quality of the stories produced has diminished considerably. This is not peculiar to Botswana. It is a trend in other countries in Africa and even in the developed world.

⁴ James J. Zaffiro ‘The press and political opposition in an African democracy’ 27:1, 51-73

⁵ Gaothobogwe, M. (2014) Mmegi retrenches. Retrieved January 10, 2018
<http://www.mmegi.bw/index.php?aid=47428&dir=2014/november/17>

⁶ Ontebetse, K. Government bans advertising on critical media houses. Retrieved January 10, 2018
<http://www.sundaystandard.info/govt-bans-advertising-critical-media-houses>

⁷ Badala Tachilisa Balule (2016) ‘Promoting and safeguarding media pluralism in Botswana: an assessment of legal risks’ *Commonwealth Law Bulletin*, 42:1, 84-104

I have not been a distant observer. It is important therefore to clearly state my place in this study. I started as a reporter and climbed the ladder to eventually become the editor of *Mmegi*, a major newspaper within *Mmegi* Investment Holdings, a dominant player in the media business in Botswana⁸. In my experience as a journalist in Botswana and the African continent in general, I have witnessed how the standards of journalism have deteriorated over the years from a lack of resources. I have seen how the need to maximize profits at all costs has killed quality journalism, and how the media has been manipulated to pander to the elites. I have also experienced, first hand, how governments use public resources to cripple and muzzle the media. These are the circumstances that shaped my thoughts in the past few years and further invigorated my passion to finding a solution for the challenges the profession face.

Out of frustration, in 2015 together with another former editor from a different newspaper, we formed the country's first donor-funded investigative journalism outlet. The *Ink Centre for Investigative Journalism* was formed to promote democracy by developing investigative journalism in the public interest⁹. In creating the centre, we didn't reinvent the wheel, but rather copied similar models from countries like South Africa, the United States, the United Kingdom and Romania. The centre also imparts basic investigative reporting skills to young reporters in the newsrooms that have significant budget constraints and are struggling to maintain investigative journalism desks¹⁰.

The centre's motto, "*independence buys freedom*", succinctly captures the excitement that comes with working for something that is completely independent from greedy advertisers, nagging publishers, and agenda-driven politicians. In the past three years the centre has been able to produce major ground-breaking stories (as we shall see elsewhere in chapter 7), and in 2017 became part of the team that won the Pulitzer Prize for Explanatory Reporting for the work on the Panama Papers leak. While it has its own challenges, not-for-profit investigative

⁸ Ibid

⁹ Konopo, J. (2015) Why nonprofit newsroom is the future of journalism. Retrieved January 02, 2018 <http://inkjournalism.org/53/why-non-profit-newsroom-is-the-future-of-journalism/>

¹⁰ Ibid (Ink website)

journalism now appears to be an effective model to fight corruption, betrayal of public trust, and hold power accountable during this period in which newspapers are hamstrung by economic realities.

In the last eight years, the African continent has seen an unprecedented increase in the number of not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations or centres as they are often called. The first centre in Africa dedicated to doing investigative journalism in the public interest was formed in 2010 in South Africa¹¹. Following the formation of the South African organization several other organizations have been set up in Nigeria, Malawi, Botswana, Namibia, Ghana, Lesotho, Zimbabwe and Zambia. Whilst the sudden emergence of not-for-profit investigative journalism centres has been studied in great detail in the United States and to a certain extent in Europe, study of this in Africa has been paid less attention. Thus, this study will contribute to the existing limited literature on not-for-profit investigative organizations with a particular focus on Africa. To achieve this, this study will firstly understand the driving motive behind the formation of these organizations in Africa. Secondly, the study will examine the organizations's funding structures and models. Furthermore, and most importantly, the study will assess the impact of these investigative organizations. The study will argue that in the world where the news media landscape is constantly shifting, not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations are in a far much better position to hold power to account.

In seeking to understand these not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations, this research shall study the following not-for-profit outlets in Africa; Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism (South Africa) created in 2010, Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (Nigeria) created in 2014 and INK Centre for Investigative Journalism (Botswana) created in 2015. Though they are relatively new, these three organizations are arguably the most successful not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in the continent. As we shall see elsewhere in this study they have been involved in major local and global investigative

¹¹ Bizcommunity (2010). Centre for investigative journalism goes live. Retrieved February 02, 2018 <http://www.bizcommunity.com/Article/196/15/46470.html>

projects such as the Offshore Leaks¹², Panama Papers¹³, and The Paradise Papers¹⁴. It is also important to state that apart from these organizations, several more organizations in Africa have been created in the last eight years. To date there are 12 centres in Africa. Many more of these organizations are expected to be created in many more African states in future according to investigative journalists that I interviewed during the course of this research.

1.2 Research problem

In their seminal journalism book, *The Elements of Journalism*, Kovach and Rosentiel argue that serving as an independent monitor of power is one of journalism's most important contributions to society¹⁵. This study argues that the establishment of independent centres of investigative journalism in the African region is an important step in fulfilling what Kovach and Rosentiel called 'Journalism's most important contribution to their society'. Eight years after the first non-profit, independent, non-partisan investigative organization was set up in the region not much has been done to investigate motives behind their creation, funding structures, examine, assess and evaluate their impact or lack thereof in the continent and the challenges they face. Furthermore, since this is a relatively new phenomenon, not much academic work has been produced in the area of not-for-profit investigative journalism in Africa.

1.3 Research Questions

¹³ The Panama Papers is an unprecedented investigation by ICIJ that reveals the offshore links of some of the globe's most prominent figures. The first stories were published in 2016. Retrieved February 10, 2018 <https://www.icij.org/investigations/panama-papers/pages/panama-papers-about-the-investigation/>

¹⁴ The Paradise Papers is an investigation by ICIJ on a leaked database comes from the offshore law firm Appleby and a trove of data from seven corporate registries. Retrieved February 10, 2018. <https://offshoreleaks.icij.org/pages/about>

¹⁵ Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel, T. (2014). *The elements of journalism* (Rev. ed.). New York: Three Rivers Press

To get a clear understanding of the not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations, this study will be focused around four pertinent questions:

- a. What is the rationale for the formation of investigative journalism organizations in Africa?
- b. How are the organizations funded and how sustainable is the not-for-profit model?
- c. What is the impact of these investigative journalism organizations in the Africa region?
- d. What role are these centres playing in democracy and exposing corruption?
- e. What are the challenges faced by investigative journalists working for not-for-profits outlets in Africa?

1.4 Research Method

As an explorative research, this study employs qualitative research methods to collect and analyze data. Qualitative research according to Deacon is fundamentally concerned with “exploring the ways that people make sense of their social worlds and how they express these understandings through language, sound, imagery, personal style and social rituals”¹⁶. In analyzing and evaluating the investigative stories produced by not-for-profit investigative centres in Africa this study will use content analysis. It is defined as a research technique for making replicable and valid inferences from texts (or other meaningful matter) to the contexts of their use¹⁷. As a technique, Krippendorff notes that content analysis involves specialized procedures. Content analysis provides new insights, increases a researcher's understanding of particular phenomena, or informs practical actions. Krippendorff adds that:

¹⁶ Deacon, D. (et. al) (2007) ‘Researching Communications: A practical Guide to Methods in Media and Cultural Analysis’. *Arnold: Great Britain*

¹⁷ Krippendorff, K. (2004). *Content Analysis: An Introduction to Its Methodology* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage. Cristina M. Giannantonio

“Techniques are expected to be reliable. More specifically, research techniques should result in findings that are replicable. That is, researchers working at different points in time and perhaps under different circumstances should get the same results when applying the same technique to the same data. Replicability is the most important form of reliability”¹⁸

To explore views, motivations and experiences of those behind the centres, interviews will be conducted with key figures. These include journalists or the centres key managers. According to Kvale, interviews attempt to understand the world from the subjects’ point of view and to unfold the meaning of their lived world. According to Kvale, the interviews give voice to common people, allowing them to freely present their life situations in their own words and open for a close personal interaction between the researcher and their subjects¹⁹. Also, I will use the library-historical method which includes gathering evidence from published materials such as newspapers, books, journals and other documents.

1.5 Contributions to knowledge

There are numerous reasons why this study is very important and had to be undertaken. First of all, not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations are a new phenomenon in Africa and have not been adequately studied. There is an acute shortage of literature on the work of not-for-profit investigative organizations in Africa. In fact, I am not aware of any comprehensive academic work that has been done on not-for-profit journalism in Africa. The focus has often been more on investigative journalism and on the type of journalism produced by not-for-profit organizations. Second, there is the need to assess the impact of these centres as they strive to perform a very important function of holding power and the powerful to account. Not much has been done to evaluate the work by these centres, not only in Africa, but elsewhere around the world. Third, this study can be of great value to journalists and media organizations that wish to set up independent, not-for-for profit organizations to effectively hold power

¹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹ Kvale, S. (2006). ‘Dominance Through Interviews and Dialogues.’ *Sage Publications*. p481 <http://qix.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/12/3/480>

accountable. Finally, the study provides a framework for future study and discussions on the impact and usefulness of not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in Africa.

1.6 Limitations of study

The study has a number of limitations. Four limitations have been identified in this research. First, not all not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations are included in the study. Of the eleven investigative journalism organizations in Africa only three are studied. The exclusion of others is mainly because some of them are still fairly new and have not started publishing investigative journalism stories on regular basis. Whilst this is so, the three organizations studied give a clear picture of the work of investigative journalism organizations in Africa. Second, the study does not extend to the general audience. While the study analyses the impact of the centres broadly it does not engage the public to get their overall impression of the work done by these organizations. Third, lack of readily available academic literature on not-for-profit journalism in Africa was a major study limitation. The researcher relied on studies and authorities from the United States and Europe. Lastly, the researcher's views on not-for-profit journalism are well known and publicized. There is thus the possibility of bias. Also, the researcher has close relationship with some of the interviewees manning centres under study. However, being conscious of this, the researcher will endeavour to lessen his bias to be able to ensure reliable conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Overview

In this chapter I will now seek to review available literature on the importance of investigative journalism. This study is deeply rooted in three theories—media ownership, normative theory of social responsibility and agenda-setting theory. First, I will argue the concentration of media is a significant hindrance to investigative journalism. Second, I will introduce the development of a normative theory of social responsibility, and argue that investigative journalism is a public good needed to hold power to account. Finally, I will look at agenda-setting theory and introduce various models of agenda-setting investigative journalism.

2.2 The purpose of investigative journalism

A pertinent question that has been asked many times is what is the importance of journalism in the society? A lot has been written about the importance of investigative journalism and many scholars agree on the role and the importance of this genre in a society. According to Rosensteel and Kovach the primary purpose of journalism is to provide citizens with the information they need to be free and self-governing.²⁰ According to the two authors by reporting on government, business and powerful institutions, journalists one way or the other give citizens the information they need to make informed decisions. The purpose of journalism as such is not defined by technology, not by journalists or the techniques they employ but the principles and purpose of journalism are defined by something more basic, the function news plays in the lives of people, Rosensteel and Kovach noted²¹.

²⁰ Kovach and Rosensteel pg17

²¹ *ibid*

With this in mind it is also important to review the importance or the purpose of investigative journalism in a democracy. Because investigative journalism is a genre of journalism, its meaning and purpose are deeply rooted in what Kovach and Rosenteil's calls journalism's primary purpose. Simply put, investigative journalism exists to provide the citizens with information by engaging in watchdog activities. Locating investigative journalism's role in a democratic setup Coronel noted that high impact investigative journalism has made the media an effective and credible watchdog and boosted its credibility and support among the public.²² For Coronel and many others, the press as an institution is strengthened when journalists have demonstrated that they serve the public interest by uncovering malfeasance and abuse. Downie and Kaiser takes this further by arguing that exposure of incompetence and corruption by investigative journalism in government can change misbegotten policies, save taxpayers money and end careers of misbehaving public officials²³. On the corporate side revelation of unethical business practices can save consumers money or their health.²⁴ For Coronel, Downie and Kaiser is a clear indication that the purpose of investigative journalism is a tool for the public to hold those in power accountable. Spark stretches this argument even further by contending that investigative reporters "work side with less powerful and forgotten."²⁵ It is this study's thesis that investigative journalism exists not only to uproot corruption but to be the voice of the voiceless.

2.3 Media Ownership Theory: Bagdikian's theory

There have been critical studies that show that whilst journalism is expected to hold power to account, it has failed to do so because of several of reasons. Stringent media laws, ownership and threats of violence are some of the main reasons why investigative journalism has been unable to thrive in some countries. In this section, however, I will focus on the issue of media

²² Coronel, S (2010) 'Corruption and the Watchdog role of the media'. *Public Sentinel*.

²³ Downie, L and Kaiser R, G. (2003). 'The News about the News: American Journalism in Peril'. *First Vintage Books*. p.4

²⁴ *ibid*

²⁵ Spark, D. (1999) 'Investigative Reporting: A study in technique'. *Focal Press: Taylor and Francis Group, New York*

ownership as a primary concern for investigative journalism and support Chamber's claim that the fate of investigative journalism is tied both to the dynamics of media ownership and control and to the effectiveness of future protection of the role of servicing democracy²⁶. Chambers' observation is very much consistent with Altschull's earlier theory of media ownership which argues that media content is directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the media²⁷. Bagdikian, writing about the American media, presented an argument that shows that since the 1980s a new private 'ministry of information' has emerged as ownership of news organizations became increasingly concentrated²⁸. McChesney²⁹ and Herman, Chambers and Chomsky³⁰ support this viewpoint. They say despite an explosion in raw numbers of media channels, the degree of ownership concentration is high.

Bagdikian's views are even more interesting and instructive. He decried that few powerful conglomerates have monopolized the media thus impacting on the quality of news produced some outside number of corporations controlling the media. Bagdikian's argument is not only restricted to the US. He argues that some conglomerates are global and that they now own newspapers, magazines, and television studios all over the world³¹. In 2003 Bagdikian noted that the world largest media firms were Time Warner; The Walt Disney Company; Murdoch's News Corporation based in Australia, Viacom; and Bertelsmann based in Germany.

"Today, none of the dominant media companies bother with dominance merely in a single medium. Their strategy has been to have major holdings in all the media, from newspapers to movie studios. This gives each of the five corporations and their leaders more communications power than was exercised by any despot or dictatorship in history".³²

²⁶ Chambers D, (2000) 'Critical Approaches to the Media: The changing context for Investigative Journalism'. In Hugo de Burgh (ed.), *Investigative Journalism: Context and Practice*. London: Routledge

²⁷ Altschull, J. H. (1995). 'Agents of Power: The Role of the News Media in Human Affairs'. *New York: Longman*

²⁸ Bagdikian, B (2007) *The New Media monopoly*. *Beacon Press*

²⁹ McChesney, R.W (2008) *Political economy of Media: Enduring Issues, Emerging Dilemmas*. New York: Monthly Review Press

³⁰ Herman, E.S and Chomsky, N. (1988) *Manufacturing Consent: The Political Economy of the Mass Media*. London: Vintage.

³¹ Bagdikian, B 'The New Media monopoly'.

³² Ibid.

Writing about this trend, Chambers supports arguments advanced by Bagdkian, Chomsky and many other by adding that the convergence between telecommunications, press and broadcasting and intensified integration between electronic hardware and software industries have led not only to the concentration of the media in fewer and fewer hands but also to a fast expanding global 'information economy'.³³

2.4 Normative Theories of the Press: The ideal media

While this study will apply theories such as political economy, and agenda setting, it is however profoundly rooted in the normative theory of social responsibility of the press. Normative press theories according to McQuail are a body of theory that is more concerned with how the media ought to operate if certain social values are to be observed.³⁴ McQuail also refers press theories as 'ideas of right and responsibility' that underlie the expectations of benefit from the media to individuals and society. The normative theories were first developed by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm in their seminal book, *Four Theories of the Press*. They identified the four normative theories of the press as, Authoritarian Theory – a theory that places all forms of communication in the hands of the government or bureaucrats; Libertarian Theory – a theory which comes from libertarian thought; Social responsibility theory – a theory that allows free press but also calling for accountability in the press; and Soviet Media theory – a theory that gives the government absolute control of all the media on behalf of the public.³⁵

The Four Theories of the Press have come under criticism from several scholars around the world for lack of focus on idealism and lack empiricism. Ostini, et al, propose that to understand press systems and the societies, a model to understand the media should incorporate the dimensions of individual journalistic autonomy and the structures of state policy.³⁶ While the

³³ Chambers, D. 'Critical Approaches to the Media'.

³⁴ McQuail, D. (2010) *McQuail's Mass Communication Theory*. London: Sage.

³⁵ Siebert, Peterson and Schramm (1956) 'Four theories of the press: The authoritarian, libertarian, social responsibility, and Soviet communist concepts of what the press should be and do'. *Urbana: University of Illinois*.

³⁶ Ostini J, and Ostini Y. H. (2002) 'Beyond the Four Theories of the Press: A New Model of National Media Systems', *Mass Communication and Society*, p. 41-56.

normative theories may not provide any scientific explanations and predictions they remain vital in understanding the media ecosystem in any given society.

2.5 Social Responsibility theory

This theory was developed Siebert, et al, as a means to reform the pure libertarian theory of the press immediately after World War II, and is associated with the Commission of the Freedom of Press in the United States at the University of Chicago in the 1940s (The commission is also known as the Hutchins Commission). According to Picard the commission was set up to define press freedoms in relation to responsibility and codified a set of public obligations that the press must satisfy to remain self-regulated. In effect, the commission questioned and sought to reform the libertarian theory of the press.³⁷ Some scholars call it an outgrowth of the libertarian theory. The theory's major premise as articulated by Peterson is that freedom carries concomitant obligations and the press which enjoys a privileged position under our government, is obliged to be responsible to society for carrying out certain essential functions of mass communication in contemporary society.³⁸ The theory performs the following tasks:

- i. Servicing the political system by providing information, discussion, and debate on public affairs;
- ii. Enlightening the public so that it should be capable of self-government
- iii. Safeguarding the rights of individuals by acting as a watchdog against government;
- iv. Servicing the economic system by bringing buyers and sellers of goods and services together through advertising;
- v. Providing entertainment; and

³⁷ Pickard, V. (2010) "Whether the Giants Should Be Slain or Persuaded to Be Good": Revisiting the Hutchins Commission and the Role of Media in a Democratic Society, *Critical Studies in Media Communication*. p391-411

³⁸ Siebert F, Peterson T, and Schramm W. 'Four theories of the press'

vi. Maintaining financial self-sufficiency so that it can be free from the pressures of special interests.³⁹

Under this theory the press goes beyond objective reporting to interpretive (investigative reporting). Part of the report read, “It is no longer enough to report the fact truthfully. It is now necessary to report the truth about the fact”.⁴⁰ Later in the study this theory will be applied to assist in determining the social responsibility of investigative journalism in the African continent.

2.6 Agenda setting theory

Has not-for-profit journalism in Africa been able to set the agenda and influence change? In answering this pertinent question, it is important to turn to the agenda-setting theory for answers and direction. This theory was introduced by McCombs and Shaw in 1972 following their seminal study of how the media played a role in the 1968 presidential campaigns. As later defined by McCombs and Reynolds in 2002 the agenda-setting theory describes the ability of the news media to influence the salience of topics on the public agenda.⁴¹ Simply put agenda setting refers to how news organizations determine which news is important and should become the focus of public attention. Agenda setting has two main assumptions. The first one is that the media filters and shapes reality instead of reflecting it. The second assumption is that the more attention the media gives to certain issues, the more likely the public will label those issues vital.⁴²

2.7 Models for agenda setting investigative journalism

³⁹ Ibid

⁴⁰ Blanchard M. A. (1977). ‘The Hutchins Commission: The Press and the Responsibility Concept’. *Association for Education in Journalism*

⁴¹ McCombs and Reynolds (2000) ‘How the news shapes our civic agenda’. *Media effects: Advances in theory and research*

⁴² University of Twente, <https://www.utwente.nl/en/bms/communication-theories/sorted-by-level/macro/Agenda-setting%20theory/#the-creation-of-what-the-public-thinks-is-important> Accessed March 10, 2018

On the investigative journalism front, Feldstein has developed three useful investigative (Muckraking) models to study its agenda-setting role; the Catalyst Model, The Dummy Model, and the Ventriloquist Model.

Catalyst Model: In this model investigative journalism acts as a catalyst, stimulating the public to demand reform. According to Feldstein, in this linear paradigm, the media exposés lead directly to changes in public opinion – to an angry and mobilized populace – which leads directly to reform. In this paradigm, he notes that journalists remain independent of the governing process while influencing it for the public good⁴³.

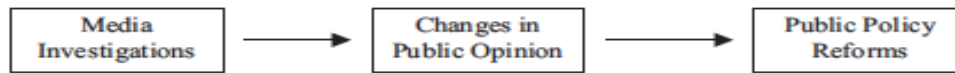


Figure 1 Catalyst Model

The Dummy Model: In this model policy changes are effected before investigative stories are published. According to Protes (cited by Feldstein) policy making proposals may be triggered by prepublication transactions between journalists and policy makers. “In other words, reform was created not by an aroused citizenry, but by media elites in collaboration with policy makers even before any stories were made public.”⁴⁴

⁴³ Feldstein, M. (2007) *Dummies and ventriloquists: Models of how sources set the investigative agenda*. Sage Publications

⁴⁴ Ibid

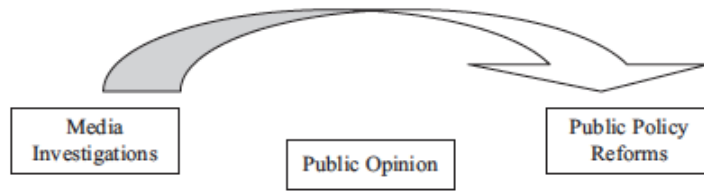


Figure 2 Dummy Model

Ventriloquist Model: This is perhaps one of Feldstein’s controversial model. He argues that in this model investigative journalists do not set the agenda, but their sources. “In this model, the process is initiated not by the much-heralded journalist, but by the behind the scene source; for is the source, not the reporter, who is the real catalyst here for change.” The source, according to Feldstein, plays a pivotal role of planting a story, and also at the very end when reform or action is taken⁴⁵. These three models will be very important in understanding and assessing the agenda setting function of not for profit investigative journalism in Africa in the next chapters.

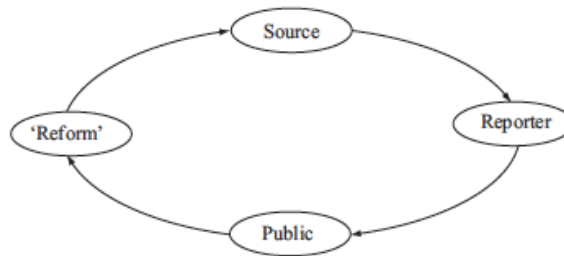


Figure 3 Ventriloquist Model

2.8 Conclusion

Available literature indicates that in democratic societies, investigative journalism is an important component to fight corruption, organized crime and most importantly it gives power to the people and hold those who wield power accountable. Investigative journalism is arguably

⁴⁵ Ibid

the most important genre of journalism, and yet the most endangered of them all. The literature we have reviewed in this chapter shows that in an ideal democratic society, investigative journalism should be a useful agenda-setter, a catalyst for change, operate in a media-friendly environment without pressures of ownership and more importantly fulfill its social responsibility of holding power to account.

CHAPTER THREE

Background: Understanding investigative journalism

3.1 Overview

Investigative reporting is an essential arm of journalism. It seeks to expose wrongdoing and spark change. As such it remains a critical tool by the media to hold power to account. In this chapter, I begin with defining the term ‘investigative journalism’ from the viewpoint of different scholars and journalists. Second, I give a brief overview of history and development of investigative journalism by using the United States of America and the United Kingdom as case studies. Finally, I will look at the history of investigative journalism in Africa, its influence, challenges, and successes in the continent.

3.2 What is investigative Journalism?

It is always difficult to offer a precise definition of investigative journalism because, for many journalists, all journalism work one way or the other involves investigation. Veteran journalist David Kaplan agrees that there is some truth with this assertion, “There is some truth to this – investigative techniques are used widely by the beat journalists on deadline as well as by the ‘I-team’ members with weeks to work on stories.” However, Kaplan’s point of departure is that “investigative journalism is a set of methodologies that are a craft, and it can take years to master.”⁴⁶

Ettema and Glasser offer an interesting but not exhaustive definition when they observe that, investigative reporting is journalism at its most politically vigorous and methodologically

⁴⁶ Kaplan, D. (2013). ‘Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support’. *Centre for International Media Assistance*. p10

rigorous.⁴⁷ De Burgh, on the other hand, offers a much more detailed definition of the term by observing that an investigative journalist is a man or a woman whose profession is to discover the truth and identify lapses from it in whatever media may be available. According to De Burgh, the act of doing this generally is called investigative journalism and is distinct from apparently similar work by police, lawyers, auditors and regulatory bodies in that it is not limited as to target, not legally founded and usually earns money for media publishers.⁴⁸

The most recent interesting definitions of investigative journalism have been by UNESCO and the US-based Investigative Reporters and Editors (IRE). According to UNESCO, “investigative journalism involves exposing to the public matters that are concealed – either deliberately by someone in a position of power, or accidentally, behind a chaotic mass of facts and circumstances that obscure understanding. It requires using both secret and open sources and documents”.⁴⁹ For IRE, “It is the reporting, through one’s own work product and initiative, matters of importance which some persons or organizations wish to keep secret.”⁵⁰

From the above definitions, it is clear that investigative journalism seeks to open up the societies we live in and hold power accountable by revealing incidents of abuse, corruption, and betrayal of public trust both in government, in business, and in not-for-profit organizations. With that in mind, it is important to state that while all these definitions above are useful in explaining what investigative journalism is, they fall short of addressing the critical question of what is the overall intended purpose of investigative journalism work.

Two definitions by media historians, Aucoin, a media studies scholar, and Kaplan, a veteran journalist with Global Investigative Journalism Network, offer the best definition of the term.

⁴⁷ Ettema, J S and Glasser T. L (2007). ‘An international symposium on investigative journalism: Introduction’. SAGE Publications. P. 1464

⁴⁸ De Burgh, H. (ed.) (2000). *Investigative Journalism: Context and Practice*. London: Routledge.

⁴⁹ UNESCO (2011). *Story based inquiry: A manual for investigative journalists*. Paris, France: UNESCO Publishing.

⁵⁰ IRE

According to Aucoin investigative journalism has five distinct components, “1) exposure of information 2) about an important public issue 3) that someone or some organization does not want reported 4) that is revealed through the original, time-consuming “digging” of the reporter 5) for the purpose of inspiring reform.”⁵¹

According to Kaplan investigative journalism can be defined as:

“the in-depth systematic use of original research and reporting, it often uses large amount of data and documents, it uses public records, to find out what is going on. It also involves frequently the baring of secrets, it makes information that before had been hidden into the public domain. Finally, it has strong emphasis on social justice and accountability.”⁵²

He further adds that this definition is based on his 35 years’ experience as an investigative journalist and editor, and having held senior positions at the Centre for Investigative reporting, Centre for Public Integrity, US News & World Report investigative unit and as a former director of International Consortium of Investigative Journalism and now GIGN.⁵³

Keywords coming out of Aucoin and Kaplan’s definitions are ‘reform’, ‘social justice’ and ‘accountability.’ These are words that describe investigative journalism’s intended purpose which is more than just exposing wrongdoing or secrets but also to inspire reform, change and ensure accountability. For this study, Aucoin and Kaplan’s definitions are used guiding definitions.

3.3 History of Investigative journalism

In giving a contextual overview of investigative journalism, it is important to also start by giving a brief history of investigative journalism. History is relevant because the past always influences

⁵¹ Aucoin, J.L. (2007). *The evolution of American investigative journalism*. Columbia, MO: University of Missouri Press.

⁵² Kaplan (2018) Email correspondence (February 12).

⁵³ Ibid.

the future and in journalism like in other professions the past has and is impacting on the present and the future.

3.3.1 The United States of America: Cycles of Muckrakers

In the United States of America, scholars agree that investigative journalism, or muckraking as it was known in the early years, is as old as the newspapers. The earliest known investigative journalism in the United States of America can be traced to the first colonial newspaper published in 1690.⁵⁴ Fieldstein and other scholars agree that printer Benjamin Harris's *Publick Occurrences* was a forerunner of both the noble and lowbrow traditions that would come to characterize investigative reporting in America.

"In its first issue, the newspaper exposed allegedly "barbarous" human rights abuses of French prisoners of war and a supposed sex scandal in which the King of France 'used to lie with' his 'Sons Wife.' Four days later, British authorities shut down the newspaper; its first issue was also its last"⁵⁵

Aucoin argue that other historians trace the practice's roots to the great muckrakers such as Lincoln Steffens, Ida Tarbell and Roy Baker who worked for *McClure* journal at the turn of the twentieth century. The era between 1902 to 1912 is often described as the golden age of muckrakers. American president Theodore Roosevelt coined the term, "Muckraker". The word was not a term of endearment.

"As a politician trying to curb the worst excesses of America's Industrial Revolution while preserving the nation's capitalist system, the president's delicate balancing act sometimes seemed threatened by a dangerous new kind of journalist: the investigative crusader whose writings inflamed the masses. Roosevelt likened this journalistic dirt-digger to a character from John Bunyan's seventeenth-century fable, *Pilgrim's Progress*."⁵⁶

⁵⁴ Feldstein, M. (2006): 'Muckraking Model: Investigative Reporting Cycles in American History'. *The Harvard International Journal of Press/Politics*, p 105-120

⁵⁵ Ibid. p. 105

⁵⁶ Ibid.

According to several historians, although the president's use of the word was pejorative, the muckrakers themselves embraced the insult as a badge of honor.

The muckrakers of that time targeted corporate wrongdoing, government misbehavior, and social injustice; they viewed all three as interconnected to one another and to systemic problems spawned by the U.S. Industrial Revolution.⁵⁷ Scholars agree that this period of great muckraking did not last. During and after the World War I, investigative journalism suffered a major knock. According to Feldstein the following six reasons have been advanced by historians over the years as the main reasons for the demise in investigative reporting in the 1900s.

- the reforms they engendered ameliorated the Industrial Revolution's worst abuses and thus reduced the need or appetite for muckraking;
- the decline of the progressive political movement inevitably meant the decline of muckraking because the two were inextricably linked;
- World War I turned the public's focus abroad and increased public deference to authority at home;
- the media consolidation eliminated magazine outlets for muckraking;
- individual journalists turned inward to narrow careerism or their families;
- irresponsible muckraking alienated the public, which had already grown weary of journalistic negativity.⁵⁸

The period between World War I and 1960 is generally believed to have been quite as far as investigative journalism was concerned. In the early 1960s investigative reporting re-emerged. There have been several reasons advanced for the re-emergence of investigative journalism in

⁵⁷ Ibid. p. 106

⁵⁸ Ibid. p.110

the 1960s. Media historian James Baughman and Time magazine Editor Richard Clurman suggest that this was a direct response to technology and competition by television as news source. "Many newspaper and magazine publishers saw investigative journalism as a way to counter the competition from television, which was unsuited to in depth coverage of news."⁵⁹ For social historians Michael Schudson and James Boylan it was because the press broke away from the government's view of events particularly the Vietnam war.⁶⁰

The most famous investigative work in the early years of the re-emergence of investigative journalism was by Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein of *Washington Post*. The two journalists methodically broke the Watergate story by exposing illegal activities of the Nixon administration and their attempts to cover up their wrongdoing.⁶¹ Their series of stories eventually led the resignation of President Nixon in 1974.

Aucoin dismisses the idea that the Watergate scandal was solely the main reason why investigative journalism re-emerged. "Watergate, despite its status as a particularly myopic myth for journalists, did not cause investigative journalism to re-emerge in journalism culture,"⁶² he argues. Aucoin argues that by the time of the Watergate scandal, investigative journalism had resurfaced as a strong alternative to event-focused journalism for nearly two decades before the Watergate. Added Aucoin:

"By 1962 a recognizable pattern of investigative journalism had already emerged, and by the late 1960s several newspapers including the Boston Globe, Newsday, and the Chicago Tribune, fielded permanent investigative teams and 60 Minutes, television's preeminent investigative newsmagazine had debuted on CBS."⁶³

⁵⁹ Aucoin, 'The evolution of American investigative journalism'. p.11

⁶⁰ Ibid. p.11

⁶¹ Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel. 'The elements of journalism'. p.170

⁶² Aucoin, 'The evolution of American investigative journalism'. p.18

⁶³ Ibid. p.18.

Aucoin's argument is very much supported by Kovach and Rosenteil who note that the University of Columbia's Pulitzer Prize committee introduced the 'investigative journalism' category in 1964.⁶⁴ There is a general agreement that the Watergate scandal and reporting by the Washington Post inspired young people to enter the field of journalism and investigative reporting. As we shall see elsewhere in this study, there are scholars who are of the view that investigative journalism has now entered another period of not-for-profit journalism.

3.3.2 Britain: Cobbett and Stead: The Williams of investigative journalism

In Britain, the history of investigative journalism is less glamorous but still significant for this study. Douglas Underwood traces the origins of investigative journalism in Britain to the 16th century during the period of Christian reformation. He observed that:

"Many elements of prophetic tradition – the spirit of righteousness, the indignant moralism, the effort to maintain purity of values, the call for the spiritual and ethical renewal, the fierce sense of corruption abounding everywhere – are as typically found in today's best investigative reporters or crusading editors."⁶⁵

This may have paved the way for William Cobbett to popularize radical journalism, and for William Stead to 'invent' modern-day investigative journalism.

William Cobbett is well recognized as the inventor of popular radical journalism in the late 1700s and early 1800s. It is this style of writing that later paved the way for investigative journalism in Britain. His animosity towards corruption and injustice and his attitude towards reformation characterized his *Cobbett's Weekly Political Register* published in the UK between 1802 and 1835. This cost him several lawsuits and jail term. According to De Burgh, if one of

⁶⁴ Kovach, B., & Rosenstiel. 'The elements of journalism'. p.170

⁶⁵ Underwood, D. (2002) 'From Yahweh to Yahoo: The religious Roots of the Circular Press.' *University of Illinois Press*. p.23

the features of investigative journalism is the fearless uncovering of the facts unpalatable to the powerful, then Cobbett is a distinguished precursor.⁶⁶ Between 1810 and 1812 Cobbett spent two years in jail because he denounced the flogging of militiamen who had protested against unjustified deductions from their pay. According to De Burgh in the past information entrepreneurs had gone to prison for offending someone high and mighty or for blasphemy or getting the official line wrong – “but Cobbett went to prison for defending the voiceless. It was an important moment in the development of journalism,”⁶⁷

The most important development of investigative journalism in Europe however, occurred after the industrialization of the press. And the central figure to this development was William Stead, often referred to as Britain first investigative journalist. In 1885, Stead, who was the editor of *Pall Mall Gazette*, went undercover and in disguise bought a 12-year old girl in the East End of London for sexual purposes, as a way of demonstrating to his readers that child prostitution in Britain was prevalent. He was arrested, tried and imprisoned. However, since his motive was not to take advantage of the young girl, his sentence was reduced and he made a whole affair the sting that finally brought success to the campaign to stop child prostitution in Britain.⁶⁸ According to De Burgh, his undercover investigative style was premonitory. He carried out detailed preliminary research and undertook a sting, in much the manner favored by modern investigative journalists.

3.3.3 Africa: The emergence of investigative journalism

Newspapers in Africa only emerged in the early 19th century with the arrival of missionaries in the continent. The early newspapers in Africa can be traced back to the beginning of the 19th century. *The Cape Town Gazette* the first English newspaper appeared in 1800 in South Africa, and *Royal Gazette* in 1801 in Sierra Leone. The first genuinely indigenous newspaper – Liberia

⁶⁶ De Burgh, H. 'Investigative Journalism: Context and Practice'. p.35

⁶⁷ Ibid.p.35

⁶⁸ Ibid.p. 42

Herald was founded in 1826.⁶⁹ In Ghana, *The West African Herald* started in 1857 while in Nigerian *Iwe Irohin* hit the streets in 1859.⁷⁰

Various scholars well articulate the involvement of the Christian missionaries in the setting up of newspapers. The argument is that because protestant missionaries needed to print Bibles and educational material to spread their religious beliefs, they imported the printing press technology and allowed indigenous communities to use it.⁷¹ Peterson et al. make another compelling argument that missionaries established newspapers in Africa to manage the enlargement of scale in their work, a means also to shape converts' reading habits.⁷² Regions in Africa that had access to the printing press developed local newspapers faster than others. On the other hand, in regions where Protestant missions were less active, the first newspapers appeared only at the beginning of the 20th century and no indigenous newspapers were created before World War I.⁷³

Missionary owned newspapers later led to the emergence of more radical indigenous and African owned newspapers. It was these newspapers that would later play a key role in speaking against colonialism and calling for independence. According to Omu, the press in Western Africa assumed the role of the opposition and sought to rival the government, encouraging political awareness and involvement by providing a means of criticism of the authorities and spreading dissatisfaction with official plans and policies.⁷⁴ Schiffrin elucidates this further: "That the rise of newspapers was entangled with that of other colonial institutions produced strange tensions since many newspapers ended up being part of the vanguard of independence movements."⁷⁵

⁶⁹ Schiffrin, A. (ed.) (2017). *African Muckraking: 100 Years of African Investigative Journalism*. South Africa: Jacana Media.

⁷⁰ Omu, F. (1967). "The *Iwe Irohin*, 1859-1867," *Journal of the Historical Society of Nigeria*. P. 35-44

⁷¹ Woodberry, R.D (2012). "The Missionary Roots of Liberal Democracy", *American Political Science Review*. P. 249

⁷² Peterson D, E. Hunter , S. Newell (eds.) (2016). *African Print Cultures: newspapers and their Publics in the Twentieth century*. Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press.

⁷³ Schiffrin, A. *African Muckraking: 100 Years of African Investigative Journalism*.

⁷⁴ Omu F. (1978) *Press and Politics in Nigeria 1880-1937*. Atlantic Highlands, New Jersey: Humanities Press.

⁷⁵Ibid.

There is a general agreement that well-organized investigative journalism occurred in the 1960s and the 1990s following transitions from the colonial era and authoritarian regimes. The opening up meant that more journalists were free to do investigative reporting.⁷⁶ According to Berger, the real opening up [of media spaces] coincided with the post- Cold War liberalization that legitimized private newspapers across the continent.⁷⁷ The end of Apartheid in South Africa, and the end of authoritarian regimes in Ghana, Mozambique and Nigeria also opened up the media in those countries. “Media outlets tend to multiply and blossom as soon as the shade of authoritarianism is removed”⁷⁸ Schiffrin observed.

This argument by Schiffrin on authoritarianism and investigative journalism maybe flawed. Some scholars are of the view that even under authoritarianism investigative journalism is capable of thriving. The scholars argue compellingly that during more than 20 years of military rule in Nigeria journalism thrived, and the media in Nigeria became known for being brave and outspoken.⁷⁹ The Nigerian media despite constant harassment and imprisonment produced critical investigative journalism reports that challenged the legitimacy of the military dictators.⁸⁰ “The Nigerian press has over the years revealed grand corruption schemes”⁸¹ During apartheid in South Africa, a more critical press later known as ‘the alternative press’ emerged to challenge the legitimacy of the white minority rule. The ‘Alternative Press’ produced investigative stories that exposed the apartheid government’s brutality.⁸²

3.4 Investigative Journalism in Africa: Obstacles, criticism and successes

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Berger, cited in Schiffrin, *ibid.*

⁷⁸ Ibid

⁷⁹ Rønning, H.(2009) ‘The politics of corruption and the media in Africa’. *Journal of African Media Studies*. p155-171

⁸⁰ Ibid

⁸¹ Rønning, H. (2009). ‘The politics of corruption and the media in Africa. P. 536

⁸² Switzer, L and Adhikari, M. (2000). *South Africa’s Resistance Press: Alternative Voices in the last generation under apartheid*. Athens: Ohio University Centre for International Studies

Investigative journalism in some parts of Africa continues to thrive despite challenges faced by investigative journalists and their media organizations. While this is the case, there are some parts in Africa where it is impossible for journalism to thrive due to absence of media-friendly environment. In repressive societies Rønning says societies journalists can end up losing their jobs, be killed and worse be killed because of their investigative work.⁸³

The risks associated with doing investigative journalism in Africa are enormous. Mudhai shares Rønning's argument and further gives a detailed description of the dangers faced by investigative journalists in Africa.

“The first and most visible cost is violence against journalists and their equipment or premises as well as their sources. It includes arrest, imprisonment and torture. It also includes fire-bombing, physical harm by hired thugs or hit-men, burning of premises by arsonists, leaving black ‘body-bags’ menacingly on doorsteps, harassment – such as rape threats or acts– targeting families, freezing of bank accounts and assassination”⁸⁴

As illustrated elsewhere in this study some argue that investigative journalism can still thrive under the circumstances. But inevitably this kind of courageousness comes with a cost.

According to the Committee for the Protection of Journalists, since 1992, 1278 have been killed around the world. Of this number, 245 journalists were from Africa.⁸⁵ CPJ's data does not however, give a clear indication of the number of investigative journalists killed during this period. It does however, show that of the 245 journalists killed, 16 died while covering corruption stories, 55 died while covering human rights stories, 139 died covering politics, 8 died while covering business stories, 10 died while covering crime, 102 died while covering war and 6 died while covering sport related stories. As indicated, it is not clear how many of those killed were investigative journalists or died because of investigative journalism.

⁸³ Rønning, H. ‘The politics of corruption and the media in Africa’

⁸⁴ Mudhai, O.F (2007). Light at the end of the tunnel? Pushing the boundaries in Africa. p.536-544

⁸⁵ CPJ (2018). <https://cpj.org/data/>

Prominent investigative journalists killed during this period include Mozambique's Carlos Cardoso who was assassinated in November 2000 while investigating US\$14 million banking scandal reportedly linked to the son of President Joaquim Chissano.⁸⁶ In November 2005, an investigative journalist from the Democratic Republic of Congo Frank Ngyke Kangundu and his wife were murdered for stories alleging that DRC President Joseph Kabila hid US\$30 million public funds in Tanzania.⁸⁷ A year later, another investigative journalist Louis Bapuwa Mwamba was murdered in the DRC while investigating DRC's diamond smuggling mining mafias in the country. Perhaps the vividness of the killers' brutality is captured well here by Groenink and Posthumus: "Killers of both journalists left them alive to bleed to death – both 'punished' for 'hurting' the powers that be."⁸⁸

'Hurting and punishing' journalists in Africa does not always imply death but the curtailing of the media space as well. Governments have often resorted to strict media laws to curtail and suppress the work of investigative journalists. Laws such as the criminal defamation, sedition and insult laws are making life difficult for journalists, not just investigative journalists. According to Limpitlaw despite oft-expressed anger at the colonial era and its on-going repercussions for the continent, African ruling elites have essentially retained colonial-era media law.⁸⁹ In Zambia⁹⁰, Tanzania⁹¹, and Botswana⁹² sedition laws have been used to go after journalists viewed to be too critical of the government in the last four years. According to Mudhai in some cases to information for journalists in Africa is heavily monitored. In Zimbabwe, access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act compels state registration of journalists, while the Interception of Communication Bill of 2006 proposes blanket state interception of

⁸⁶ Ibid

⁸⁷ Groenink, E and Posthumus, B (2006). 'The Marshall's Treason: 'A 30-Million Dollar Story' & 'Cuts and Expenses'. Netherlands Institute for Southern Africa.

⁸⁸ Ibid. p. 36

⁸⁹ Limpitlaw J. (2011). 'Media Law Handbook for Southern Africa'. *KAS Media Africa. South Africa*

⁹⁰ Fox News (2013) <http://www.foxnews.com/world/2013/07/10/zambia-charges-two-journalists-with-sedition.html>

⁹¹ Article 19 (2017) <https://www.article19.org/resources/tanzania-newspaper-mwanahalisi-banned-for-sedition/>

⁹² *Mail and Guardian* (2014) <https://mg.co.za/article/2014-09-11-outrage-over-sedition-charge-against-botswana-journalist/>

phone calls and email messages. “The unfavourable legal environments make life nightmarish for most African media houses and their journalists” argues Mudhai.⁹³

The continent is, however, making some efforts to repeal some of these laws. According to Limptlaw, in 2010, the African Commission on Human and Peoples rights adopted a resolution on rescinding criminal defamation laws in Africa. “The resolution calls on states parties to repeal criminal defamation and insult laws which impede freedom of speech. In May 2013, the Pan African Parliament adopted the Midrand Declaration on Press Freedom in Africa. The Pan African Parliament resolved to launch campaign entitled ‘Press Freedom for Development and Governance: Need for Reform’ in all five regions of Africa.”⁹⁴

Some scholars have questioned the genuineness and thoroughness of African investigative journalism. The question they raise is whether African journalism upholds the high standards of journalism. Rønning is perhaps the harshest critic of African investigative journalism. According to Rønning, many stories that appear in the African press attributed to investigative journalism do not adhere to proper standards of journalism practice. Rønning argues that, “Good investigative journalism does not sensationalize. It is not based on gossip and it does not consist of rumour-mongering. Much of what is presented as investigative journalism in Africa is based on poorly sourced material, often only one source, which has not been properly checked.”⁹⁵

However, Rønning’s argument is defective. While it is true that some journalists do not adhere to journalistic standards as it is the case elsewhere around the world, by arguing that ‘many African stories’ do not adhere to standards over simplifies reality. Schiffrin dismisses this line of argument. According to Schiffrin, in the Global North, the contributions, of African journalists are unknown, often because of a sneaking assumption that good journalism simply doesn’t originate in Africa. Schiffrin argues further that: “African journalism not only exists but is part of

⁹³ Kaplan (2018) Email correspondence (February 12).

⁹⁴ Ibid. p.82

⁹⁵ Rønning, H. (2009). ‘The politics of corruption and the media in Africa’. p.166

a tradition going back more than a century. Further, it is activism-orientated, influential and growing.”⁹⁶ In her work, Schiffrin and other African journalists profile some of the best work ever produced in the continent. These include the best investigative stories produced during the continent’s struggle for independence, the apartheid era in South Africa, military rule in Nigeria, the famine and disease in the continent, the rampant corruption in the continent, the coverage of extractive industries, and the coverage of human and women rights stories.

3.5 Conclusion

Investigative journalism has gone through significant transformational stages in the past decades. Its definition and meaning has evolved over the years. In the United States, the 19th century muckrakers exposed corporate and government corruption and, later the reportage of the Watergate scandal reinvigorated the craft of investigative journalism, not only in the US but all over the world. In Britain, a new kind of journalism emerged in the 1800s with a daring and audacious journalist employing what was then unorthodox methods of sourcing for information. William Stead undercover investigative journalism methods are still employed by journalists around the world more than 100 years later. In Africa, investigative journalism played a critical in the fight against colonialism, racial discrimination, military dictatorships, authoritarianism and corruption. The conclusion is that despite a litany of challenges of challenges (such as lack of resources, media friendly laws, intimidation and violence) African media continues to play a critical role in holding power to account. In the next chapter I look at not-for-profit investigative journalism as a new model for quality journalism.

⁹⁶ Schiffrin, A. (2017). ‘African Muckraking: 100 Years of African Investigative Journalism’

CHAPTER FOUR

Not-for-profit journalism: The new model for investigative journalism?

4.1 Overview

In this chapter, I attempt to unpack the phenomenal surge in not-for-profit organizations around the world. To achieve this, I start by giving a brief general definition and description of not for profit organizations, assess the need for not-for-profit investigative journalism, and finally, I provide a history and development of not-for-profit investigative journalism centres in the world.

4.2 What are not-for-profit organizations?

Not-for-profit organizations are important bodies and stakeholders in any society. They are entities that do not seek to earn a profit for their founders and shareholders and rely on donations to survive and carry out their programs. This is a simple definition of not-for-profit organizations. To get a clearer understanding of these entities, it is essential to offer a methodical definition. Salamon and Anheier provide the best definition. In developing the most comprehensive definition of not-for-profit organizations, they identified five operational features that distinguish not-for-profit organizations from other organizations. The following are the operational features that define not-profit organizations according to Salamon and Anheier:

- *Organised*, i.e. institutionalized for some extent. And possessing some institutional reality, which separates the organisation from informal entities such as families, gatherings or movements;
- *Private*, i.e., institutionally separate from government, which sets the entity apart from the public sector. They are not part of the government.

- *Non-profit-distributing*, i.e., not returning any profits generated to owners or equivalents, which distinguishes non-profits from businesses;
- *Self-governing*, i.e., equipped to control their own activities. Not-for profit organizations have their own internal procedures for governance and are not controlled by outsiders.
- *Voluntary*, i.e., involving some meaningful degree of voluntary participation, either in the actual conduct of the agency's activities or in the management of its affairs.⁹⁷

According to Salamon and Anheier the five conditions identified in the operational definition will vary in degrees and some organizations may qualify more easily on one criterion than the other.⁹⁸ To be considered part of the not-for-profit sector under this definition, however, an organization must make a reasonable showing on all of the five of these criteria. With this definition as the reference point, the next section will now assess the history of not-for-profit organizations in journalism.

4.3 Why not-for-profit in investigative journalism?

In 2007, when the Centre for International Media Assistance surveyed not-for-profit organizations, it found out that they were 39 of these organizations in 26 countries.⁹⁹ As of March 2018, Global Investigative Journalism Network an international association of not-for-profit organizations that support, promote and produce investigative journalism had a membership of about 163 investigative journalism organizations in 72 countries. The numbers has increased significantly. The question is why is this the case? In responding to this, Lewis argues that growing market pressures on the traditional news media are highlighting the need

⁹⁷ Salamon, L.M and Anheier, H.K (1992) 'In Search of the non-profit Sector; The question of definitions'. *Voluntas: International Journal of Voluntary and Nonprofit Organizations*. P. 125-151

⁹⁸ Ibid

⁹⁹ Kaplan, D. 'Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support'

for an expanding not-for-profit media sector that will act more directly in the public interest.¹⁰⁰ The economic challenges faced by news organizations around the world meant that they paid little to investigative stories hence the need to find a model to address this anomaly. As news organizations reduced their commitment to investigative journalism there has been an incalculable cost to communities and to the citizens' ability to monitor those in power, Lewis observed¹⁰¹. Investigative reporters as such are attracted to not-for-profit model because they believe it will allow them to focus more on their investigative work with fewer impediments and truer mission.¹⁰²

Behind not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations around the world are international aid groups and foundations. According to Kaplan the investigative journalism's emphasis on public accountability, targeting crime and corruption, and demonstrated impact have attracted millions of dollars in media development funding from international donors, who see it as an important force in promoting the rule of law and democratization.¹⁰³ There are some who are apprehensive by the involvement of donor foundations or aid organizations in journalism. Brownie raises issues of 'hidden agendas' and interests by the aid organizations as having the potential to contaminate the profession.¹⁰⁴ Lewis, counters this, arguing that transparency about donors is essential to protect the integrity of the editorial and journalistic processes.¹⁰⁵ Investigative journalists, media analysts, scholars and even donors agree that sustainability of not-for-profit journalism organizations is a major concern. Picard and Levy addressed this when they noted that foundation support of news organizations is unlikely to sustain news operations over the long run unless a new model is found¹⁰⁶.

¹⁰⁰ Lewis, C. 'Growing importance of nonprofit investigative journalism'

¹⁰¹ Ibid

¹⁰² Houston, B (2009). 'Emerging models for regional and state non-profit investigative journalism Centres'. *Duke Conference on non-profit media*

¹⁰³ Kaplan, D. 'Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support.'

¹⁰⁴ Harry Browne (2010) 'Foundation-Funded Journalism', *Journalism Studies*, p. 901

¹⁰⁵ Lewis (2007). 'The growing importance of nonprofit journalism'. Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy, Harvard University. p. 6.

¹⁰⁶ Picard, R. G and Levy, D. (2010). What we now know about Charitable and Trust Ownership of News organizations. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism, Oxford University.

Because the interests of foundations vary over time depending upon their governance and programmes, funding for news enterprises provided by general foundations and community foundations cannot be expected to be a long-term solution to challenges facing news organisations. Those operating new organisations need to ensure their sources of funding are continually diversified to reduce dependence on any one source, including foundations.¹⁰⁷

Kaplan agrees with Picard and Levy and weather to reveal that unfortunately most suggests that not-for-profit organizations are far from achieving this. According to Kaplan few not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations, particularly reporting centers, have adequate sustainability plans. To survive in a competitive and poorly funded environment, many will need to diversify and become more entrepreneurial, drawing revenue from various sources and activities¹⁰⁸. Carvajal, et al. make a strong case for crowdfunding as a model for not-for-profit public interest news organizations because it places the audience back at the heart of the journalistic mission. According to Carvajal, investigative journalism is discovering new ways to obtain resources, engage users and involve them in the process. Carvajal, argue that in this process, audiences participate in the production of news and quality journalism in a broader sense than that of traditional media. “Instead of replacing the journalism professional with citizen journalists, crowdfunded journalism gives users the role of producers without endangering content quality,” argues Carvajal.¹⁰⁹ Kaplan suggests that investigative not-for-profit organizations generally fall under three types; (1) reporting centres, which produce editorial products ranging from documentaries to beat stories; (2) associations and training centres, which include membership organizations and professional networks; (3) and funding organizations which typically give out relatively small grants, ranging from few hundred to a few thousands to journalists for stories.¹¹⁰

4.4 History and development: Not-for-profit in investigative journalism

¹⁰⁷ Ibid. p.133

¹⁰⁸ Kaplan, D. ‘Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support.’

¹⁰⁹ Carvajal, M, García-Avilés J. A and González, J L. (2012). Crowdfunding and Non-Profit Media. *Journalism Practice*. p 638-647.

¹¹⁰ Kaplan, D. ‘Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support’ p. 28

4.4.1 United States of America: The Pacesetter

To properly understand the not-for-profit investigative journalism, the media in the United States of America is the starting point. The US has a long and well-established tradition of not-for-profit journalism.¹¹¹ It was in the US that the idea of non-profit news started in the 1800s and developed further in the 1900s and the 2000s. The oldest and perhaps the largest not-for-profit news organization in the world is the Associated Press, better known as AP. The news organization was formed in 1846 as a cooperative venture. The organization was founded by five news organizations in New York to share the costs of reporting and transmitting news of the Mexican-American War. The central figure in the formation of the organization, Moses Yale Beach was responsible for organizing, *New York Herald*, *The New York Courier and Enquirer*, *The Journal of Commerce* and *New York Express* around the idea. Today AP operates in 263 locations around the world in more than 100 countries.¹¹²

Other news organizations such as the Christian Science Monitor, The Petersburg Times, The Manchester Union Leader, The day, Anniston Star, Delaware State news, and other publications such as Congressional Quarterly, National Geographic, Consumer reports, Mother Jones, Foreign Affairs, Foreign Policy and Harpers, were also started as not-for-profit news organizations.¹¹³ On the national television front, programs such as Frontline, and The News Hour with Jim Lehrer were aired on the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) a not-for-profit organization created in 1967.¹¹⁴

Despite their rigorous reporting, these organizations mentioned above were not involved in the practice of investigative journalism. Not-for-profit investigative journalism however only

¹¹¹ Lewis C. 'The growing importance of nonprofit journalism'

¹¹² AP (2018). <https://www.ap.org/about/our-story/>

¹¹³ Lewis, C. (2007) 'The growing importance of nonprofit journalism'. *Joan Shorenstein Center on the Press, Politics and Public Policy*

¹¹⁴ Ibid

emerged in the US during the reemergence of the investigative journalism in the 1970s, few years after the famous Watergate scandal that had catapulted Bob Woodward and Carl Bernstein into national heroes. Feldstein traces the development of not-for-profit organizations to the invention of the copying machine. Feldstein argues that the invention of the copying machine helped whistle-blowers leak evidence documenting wrongdoing and not-for-profit organizations devoted to institutionalizing watchdog journalism, such as Investigative Reporters and Editors, Centre for Investigative Reporting, and the Fund for Investigative Journalism took root.”¹¹⁵

The first not-for-profit investigative journalism centre dedicated to doing investigative reporting was formed in 1977 by retrenched Rolling Stones magazine investigative journalists, Lowell Bergman, and David Weir, together with their colleague Dan Noyes.¹¹⁶ The California based centre specialized mainly on California based Centre for Investigative journalism which was formed in 1977. According to the organization, it serves to “engage and empower the public through investigative journalism and ground-breaking storytelling to spark action, improve lives and protect our democracy.”¹¹⁷

It is also worth adding that two years earlier another investigative journalism organization Investigative Reporters and Editors was formed. Unlike the Centre for Investigative Journalism, its primary focus was not on producing investigative journalism but to facilitate collaboration between investigative journalists and at the same time to set the standards for the craft. According to Houston who is also one of the organization’s executive director IRE only engaged in its investigative project of its own just once when a car bomb in Phoenix, Arizona killed its founding member. Houston recalls that the six-month investigation involved forty journalists from twenty-eight different news organizations across the United States and expanded on the murdered reporter’s work on organized crime and public corruption. Houston states, “The

¹¹⁵ Feldstein, M. ‘Muckraking Model: Investigative Reporting Cycles in American History’ p. 6

¹¹⁶ Lewis. ‘The growing importance of nonprofit journalism.’

¹¹⁷ Centre for Investigative Journalism, <https://www.revealnews.org/about-us/> Accessed February 20, 2018.

investigation resulted in a high profile- twenty-three-part series known as the Arizona project.”¹¹⁸

Centre for Public Integrity, a brainchild of not-for-profit journalism czar, Charles Lewis, was formed in 1989 and became one of the best known not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in the United States, and the rest of the world. The centre is based in Washington DC. A former CBS News Producer, Lewis says that he was frustrated that investigative reporting did not seem to be particularly valued at the national level.¹¹⁹ The centre’s primary mission is to serve democracy by revealing abuses of power, corruption and betrayal of public trust by powerful public and private institutions, using tools of investigative journalism.¹²⁰ In 1997 Lewis started International Consortium of Investigative Journalists – a network of investigative journalists around the world as an internal project of Center for Public Integrity¹²¹. The network focused primarily on cross-border investigative journalism. About the formation of the centre, Lewis adds that he was convinced that commercial media organizations would never be able to create such a collaborative entity, “because of their overweening individual pride, arrogance, competitiveness and thus their inability to ‘play in the sandbox with others”.¹²²

ICIJ has produced major collaborative investigative work since its formation. The major collaborative work includes the Pulitzer Prize-winning Panama Papers (of which I participated) and the later the Paradise Papers. Other successful not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations such as multi-award winning ProPublica, Investigative Reporting Workshop, Investigative News Network and The Marshall Project have been set up in the last few years.

4.4.2 Not-for-profit around the world: How the world adopted the US model

¹¹⁸ Houston, B. (2010). ‘The Future of Investigative Journalism’. *American Academy of Arts and Science*. p.46

¹¹⁹ Lewis, C. (2010)

¹²⁰ Centre for Public Integrity (2018) <https://www.publicintegrity.org/about>

¹²¹ Lewis, C (2018). ‘Tear Down These Walls: innovations in Collaborative Accountability Research and reporting’. Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism.

¹²² Ibid p.18

From this, it is clear that the United States is a pacesetter whose influence around the world is immense when it comes to not-for-profit investigative journalism. Not-for-profit investigative journalism in Europe is a relatively new concept, and was developed in the early 2000s. It did not start in major European countries such as the United Kingdom, France, or Germany, but mainly in the Balkans following the fall of communism. The oldest organization, Romanian Centre for Investigative Journalism, was formed in 2001 by three journalists Stefan Cădea, Sorin Ozon and Paul Radu. According to Radu the formation of the centre was out of the need for a strong investigative journalism organization to uncover corruption and ties between high ranking officials, organized crime groups and crooked intelligence officers, in Romania.¹²³ As one of the largest and perhaps the most successful investigative journalism organization, the centre produces articles on arms trade, offshore media ownership and international organized crime.¹²⁴

In 2006 the centre was influential in the formation of what is perhaps Europe largest investigative journalism collaborative network – Organised Crime and Corruption Reporting Project.¹²⁵ Radu and Drew Sullivan formed OCCRP as an investigative project to look into shady electricity deals in the Balkans. The initial project was successful, and the project has since extended beyond Eastern Europe to continents such as Africa, North America, and Latin America.¹²⁶ The centre has registered unparalleled success since it was established. Since 2009 its reporting has led to:

- US\$ 5.735 billion in assets frozen or seized by governments.
- 84 criminal investigations and government inquiries launched as a result of its stories.
- 81 calls for action by civil, public or international bodies.
- 147 arrest warrants issued with 7 subjects on the run.

¹²³ Lewis. 'The growing importance of nonprofit journalism'

¹²⁴ Ibid

¹²⁵ OCCRP

¹²⁶ Paul Radu (2018) Email Interview

- 20 major sackings, including a President, Prime Minister and CEOs of major international corporations.
- Over 1,400 company closures, indictments and court decisions.¹²⁷

Not-for-profit investigative journalism such as The Baltic Centre for Investigative Journalism, Centre for Investigative Journalism of Montenegro, Balkan Investigative Reporting Network, Centre for Investigative Reporting in Bosnia-Herzegovina, and many others were formed in the Eastern Europe in the early and late 2000s.

Notwithstanding its robust history media, in the United Kingdom, not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations only appeared in the picture much later. The Centre for Investigative Journalism was initially formed in 2003 but not as a news organization but to run a Summer Investigative Journalism School. These days, the organization's primary mission is to provide a centre for excellence for the training of journalists; to raise the standard of investigative reporting to a high level.¹²⁸ The organization hosts a number of training sessions every year. The first organization dedicated to producing investigative journalism work in the UK was only created in 2010. Ironically, the UK's first not-for-profit investigative journalism news organization, The Bureau for Investigative Journalism, was not formed by journalists but by the funders. According to the organization's website, the organization was founded by wealthy philanthropists David and Elaine Porter. They also sit on the organization's board of directors.¹²⁹ TBIJ aims to inform the public through in-depth investigative journalism, with no corporate or political agenda. "Through fact-based, unbiased reporting, we expose systematic wrongs, counter misinformation and spark change," reads the TBIJ's website.¹³⁰

In Asia, Philippines Centre for Investigative Journalism stands out as the oldest and the most successful not-for-profit in the region. Founded in 1989 by Shiela Coronel with few hundred

¹²⁷ OCCRP website <https://www.occrp.org/en/about-us>

¹²⁸ The Centre for Investigative Journalism, <https://www.tcij.org>

¹²⁹ The Bureau of Investigative Journalism, <https://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/about-us>

¹³⁰ Ibid

dollars and single typewriter, the PCIJ has grown into the gold standard for investigative journalism.¹³¹ According to Kaplan, the centre is best known for its series on the hidden wealth of President Joseph Estrada, which forced his resignation.

“...The PCIJ’s impact goes far beyond that scandal [Estrada’s scandal]. Its reporters have broken hundreds of stories in print, radio, TV, and online; produced eight documentaries; and written two dozen books, meticulously documenting official corruption and corporate abuse. Its trainers have almost single-handedly educated a generation of investigative journalists in the Philippines and spread their know-how across Asia.”¹³²

In Asia, PCIJ is considered one of the most successful investigative journalism model, and has been replicated by other journalists in Asian countries. In Africa, not-for-profit investigative journalism concept is relatively new. The oldest organization dedicated to investigative journalism in Africa is the now defunct Forum for African Investigative Reporters. The organization was formed in 2003 as a professional association of investigative journalists in Africa. Its mission was to enhance, deepen and build investigative journalism as a profession throughout the continent.¹³³ It is not clear when and how the organization ceased to operate but from its website it shows that its last Annual General Meeting was in November 2013. In Nigeria, Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism was formed in 2005. When it was established, it operated under the name Wole Soyinka Investigative Reporting Award, but it changed the name and its focus in 2008.¹³⁴ Initially the centre recognized excellence in journalism by giving awards to deserving reporters. The centre now supports investigative journalists in Nigeria with resources, training and continues to recognize excellence in journalism by awarding prizes to journalists.¹³⁵

¹³¹Kaplan, D. ‘Global Investigative Journalism: Strategies for Support’

¹³² Ibid

¹³³ FAIR website <https://fairreporters.wordpress.com/about/> Accessed February 25, 2018

¹³⁴ Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism. <http://wscij.org/about-us/> Accessed February 25, 2018

¹³⁵ Ibid

The first not-for-profit investigative journalism centre that is dedicated to producing investigative journalism is a South African organization, Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism, formerly known as M&G Centre for Investigative Journalism. The Centre is the subject of this study as we shall see in the later chapters. Since 2010 more centres have emerged in Africa. To date, there are fifteen (15) non-profit investigative journalism organizations in Africa. Other centres include Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism (Nigeria), New Narratives (Liberia), African Investigative Publishing Collective (Continental), Norbet Zongo Cell for Investigative Journalism in West Africa (Burkina Faso), INKYFADA (Tunisia), Centre for Investigative Journalism (Malawi), INK Centre For Investigative Journalism (Botswana), Oxpeckers Centre for Investigative Environmental Journalism, African Network of Centres for Investigative Reporting (Continental), Lesotho Centre for Investigative Journalism, Zimferrets Investigative Journalism Hub, The Namibian Investigative Journalism Unit, Makanday Centre for Investigative Journalism (Zambia).

4.5 Conclusion

A not-for-profit model has significantly developed and evolved in the last three decades. In 1989 there were only three such organizations in the world, but ever since the number has increased significantly. To date, there are more than 160 not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in the world according to the Global Investigative Journalism Network. More of these organizations are created every year. While it is true that the disturbances in the economic foundations of newspapers have contributed to the upsurge in these organizations, this study argues that investigative reporters' desire to hold power to account equally played a part. This argument shall be developed further in the following chapters where I focus on specific investigative journalism centres.

CHAPTER FIVE

Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism

“The centre came about as a result of frustrations we had... We wanted to achieve more”

5.1 Overview

Sam Sole and Stefaans Brümmer were trailblazing journalists whose journalism careers had started in the 1980s and 1990s, respectively. Sole had been a journalist since 1986 and had worked for news organizations such as Nooseweek, Sunday Tribune before joining the Mail and Guardian in 2002¹³⁶. Brümmer, on the other hand, cuts his reporting teeth at Cape Argus in the early 1990s before joining *Mail and Guardian* as democracy dawned in April 1994¹³⁷. It was at the *Mail and Guardian* - an iconic anti-apartheid the two men (and many others) partnered on major investigative stories that exposed corruption in government. Some of the major stories included, the Oilgate scandal, which traced the involvement of an ANC-linked company in diverting money from a state contract to the coffers of the party¹³⁸, and the arms deal scandal, a \$2.3 billion deal to buy military equipment in the late 1990s that was plagued by allegations of fraud and corruption¹³⁹.

5.2 Motivation and Historical context

With dozens of awards to their names and unparalleled success in South African journalism, the two men were unsatisfied with the standard of investigative journalism in the country. Together with a young journalist Adrian Basson, the two decided to establish an investigations unit at the *Mail and Guardian* newspaper in 2009. Immediately after that, they registered a non-profit investigative journalism organization which was then known as M&G Centre for

¹³⁶ <http://amabhungane.co.za/page/team-amabhungane>. Retrieved April 30, 2018

¹³⁷ Ibid

¹³⁸ Ibid

¹³⁹ Kumwenda-Mtambo O. (2017) Digging Dung: South Africa’s Amabhungane heaps pressure on Zuma. Retrieved April 30, 2018. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-safrica-media-amabhungane-idUSKCN1B81AJ?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29

Investigative journalism. The not-for-profit outlet was also colloquially known as Amabhungane, a Zulu word for dung beetles. “The centre came about as a result of the frustrations we had. The frustrations were not mainly with the M&G but with the general pace of investigative journalism in the country,” says Brümmer now the organization’s co-managing partner¹⁴⁰. While *Mail and Guardian* had a fair amount of resources to go after investigative stories, the formation of the centre was because they ‘wanted to achieve more’ he says¹⁴¹. The other reason behind the formation was because they wanted to have enough time to work on investigations without pressures from the news desk, which in most cases demanded the investigations unit to churn more investigative stories week in and week out¹⁴².

The formation of the organization in 2010 came at a time when not-for-profit investigative models around the world were taking shape. In the United States, ProPublica was launched in 2007. In the United Kingdom, Bureau for Investigative Journalism was launched a month before Amabhungane. Other organizations such as Centre for Public Integrity and Centre for Investigative Reporting in the US, had already proved to the world that not for profit investigative models were viable. Says Brümmer, “We looked around the world for an investigative model around, and we were very much impressed by non profit models in the US, UK, and Eastern Europe.” The new centre registered with Companies and Intellectual Property Commission as a Not for Profit company (NPC), with Brümmer and Sole as the principal shareholders. With a model in place Sam, Stef and Basson started discussions with *Mail and Guardian* and agreed that the new centre would be corporately distinct from the newspaper.

In 2010 the centre signed a service agreement with the *Mail and Guardian*. According to the agreement, Sole, Brümmer and Adrian were to continue as the newspaper’s employees but on secondment to the newly formed establishment. The also produced stories exclusively to the paper¹⁴³. The organization further introduced the training and advocacy components. When

¹⁴⁰ Brümmer S. (2018) Skype Interview. (April 30)

¹⁴¹ Ibid

¹⁴² Ibid

¹⁴³ Ibid

the centre was formally launched in 2010, Open Society Foundation – South Africa and *Mail and Guardian* became the organization's first seed funders.

At the organization's launch in 2010, the former *Mail and Guardian* editor, Nic Dawes, said the centre was formed to insist on "accountability both in government and in the private sector"¹⁴⁴. Dawes continued, "From corruption and governance issues to health, the environment and poverty, *Amabhungane* will be working to turn the dross of greed and self-interest into fertilizer for democracy." Not everyone was excited by the new outfit, however. An editor on the Bookslive blog dismissed the formation of the organization on April 10 as 'half baked' initiative. The Centre, he said was more like a "weekend high school project". "The Likes of *Mail and Guardian* – a veritable pillar of South Africa's democracy – deserved something less frivolous [like *Amabhungane*]"¹⁴⁵ read the editor's commentary. As we shall see later, *Amabhungane* has proved to be more than just "a weekend high school project".

5.3 Funding Model: Success, challenges and the future

The organization's initial funder was Open Society Foundations - South Africa, an organization that is well known for supporting independent journalism and of course the *Mail and Guardian*. While Open Society Foundation supported the organization with R1million (about US\$ 100,000) in its first year the *Mail and Guardian*'s support was around P2 million (R200,000) a year. Brümmer, however, stresses that the support was mainly in kind and included the use of *Mail and Guardian*'s office space and other resources by the organization. In its first year, the organization operated with a budget of about R3 million (US\$ 300,000)¹⁴⁶. With a sound budget, the centre started on a sound footing than similar organizations in the continent.

¹⁴⁴ Bookslive. (2010) The *Mail and Guardian* Launches *Amabhungane*. Retrieved April 30, 2018. <http://bookslive.co.za/blog/2010/04/12/media-watch-the-mail-guardian-launches-amabhungane-its-centre-for-investigative-journalism-symbolised-by-a-dung-beetle/>

¹⁴⁵ Ibid

¹⁴⁶ Brümmer S. (2018) Skype Interview

As the organization expanded its programme, it was able to attract more funding from other donors mostly from South Africa. In few years after its formation, the centre managed to source funding from organizations such as Open Society Initiative of Southern Africa, Bertha Foundation, Millennium Trust, Raith Foundation, Social Justice Initiative, and Claude Leon Foundation. The Centre's ability to attract more funding led to expansion. Reporters, as well as fellows within and outside South Africa, were engaged. Five years after the centre's formation, it operated with a budget of about R9 million (about \$850 000) a year according to the Centre's 2015/2016 audited financial report¹⁴⁷. Consistent funding helped the organization to produce better investigative stories, as well as offering training to journalists.

In 2016, six years after the formation of the organization, it parted ways with *Mail and Guardian*. In their press statement, Brümmer and Sole said the organization was to distribute stories more widely – through a selection of print and online titles, social media and their new website. The organization relaunched as Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism. “Well, “M&G’s” we will be no more. But to the M&G, which helped form, found and find us and with whose journalists we have shared the exhilarating rollercoaster ride that is reporting in this part of the world, our lasting gratitude.”¹⁴⁸.

Perhaps what was missing in the well-crafted statement was that before the separation, Sole and Brümmer had engaged in a bitter battle with the management of *Mail and Guardian* over costs.

Since parting ways with the *Mail and Guardian*, the centre has managed to retain other donors. Furthermore, the centre has moved to create a grassroots funding movement. In 2017 the centre raised R2.3 million (\$190 000) through its crowdfunding platform *GivenGain*. As of May 2018, they have raised R1.6 million (\$136 000)¹⁴⁹. “It is quite amazing that in our first year,

¹⁴⁷ Amabhungane (2016). 2015 -2016 Annual Financial Statements. Retrieved April 30, 2018 <http://serve.mg.co.za/content/documents/2016/07/25/160721amabauditedafs-ocr.pdf>

¹⁴⁸ M&G Reporter. (2016) Goodbye, Hello from Amabhungane. Retrieved April 30, 2018. <https://mg.co.za/article/2016-04-01-goodbye-hello-from-amabhungane-1>

¹⁴⁹ GivenGain (2018) <https://www.givengain.com/cc/amab>

2016, we only raised R800 000 (\$65,000) and the following year we raised more than R2.3 million.”¹⁵⁰ He attributes this to the support they got following the publication of the Gupta leaks in 2017. The Gupta leaks were stories that exposed Former president’s Jacob Zuma’s corrupt dealings with an Indian immigrant family – the Guptas. The centre aims to get at least 33% of its budget from small internet donations in the next three years. “Ultimately, we want to be able to at least receive 50% of our donations from the small donors on the internet,” says Brümmer who also doubles as the organization’s main fundraiser and administrator¹⁵¹. Perhaps the biggest challenge for most not-for-profit organizations in Africa, including Amabhungane is that most of them are often forced to apply for funding every year to sustain their operations, a process that does not bring stability to most organizations. Stefaans says, “Multi-year funding is preferable by far. It reduces the administrative burden on both sides. It also gives greater insulation from what one could call "passive editorial interference" in the sense of funders not replicating funding if they don't like the editorial line a grantee newsroom has taken.”

But how sustainable is the organization? Brümmer insists they are keeping the organization sustainable by making sure they diversify funding. Currently the organization’s major donor contributes around 19.3% to the annual budget. He says, “The trick is to keep the percentage as low as possible. We don’t want to be overexposed to one donor”¹⁵².

5.4 Practice, Impact and Challenges

Amabhungane’s investigative journalism work is unmatched not by even major news organizations in South Africa. Since 2010, the centre has been at the forefront of holding power to account producing an average of 200 stories per year. Brümmer says that after following their decision to end their relationship with *Mail and Guardian* in 2016, they have now set the

¹⁵⁰ Brümmer S. (2018) Skype Interview

¹⁵¹ Ibid

¹⁵² Ibid

target to 100 stories a year. “Without undue pressure from M&G news desk we are now able to take our time to work on more in-depth stories.”¹⁵³ The biggest story by Amabhungane has to be the Guptaleaks. This section looks at how the centre covered the story and the impact thereafter.

Brümmer and Sole began investigating Jacob Zuma even before he became president. In fact, since the early 2000s the duo has been working on stories that exposed president Zuma’s involvement in South Africa’s major arms procurement scandal known as the Armsgate. When Amabhungane was formed in 2010 a year after Zuma became president, the centre dedicated a considerable amount of time and resources investigating Zuma and his family. The organization’s first series of stories on Zuma appeared under the headline, Zuma Inc. “We looked at the Zuma family and how its business fortunes had grown since Zuma took the office of President,” Brümmer says¹⁵⁴.

It was during formative years of their investigations that the team came across the Gupta name suggesting that the then little known Indian immigrant family had close ties not only President Zuma himself but also with other members of his family. The centre produced several stories that exposed the influence of the family on Zuma, cabinet ministers and state-owned entities. Impressed by their tireless work on president Zuma and his family, Daily Maverick¹⁵⁵ editor Branko Brkic approached Amabhungane with a terabyte of data on the Zuma – Gupta emails and immediately the two organizations started working on a major investigation that later took down President Zuma. “I never had any intentions to work with anyone else in South Africa on the Gupta Leaks...Working with Amabhungane was a completely natural choice and I really

¹⁵³ Ibid

¹⁵⁴ Kumwenda-Mtambo, O. (2017) Digging Dung: South Africa’s Amabhungane heaps pressure on Zuma. Retrieved April 30, 2018. https://www.reuters.com/article/us-safrica-media-amabhungane-idUSKCN1B81AJ?feedType=RSS&feedName=worldNews&utm_source=feedburner&utm_medium=feed&utm_campaign=Feed%3A+Reuters%2FworldNews+%28Reuters+World+News%29

¹⁵⁵ Daily Maverick is an independent South African online publication

didn't waste any time pondering about it. On top of it all, they spent years investigating the Guptas — and had a massive head start compared to anyone else,"¹⁵⁶ said Brkic.

The organization teamed up with *Daily Maverick* and *Media24*, the country's largest online media organization now headed by Adrian Basson, Amabhungane's founding member. Other organizations such as *Finance Uncovered*, *Open Up and Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project* joined the collaborative effort to offer technical assistance. The three organization published stories in their online and print platforms as well as a joint online platform called www.gupta-leaks.com¹⁵⁷. On June 01, 2017, the organizations started publishing the damning Guptaleaks stories immediately capturing the attention of the country.

Amabhungane's investigative work including the publication of the Gupta leaks is widely credited for helping in the ultimate fall of President Zuma. According to Brümmer even though initially there no immediate impact, their previous stories on Zuma and the Guptas piled pressure on the President and his friends. Brümmer however cautioned that unlike in the west, in Africa it is not common for leaders to resign from office after being exposed by the media for wrongdoing. "With too much pressure [from the media] the dam eventually burst" says Brümmer¹⁵⁸.

From the Guptaleaks trove, Amabhungane and their partners published stories such as, "*How Bell Pottinger sought to package SA economic message*", "*Despite denials, Free State dairy farm was huge cash spinner for Guptas*", "*Guptas and associates score R5.3bn in locomotives kickbacks*" to the utter shock of the public. Within eight months after the publication of the Gupta leaks, President Zuma had lost his job, 10 ministers linked to the family were fired from cabinet [by the new president Cyril Ramaphosa] and multinational corporations such as

¹⁵⁶ Schmidt, C. (2018) Digging for dung, unearthing corruption: This south African investigative nonprofit could help take down the president. Retrieved April 30, 2018 <http://www.niemanlab.org/2018/01/digging-for-dung-unearting-corruption-this-south-african-investigative-nonprofit-could-help-take-down-the-president/>

¹⁵⁷ Guptaleaks Website. (2018). Retrieved May 10, 2018. <http://www.gupta-leaks.com/>

¹⁵⁸ Brümmer S. (2018) Skype Interview

KPMG¹⁵⁹ and SAP¹⁶⁰ were shamed for their links with the family. Further the Gupta family's multibillion empire collapsed spectacularly.¹⁶¹

Not all of its investigations have been about Jacob Zuma and the Gupta family. The organization has worked on stories on mining, tobacco smuggling, corporate greed amongst other. The centre has also worked on International Consortium of Investigative Journalism's projects such as offshore leaks, Panama Papers and the Paradise Papers.

The Centre's award winning investigative work has attracted much criticism in some quarters in the country. A radical organization that is closely linked to the both Zuma and the Gupta family called Black First Land First has been vocal about its disdain of Amabhungane and its journalists. Following the publication of the Guptaleaks the group has disrupted the organization's town hall events and have at times manhandled the organization's journalists¹⁶². Brümmer who has been at the receiving end of the group's hostility and aggression say this was mainly a ploy to divert attention from the Guptaleaks. Brümmer observed, "The real story is about the Guptas. They want to turn the story away from the Gupta Leaks. They want to divert us. Turning journalists into a story will help their cause because their cause is to divert to us: to keep us from doing our investigations surrounding the Gupta leaks."¹⁶³ The organization was also a subject of social online disinformation and abuse. Social media trolls have often presented Brümmer and his partner Sole as vicious racists. "They were allegations in the social media that we beat up our employees and also sleep around with them," says Brümmer¹⁶⁴. For Brümmer

¹⁵⁹ Cotterill J. (2018) KPMG South Africa Executives dismissed over Gupta scandal. Retrieved May 10, 2018. <https://www.ft.com/content/ce8ddb84-9a01-11e7-a652-cde3f882dd7b>

¹⁶⁰ Reuters Staff. (2018). Germany's SAP admits misconduct in South Africa Gupta deals. Retrieved 10 May 2018. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-sap-safrica/germanys-sap-admits-misconduct-in-south-africa-gupta-deals-idUSKCN1GK19M>

¹⁶¹ Mashego A, et al. (2018). Gupta empire crumbles. News24. Retrieved May 10, 2018. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/gupta-empire-crumbles-20180128-3>

¹⁶² Amabhungane. (2017) <http://amabhungane.co.za/article/2017-07-28-statement-blf-linked-disruption-of-amab-guptaleaks-town-hall-discussion>

¹⁶³ de Villiers. (2017). BLF in altercation with Amabhungane journalist and cape Town airport. News24. Retrieved May 10, 2018. <https://www.news24.com/SouthAfrica/News/blf-in-altercation-with-amabhungane-journalist-at-cape-town-airport-20170802>

¹⁶⁴ Brümmer S. (2018) Skype Interview

the attacks have not affected their journalism but embolden them to further hold those in power accountable for their actions.

5.5 Conclusion

As the oldest news gathering, not-for-profit organization in Africa, Amabhungane has been a force to reckon with in South Africa and the southern African region. In this chapter, we have seen how frustrated reporters put together a not-for-profit outlet that would later play a pivotal role in the fall of a sitting president, cabinet ministers, business executives and the major companies. We have also seen how the centre was able to mobilize the public to fund some of its groundbreaking investigations through online crowdfunding initiatives. The centre's colloquial mantra of finding a sweet spot where organized crime, politics and business intersect has defined its investigative works since it was created in 2010. The ideals of the centre's formation fits well with this study's argument that traditional media ownership of news organization is a hindrance to quality investigative journalism and that not-for-profit organizations are serving the public much better without profit motives.

CHAPTER SIX

Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism

“We saw ourselves coming in at a point where the Nigerian media was suffering from two major crises”

6.1 Overview

At the height of severe military repression in the 1980s and the better part of the 1990s, Nigerian journalism produced fearless men and women that were willing to risk their lives for the truth. One of these men is Dapo Olorunyomi. Olorunyomi is a well-decorated journalist and has worked for respected Nigerian news organizations such as *Next*, *TheNEWS*, and *TEMPO*. He is one of the heroes that led the troops in the war against the dictatorship of General Sani Abacha¹⁶⁵. For their sheer bravery, Dapo and his comrades were all visited with heavy hands by the military regime. Fearing for his life, in 1995, Olorunyomi fled the country and went to exile in the United States only to return five years later following the death of General Abacha. According to Babarinsa when Olorunyomi returned briefly moved on from journalism and taking up a senior position with the country’s Economic and Financial Crimes Commission¹⁶⁶. The decline in the standard of reporting in the Nigerian media forced Olorunyomi to find his way back to journalism, by first founding Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism. And partnering with trailblazing investigative journalist Musikili Mojeed to start *Premium Times* (online) and later *Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism*¹⁶⁷.

6.2 Motivation and Historical Context

¹⁶⁵ Babarinsa, D. (2017). One Hero and media in Winter. Retrieved May 11, 2018 <https://guardian.ng/opinion/one-hero-and-a-media-in-winter/>

¹⁶⁶ Ibid.

¹⁶⁷ Odion, L. (2017). Newspaperman as icon and iconoclast: Dapo Oloruntomi at 60. Retrieved May 11, 2018. <http://saharareporters.com/2017/11/08/newspaperman-icon-and-iconoclast-dapo-olorunyomi-60-louis-odion>

The story of *Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism* can never be told without first referring back to *Premium Times*, the online publication set up in 2011 by Olorunyomi and his colleague Mojeed. According to Olorunyomi the decision to start an online publication and later a not-for-profit outlet was a response to a distressing situation in the Nigerian press. “We saw ourselves coming in at a point where the Nigerian media was suffering from two major crises. A crisis of ethics and professionalism and a crisis of revenue.”¹⁶⁸ To address this daunting challenges Olorunyomi and his team embarked on a project to set up an ‘ideal newspaper’ that will address ethical and professional lapses in the Nigerian media. Secondly, they agreed to embark on a project to solve the revenue crisis that had befallen the media industry.

To achieve this, the team went back to the past to seek guidance from history and the traditions of journalism in Nigeria. In particular the two memorable periods in the Nigerian press. The first period which Olorunyomi and his team reviewed was the period called, 19th Century Lagos Press, an early press in Nigeria which helped to lay the foundation for Nigerian independence. The press then was radical and activist. It helped to mobilize the citizen. We studied what it gave it animated flavour,” says Olorunyomi.¹⁶⁹ Secondly the team revisited the period between 1984 and 1999, the most ferocious period of military repression in Nigeria. he team wanted to understand how in the face of such oppression the Nigerian press was able to perform even better.

According to Olorunyomi the study of the two glorious periods in the Nigerian press informed them that to reconnect with the public they had to do rigorous investigative journalism that holds power to account. Olorunyomi and his team were not looking set up a small investigative desk within a newspaper. Says Olorunyomi, “We wanted to create a news organization that will be defined by a whole tempo of investigative journalism.”¹⁷⁰ In addition, the team introduced

¹⁶⁸ Olorunyomi, D. (2018) WhatsApp call Interview. May 7, 2018.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid

¹⁷⁰ Ibid

data journalism to their investigative journalism component, becoming one of the first in Africa to do so.

In seeking to create an organization with investigative focus, Olorunyomi and his team were mindful of the fact that the type of journalism they wanted to pursue would not be popular with advertisers. “That meant that we had to quickly and as early as possible explore the true meaning of the revenue crisis”¹⁷¹. First, they look at all the existing models of funding the media in Nigeria and around the world to come up with what they think would work for them. The first model that they looked at was a model in which the government (or state governments) assume the role of a publisher or has a stake in the local newspapers. The model was a non-started because with government in charge total independence would not be guaranteed. The second model was private equity funded model. While the model was doing better than the government funded model, it also could not lead to independence because most of the newspapers under this arrangement in Nigeria are owned by politicians and politically connected individuals. The third model which was even more attractive was the paid-membership (or subscription) based model. While this was more attractive, they found out through studies that members’ subscriptions may not sustain the centres in the long run. The fourth model they looked at was the advertising-circulation supported, which is the model currently adopted by newspapers in globally. This model, Olorunyomi says was not attractive because circulation was going down, and so was advertising revenues.¹⁷²

The team finally settled for an online based newspaper, a model which was less costly to set up and operate. Premium Times Services Limited was registered in Abuja with businessman and banker Nasiru Abubakar Abdullahi¹⁷³ as its chairperson and Olorunyomi as its Chief Executive and publisher and Musikili Mojeed as the Managing Editor (and later Editor-in-Chief). “We came in at a time when internet penetration was growing at a very impressive and fast pace. We

¹⁷¹ Ibid.

¹⁷² Ibid.

¹⁷³ Premium Times. (2018) “About us.” Retrieved May 19, 2018 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/about>

noted this and also the fact that Nigeria has the most youthful population in Africa. So, we just situated ourselves within the 18-35 age group belt. We resolved that we will work with the new generation and use our online platform to introduce them to public policy,” says Olorunyomi¹⁷⁴. The newspaper was introduced and immediately captured popular imagination with some of the ground-breaking and explosive investigations.

Three years after the formation of Premium Times online, Olorunyomi and his team felt that to remain sustainable and also to cement their independence there was the need to create a not-for-profit platform to support the Premium Times online publication. A not-for-profit-profit arm was established in 2014 and named Premium Centre for Investigative Journalism. The centre was formed according to its website to “promote a truly independent media landscape that advances fundamental human rights, good governance, and accountability in West Africa...”¹⁷⁵. The centre has four core mandates.

ADVOCACY: promote press freedom, freedom of expression, net neutrality and media plurality. **CAPACITY BUILDING:** train journalists, civil society and government institutions on various components of development communication. **CIVIC TECHNOLOGY:** develop civic tools to track, monitor, report and present information useful for decision making by governments and citizens. **INVESTIGATIVE JOURNALISM:** conduct fact-based and data-driven investigations to hold government and institutions to account at all times. **OPEN DATA:** deploy data analysis and its tools to increase access to public and hidden data within government institutions. ¹⁷⁶

Olorunyomi is also the Executive Director of the centre. According to Olorunyomi the not-for-profit arm supports our journalism (Premium Times online) as well as journalism in Nigeria. “What this means is that we support the development of investigative and data journalism in the country.”¹⁷⁷ Of the organizations being studied, Premium Times is by far the biggest in

¹⁷⁴ Olorunyomi, D. (2018) WhatsApp call Interview

¹⁷⁵ Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism. Retrieved May 19, 2018 <http://ptcij.org/about/#1488558644889-f0fbd543-60ff>

¹⁷⁶ Ibid

¹⁷⁷ Olorunyomi, D. (2018) WhatsApp call Interview

terms of staffing and output of stories. The organization has 53 employees of which 35 are members of the editorial team.

6.3 Funding Model: Successes, challenges and the future

Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism's model is entirely different from other not-for-profits organizations, in that the organization primarily fund investigative work by Premium Times journalists. As such, the organization cannot be studied separately from Premium Times online, its main beneficiary. Further, the organization also give grants and offer technical support to other media organizations with interest in investigative journalism¹⁷⁸.

When the organization started in 2014, it received a modest US\$50, 000 from Open Society Initiative of West Africa for a two-year project on the transparency of the Nigerian National Parliament.¹⁷⁹ Shortly after, that the organization received US\$200,000 from MacArthur Foundation for a journalism project on political accountability in Nigeria. The focus of the project was mainly the, "...on the upcoming 2015 elections, human rights violations by state and non-state actors, and public resources committed to counter-insurgency actions. The grant funds will support meeting costs, training, salaries, and travel."¹⁸⁰ The centre began with a good funding from two major donor organizations.

With time the organization has been able to attract major donations from several other donors while still retaining the initial donors. In 2016, the organization received additional funding from MacArthur Foundation to carry out in-depth investigations on financing, security, and terrorism; creating a fact checking website for journalists; and building civic technology for citizens and journalists to collaboratively learn and produce multimedia reports¹⁸¹. The centre

¹⁷⁸ Ibid

¹⁷⁹ OSIWA is an arm of Open Society Foundations, specifically for West African Countries. It describes itself as both an advocate and grant maker

¹⁸⁰ MacArthur Foundation. Retrieved May 19, 2019 <https://www.macfound.org/grantees/2583/>

¹⁸¹ Ibid

has also received support from British government's Department for International Development, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Ford Foundation, Natural Resource Governance Institute, Public Private Development Centre and Free Press Unlimited. It is not clear how much the organization is receiving from some of these organizations. While the Premium Times Services Limited does not publish its finances, the figures shared for the purpose of this study show that by 2018 the centre's annual budget was US\$426 838 of which 55% was donor funding (from PTCIJ), while the rest was revenue generated from online advertising.¹⁸²

The organization does not receive funds from the government or business. "We engage funders on the basis of what we call shared values. If we have the same values, we will engage you," says Olorunyomi. The organization has developed a set of ethical values they call the CITA code, a synonym for Credibility, Integrity, Transparency, and Accountability¹⁸³. This is the organization's guiding principle of engagement.

6.4 Practice, Impact and Challenges

The work of Premium Times has been recognized both in Nigeria, Africa and elsewhere around the world. The three central values that drive the organization's journalism work are anti-corruption, promotion of human rights, and holding regulatory bodies to account, according to Olorunyomi¹⁸⁴. The organization's stories have been consistent with these values since its formation. It is also important to emphasize that stories funded and supported by the centre are published on Premium Times online. Since the creation of not-for-profit centre hundreds of explosive stories on the transparency of state institutions, corruption, military procurement, and human rights have been published on the online platform.

¹⁸² Premium Times, 2008 Internal Strategy Document called 'Departmental Review and projections'

¹⁸³ Olorunyomi, D. (2018) WhatsApp call Interview

¹⁸⁴ Ibid

The Centre's first major project was a two-year investigation and campaign to force the Nigerian government to reveal its annual budget. The annual budget had never been made public until Premium Times published with the support of the centre. A series of stories that appeared on the website under the banner *Parliament Watch* were published since 2014. The organization suspected that lack of transparency in the national parliament could be a source of grand scale corruption, and they were right. The organization published stories such as "Nigerian federal lawmakers to spend N1.2 trillion on selves in six years as poverty mounts in country"¹⁸⁵, "Inside the massive money laundering in Nigeria's National Parliament"¹⁸⁶, "Top 10 Corruption Scandals Nigeria's national Assembly hasn't resolved"¹⁸⁷, "Men and woman facing criminal allegations, who will make laws for Nigeria"¹⁸⁸. The organization takes credit for forcing the Nigerian parliament to disclose its detailed annual budget for the first time in many years. The budget was made public for the first time in 2017. According to Olorunyomi this was a significant victory that shows that journalism can make a difference.

Another major investigation by the organization involves a story on military procurement that is now known as the Dasukigate in Nigeria. The Centre was one of the few news organizations to expose the former National Security Adviser under Goodluck Jonathan, Sambo Dasuki for allegedly misappropriating US\$2.2 Billion during his time as the national security adviser¹⁸⁹. When the story broke out in 2015 that the country's Economic and Financial Crimes Commission was investigating Dasuki, senior army and government officials, the organization

¹⁸⁵ Ekott, I. (2014) Nigerian Federal lawmakers to spend N1.2 trillion on selves in six years as poverty mounts in the country. Retrieved May 19, 2018. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/156301-exclusive-nigerian-federal-lawmakers-to-spend-n1-2-trillion-on-selves-in-six-years-as-poverty-mounts-in-country.html>

¹⁸⁶ Owete F, Et al. (2015) Inside the massive money laundering in Nigeria's national Assembly. Retrieved May 19, 2018. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/investigationspecial-reports/195920-special-report-inside-the-massive-money-laundering-in-nigerias-national-assembly.html>

¹⁸⁷ Olufemi, J, et al. (2015) Top 10 Corruption scandals Nigeria's National Assembly hasn't resolved. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/182111-top-10-corruption-scandals-nigerias-national-assembly-hasnt-resolved.html>

¹⁸⁸ Olufemi, J, et al (2015) Men, Woman facing criminal allegations, who will make laws for Nigeria. Retrieved May 19, 2018. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/investigationspecial-reports/184878-investigation-men-woman-facing-criminal-allegations-who-will-make-laws-for-nigeria.html>

¹⁸⁹ Premium Times. (2015) Buhari orders arrest of ex-NSA Dasuki, others indicted in arms contract report. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/193398-%E2%80%8Bbuhari-orders-arrest-of-ex-nsa-dasuki-others-indicted-in-arms-contract-report.html>

has been at the forefront of producing exposés on charges levelled against Dasuki and 19 army generals. According to the organization, Dasuki awarded fictitious and phantom military contracts to supply military equipment for the fight against terrorism¹⁹⁰. Regarding his organization's role in Dasukigate Olorunyomi commented, "We exposed wrong doing in military procurement. We produced evidence of wrong doing and we are happy that 19 people are currently on trial for their role in this scandal"¹⁹¹.

In 2016 the organization produced a two part-investigation which exposing the extrajudicial killings of 120 indigenous people of Biafra protestors by the army in the south-eastern part of Nigerian. The stories were published under headlines, "*Inside the massive extrajudicial killings in Nigeria's South East*"¹⁹² and "*How Onitsha massacre of Pro-Biafra supporters was coordinated*"¹⁹³. According to Premium Times, the two-month long investigation uncovered multiple mass graves, lending support to allegations that police and military forces targeted innocent and defenseless civilians for abuse and extrajudicial killings. Following reports that included photo evidence, human rights groups called for an independent probe and the army announced another investigation¹⁹⁴. At the 2017 Global Investigative Journalism Conference in Johannesburg South Africa, the story won the coveted Global Shining Light Award beating hundreds of other investigative stories worldwide¹⁹⁵. In 2016, the organization worked on the Panama Papers and its reporters joined close to 400 journalists around the world that were given access to the panama papers' trove. The organization produced some of the hard-hitting stories detailing how Nigerian politicians used offshore accounts to hide millions of dollars away

¹⁹⁰ Tukur, S. (2015). SSS places former NSA Dasuki, Bello Fadile, under house arrest. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/top-news/186843-sss-places-former-nsa-dasuki-bello-fadile-under-house-arrest.html>

¹⁹¹ Olorunyomi, D. (2018) WhatsApp call Interview

¹⁹² Mayah E. (2016). Special report: Inside massive extrajudicial killings in Nigeria' <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/investigationspecial-reports/204902-special-report-inside-massive-extrajudicial-killings-nigerias-south-east.html>

¹⁹³ Mayah E. 2016 How the Onitsha massacre of pro-Biafra supporters was coordinated – SSS operative <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/investigationspecial-reports/205176-special-report-onitsha-massacre-pro-biafra-supporters-coordinated-sss-operative.html>

¹⁹⁴ Ibid

¹⁹⁵ Oyewobi A, and Busari K. (2017) Premium Times Journalists win Global Shining Light award. <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/249933-premium-times-journalists-win-global-shining-light-award.html>

from the tax authorities. The organization published 30 stories on the Panama Papers. The organization together with few others in the continent received Pulitzer Award for Explanatory Reporting.¹⁹⁶

In January 2017, police stormed into the organization's offices and arrested Olorunyomi and Evelyn Okakwu, a judiciary reporter. The arrest came after the organization refused to retract news stories about the Nigerian army and its operations¹⁹⁷. The army had complained that reports by the army "exposed a deep hatred for the leadership of the army by the organization"¹⁹⁸. The two were however released after hours of interrogation by the police. The arrest raised fears that while Nigeria has passed the stage of military repression, the military is still intolerant and allergic to scrutiny. For Olorunyomi, the arrest was a clear indicator that threats from the army or the government in general will always exist even in a democratic set-up. "The best thing we want to do now is to ensure that the public understand the value of our work and also to call for review and reform of Nigerian laws to allow journalism to continue to thrive."¹⁹⁹ Perhaps the best statement following the arrest and the raid came from Premium Times's editor-in-chief Musikilu Mojeed who defiantly said that despite the arrests, the paper will continue "to discharge its responsibilities in line with global best practice, social responsibility and patriotism, even at great risk to our personal liberties."²⁰⁰ The statement supports this study's theory that not-for-profit investigative organizations are driven by the social responsibility theory.

¹⁹⁶ Olawoyin, O. (2017) Celebrations at Premium Times as Panama papers wins Pulitzer Prize. Retrieved May 19, 2018 <https://www.premiumtimesng.com/news/headlines/228572-celebrations-at-premium-times-as-panama-papers-wins-pulitzer-prize.html>

¹⁹⁷ Vanguard (2017) 'Arrested Premium Times Publisher Freed' <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/01/breaking-arrested-premium-times-publisher-dapo-olorunyomi-journalist-freed/>

¹⁹⁸ Ibid

¹⁹⁹ Int Olorunyomi, D. (2018) WhatsApp call Interview

²⁰⁰ Vanguard (2017). Police storm Premium Times office, arrest publisher Dapo Olorunyomi. Retrieved May 19, 2018. <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2017/01/breaking-police-storm-premium-times-office-arrest-publisher-dapo-olorunyomi/>

6.5 Conclusion

Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism was introduced in this chapter as a necessary not-for-profit vehicle that supports the work of its Premium Times online, an organization that was created to address deepening crisis in investigative journalism in Nigeria. PTCIJ has lived up to its expectations and has since become an important institution in the fight for transparency in government and the fight against corruption and human rights abuses in Nigeria and the rest of Western Africa. Its investigative work has exposed graft in government and has led to arrests of several figures in government in particular in the military. This study argues that with limited resources, the organization has executed its agenda setting and social responsibility function better than some of the for-profit media organizations, both in Nigeria and elsewhere in the continent.

Chapter 7

INK Centre for Investigative Journalism

“We had observed with disgust as critical media was starved (of advertising), silenced and slowly and quietly side-lined”

7.1 Overview

INK Centre for Investigative Journalism is the organization that I founded together with three other colleagues in 2015. It is important to state from the onset that in this chapter I am not a distant observer but a willing and committed participant. In 2011, few months after Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism was set up; I became the organization’s first Southern Africa investigative fellow. At Amabhungane I was exposed for the first time to this not-for-profit model and immediately after the end of my fellowship I embarked on a plan to set up a similar organization in Botswana. With the support of Amabhungane’s Stefaans Brümmer and Sam Sole, the groundwork to create Botswana’s first ever not-for-profit investigative journalism organization started as early as 2012. Three years later responding to the journalism challenges that will be well articulated in this chapter my colleagues and I founded INK, and I became one of its directors.

7.2 Motivation and Historical Context

In 2013, exactly two years after I completed my fellowship at Amabhungane, I was tasked with heading an investigative desk at *Botswana Guardian*, the country’s oldest privately news publication in the country. My time as the newspaper’s investigations head was short lived because a few months later I was appointed an editor of *Mmegi* newspaper, then a daily newspaper (now a weekly paper) under the same stable as *Botswana Guardian*. My appointment to the editorship of *Mmegi* came at a time when plans were underway to set up a not-for-profit investigative journalism outlet in the country.

My colleague, Joel Konopo, was the editor of *Botswana Guardian*, and I had worked under him as investigations editor and was effectively his deputy. Justice Kavahematui was *Botswana Guardian's* online editor and had just returned from a fellowship at *Amabhungane* and was enthusiastic as ever to help replicate the model in Botswana. Thapelo Ndlovu, a former director of Media Institute for Southern Africa, was as frustrated as we are about the media landscape in Botswana and immediately bought into the idea of setting up a more independent news outlet.

Myself, Konopo, Kavahematui, and Ndlovu attempted to register the organization in 2014 December with the Registrar of Societies, but the government flatly refused to register the organization on account that the law does not have provisions for the registration of a not-for-profit investigative news outlet. The reason was not convincing. Frustrated with this rejection our lawyer Uyapo Ndadi suggested that we instead approach the Registrar of Deeds and register a trust or a foundation. He facilitated the registration processes, and in February 2015, we managed to register the organization under the umbrella name INK Foundation.

INK was formed mainly to address the near collapse of investigative journalism in the country and to promote democracy by exposing wrongdoing both in government and in business²⁰¹. When the organization was established the sheer quality of serious investigative stories in the country had quite frankly diminished. In fact, at that time and even now, there were no investigative desks, most had been discontinued by publishers who found them expensive to maintain. Investigative journalism was regarded by many in the newsrooms as time-consuming and expensive, high risk, high maintenance and highly litigious.²⁰² This was also during a period when major news organization were retrenching media workers in hundreds due to loss in

²⁰¹ Konopo J. (2018) Why not for profit is the future. Retrieved May 20 <http://inkjournalism.org/53/why-non-profit-newsroom-is-the-future-of-journalism/>

²⁰² INK (2018) About US. Retrieved May 20, 2018 <http://inkjournalism.org/about-us/>

advertising and circulation revenue²⁰³. We were also at a period where we faced a situation in which sources of opinion (in the social media) were proliferating, while sources of facts on which those opinions were based were shrinking. Furthermore, the organization was established out of concern that independent media was struggling to hold those in power accountable as a result of over-reliance on government revenue. “We had observed with disgust as critical media was starved (of advertising), silenced and slowly and quietly sidelined. With this happening, we knew very well that we had to do something,”²⁰⁴ my partner Konopo recalls. Investments in the media by wealthy business people²⁰⁵ with connections to the ruling elites did not sit well with us hence the need for a more robust and independent organization. INK was established to operate under three pillars, 1) it carries out investigative journalism in the public interest, 2) Does skills transfer and training, 3) Advocates for the rights of journalists to access information²⁰⁶.

In 2015 when we first launched Konopo and I became co-managing partners of the organization. Ndlovu briefly coordinated the advocacy arm of the organization before leaving to pursue other interests. Kavahematui was appointed an editor of *Botswana Guardian* shortly before the launch of the organization and has never joined the organization in any capacity. To create a fair level of oversight, we put together an advisory board of five distinguished persons led by Ms. Joyce Manase, a media activist and currently general manager of Botswana Post. Other board members are Professor Otlhogile Bojosi for Vice Chancellor of the University of Botswana, Dick Bayford a human rights lawyer, Bangwe Siwawa an accountant and Mesh Moeti, a former editor at Mmegi newspaper.²⁰⁷

²⁰³ Gaothobogwe M. (2014) Mmegi Retrenches. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <http://www.mmegi.bw/index.php?aid=47428&dir=2014/november/17>

²⁰⁴ Konopo, K. (2018) Skype Interview. May 12, 2018.

Konopo is the co-Managing Partner of INK Centre for Investigative Journalism, and currently a Knight fellow at Stanford University

²⁰⁵ Sunday Standard Reporter. (2016). Inside How Jamali captured Mmegi. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <http://www.sundaystandard.info/inside-how-jamali-captured-mmegi>

²⁰⁶ INK Website. About Us. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <http://inkjournalism.org/about-us/>

²⁰⁷ Ibid

7.3 Funding Model: Successes, Challenges, and the future

Of the three organizations under study INK Centre for Investigative journalism is the newest and less glamorous one in terms of funding. In its first year in 2015/16 financial year, the centre's received its seed funding of US\$120 000 from Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa, an arm of Open Society Foundations. The grant was to cover operational costs such as salaries, administrative and editorial expenses. As former editors of major national newspapers Konopo and I took significant pay cuts to our wages to kick-start the organization. The centre further received US\$15 000 from the United States Embassy in Gaborone to organize the centre's inaugural training workshop on the importance of investigative journalism²⁰⁸. INK does not accept donations from governments to carry out investigative stories, but it accepts their donations to develop investigative journalism. This is done to safeguard our independence from influence in particular from governments as they are often at the receiving end of our journalism work. With a budget of US\$ 135 000 in our first year, the organization engaged, finance manager, investigative intern, administrative officer, and later programmes manager. While Konopo was responsible for the editorial side of things, I was responsible for the operational management of the organization.

In our second year (2016/2017), we received a further grant of US\$147 000 from Open Society and additional US\$83 000 from the US Government. We received US\$7 000 in technical assistance from Thomson Reuters Foundation and further US\$5 000 a year from Botswana Gazette – a local news organization. And once again the donation from the US Government was mainly to develop journalists in the area of HIV/AIDS and health reporting. In its second year, the organization had expanded exponentially. With a budget of US\$237 000, the organization engaged a digital officer, senior investigative reporter and hosted its first investigative fellow from Malawi. In this current year (2017/2018) the organization operates under a budget of US\$210 000.

²⁰⁸ Sibanda, A. (2015) Investigative journalism inevitable. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <http://www.dailynews.gov.bw/news-details.php?nid=23534>

The organization relies heavily on international donors and has given its content free of charge to select news organizations. News organizations that we have served for the last three years are not willing to pay for our content. “This is not because our content is not good, but because they are currently going through financial difficulties, (including South African publications). We exist to assist some of these organizations, and that is why we have availed our work to them for free,” says Konopo.²⁰⁹

Our approach however is not sustainable and may cost the organization in future. “We have reach a point where we are in the process of find ways to monetize our content and we will now work less and less with newspapers.”²¹⁰ How INK will monetize its content is something that the organization is currently grappling with. One of the initiatives the centre will launch is a general news Setswana²¹¹ digital platform. The platform will be the country’s first online platform in the country to publish its editorial and advertising content in vernacular. The platform which we hope will be driven by subscriptions will take advantage of online advertising and reach out to marginalized communities in the country. “The platform will aggregate and simplify complex stories in Setswana using audiovisuals, cartoons, music and comedy.”²¹² The platform will be a subsidiary of INK but managed separately from the organization.

7.4 Practice, Impact and Challenges

INK Was formed to do stories that news organizations are finding difficult to do because of various factors including lack of commitment to investigative journalism by publishers, and lack of both financial and human resources. “We have demonstrated our commitment to holding

²⁰⁹ Konopo, K. (2018) Skype Interview.

²¹⁰ *ibid*

²¹¹ *Setswana is Botswana’s official language. No newspapers in the country are published in Setswana at the moment even though it is widely spoken.*

²¹² Konopo, K. (2018) Skype Interview

power to account by producing some of the best investigative work the country has ever seen,” says Konopo. Since 2015 the organization has produced 91 investigative reports mainly on corruption, human rights illicit financial flows. The organization has worked closely with media organizations both in South Africa and around the world. Some of the organizations that we have worked with include The Namibian newspaper in Namibia, Times in Malawi, Daily Maverick in South Africa, Amabhungane in South Africa. The organization also collaborated with International Consortium of Investigative journalism on the Panama Papers project, which subsequently won a Pulitzer award for explanatory journalism²¹³. The organization produced seven investigations on the Panama Papers, including an explosive story about the undeclared financial interests of the President of Botswana's Court of Appeal Justice Ian Kirby²¹⁴.

In addition to the Panama Papers’ project, three stories have come to define the work of the organization in the last three years. The first story was a collaborative work between the organization and The Namibian newspaper on allegations that the government of Botswana had sanctioned the extra-judicial killings of over 30 suspected wildlife poachers along the Namibia-Botswana borders in the last ten years²¹⁵. According to Konopo, the story had a human rights angle because Botswana government was executing suspected poachers without due process contrary to the rule of law. We set out to document the killings and abuses by the military²¹⁶. Konopo and I spent two weeks in areas around the Namibia-Botswana borders talking to residents including relatives of the deceased suspected poachers. The investigation was later published with Mail and Guardian in South Africa under the headline, “*Botswana’s ‘shoot-to-kill policy’ against suspected poachers,*”²¹⁷ and was also published in Botswana and Namibia under the headline, “*Deadly Borders: BDF stirs tension with lethal policy on suspected*

²¹³ INK. (2017). INK, ICIJ and others win Pulitzer for Panama Papers. Retrieved May 20, 2018 <http://inkjournalism.org/1047/ink-icij-and-others-win-pulitzer-for-panama-papers/>

²¹⁴ Ntibinyane, N. (2016) Panama Papers: Botswana’s judge’s Offshore Investments raises questions. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <https://www.timeslive.co.za/news/africa/2016-04-04-panama-papers-botswana-judges-offshore-investments-raises-questions/>

²¹⁵ Ntibinyane N, Konopo J, Mongudli T. (2016). Botswana’s ‘shoot-to-kill policy’ against suspected poachers. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <https://mg.co.za/article/2016-03-16-botswanas-shoot-to-kill-policy-against-suspected-poachers>

²¹⁶ Konopo, K. (2018) Skype Interview

²¹⁷ Ibid

poachers”²¹⁸. The impact was enormous, immediately after the publication of the story, the Namibia cabinet met and called for restraint. The government has since issued a statement that it will revoke the policy and will also withdraw military grade arms from its ant-poaching units along the country’s borders.²¹⁹.

In another story ground-breaking story, in 2017 we used satellite technology to expose denials by the government that the former president (then president) Ian Khama was not constructing a multi-million-dollar compound and an airstrip with the aid of the military in his private land in more than 600km north of the capital city. Earlier Konopo, Kaombona Kanani and I had attempted to access the place but were detained few kilometers before reaching the compound by heavily armed security personnel.²²⁰ Frustrated we contracted DigitalGlobe, a New York-listed commercial satellite imagery firm to capture a high-resolution 50cm worldview image of Khama’s secret home in real time.²²¹ For the first time, we published fresh images of the compound and the airstrip. The story was published with the Daily Maverick in South Africa under the headline, *“Satellite images show Botswana military personnel doing construction work at Khama residence”*²²². In Botswana, the story was published with Sunday Standard and our website under the heading, *“Exclusive: Khama’s Mosu built with public funds”*. The response from the public was quite astonishing. Konopo says, “Of course, president or senior government officials did not resign in shame, but it became a matter of public debate even to this day, months after he left office.”²²³

²¹⁸ Ntibinyane N, Konopo J, Mongudli T. (2016). Deadly Borders: BDF stirs tension with lethal policy on suspected poachers. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <http://inkjournalism.org/135/deadly-borders/>

²¹⁹ Tebele M. (2018) Masisi revokes ‘Shoot-to-kill’ policy. Southern Times. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <https://southern-timesafrica.com/site/news/masisi-revokes-shoot-to-kill-policy>

²²⁰ <https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/botswana-journos-investigating-khamas-holiday-home-detained-threatened-20170312>

²²¹ Konopo J, Ntibinyane N, Kanani K. (2017) Satellite images show Botswana military personnel doing construction work at Khama residence. Daily Maverick. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <https://www.dailymaverick.co.za/article/2017-06-25-amabhungane-satellite-images-show-botswana-military-personnel-doing-construction-work-at-khama-residence/#.WwP9JKkh3GI>

²²² Ibid

²²³ Konopo, K. (2018) Skype Interview

In 2015, the organization produced a 16-page report exposing incidents of abuse at Francistown Centre for Illegal Immigrants, a prison facility initially meant to house illegal immigrants temporarily, but now turned into a prison facility. In our exposé, we revealed that over 500 rejected asylum seekers had been confined in the facility for many years alongside prisoners convicted of serious crimes such as murder and rape; that at least two asylum seekers died after being denied health care; that hat army, police and intelligence operatives violently²²⁴. We also questioned the rationale behind imprisoning asylum seekers (with minors) without any charge. The story received attention from both in South Africa and Botswana and was published under the heading *“Prisoners of Injustice”* by *Botswana Gazette* and *“Asylum seekers accuse prison officials of ill-treatment and sexual assault”* by the *Daily Maverick* and *Amabhungane* in South Africa.

The challenges to our journalistic work are many, but there are two major challenges that the centre faces. The first major challenge is that we are operating in a secretive society where the government is still obsessed with controlling information. Botswana despite the fact that it is often lauded as the “shining example” of democracy in Africa does not have access to information laws in place. Journalists, in particular investigative journalists, rely on the good will of the people in government for information that would otherwise be available for the public in other countries. My colleague Joel Konopo agrees that it is tough being a journalist and even tougher being an investigative journalist in Botswana for that matter as a result. He argues that the law is not only unfriendly to journalists but also criminalizes their work. He says, “I have not come across any law that explicitly calls for the existence of journalism in Botswana. Politicians are not eager to correct this because it works well for them.”²²⁵ The second challenge is harassment and intimidation. In 2017 when we investigated the construction of President Khama’s compound we were briefly detained by members of the security apparatus and told

²²⁴ Ntibinyane N, and Konopo J. (2017) Prisoners of Injustice. INK Website. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <http://inkjournalism.org/1240/prisoners-of-injustice/>

²²⁵ Konopo, K. (2018) Skype Interview

that ‘we would be shot and killed if we ever set foot’ in the area again²²⁶. The warning was chilling coming from heavily armed officers in the bushy area in the middle of nowhere. The organization has also faced vicious attacks from other privately-owned media organizations for being agents of regime change sponsored by Central Intelligence Agency linked companies²²⁷. The allegations are false and without basis, and are made by persons who are worried by our investigative journalism work, says Konopo²²⁸.

7.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have introduced INK Centre for Investigative Journalism, an organization I helped create as a fearless outlet that was formed by newspaper editors frustrated with the media establishment and failure by some major media organizations to invest in the craft of investigative journalism. In the last three years the organization’s agenda-setting investigations, have created impact and supported this study’s argument that, not-for-profit organizations and their founders are driven by a higher calling of social responsibility and the need to hold power accountable. With limited resources and at times harassment, the organization has been able to play a pivotal role in exposing the darker and the hidden side of Botswana, a country that has received praise from the international community and its peers as the paragon of economic success and political stability.

²²⁶ <https://www.news24.com/Africa/News/botswana-journos-investigating-khamas-holiday-home-detained-threatened-20170312>

²²⁷ Mbuya T. (2016). INK Centre for Investigative Journalism: snout in CIA feeding trough. Mmegi. Retrieved May 20, 2018. <http://www.mmegi.bw/index.php?aid=61404&dir=2016/july/08>

²²⁸ Konopo, K. (2018) Skype Interview

CHAPTER 8

Findings, Recommendations and Conclusion

8.1 Overview

The purpose of this chapter is to summarize and synthesize dominant themes emerging from this exploratory study of not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in Africa. The Chapter will also offer concrete recommendations for strengthening not-for-profits organizations in Africa and will conclude by arguing forcefully that the sudden mushrooming of not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in the continent is important in helping to hold those in power accountable and documenting incidents of human rights abuse and betrayal of public trust.

8.2 Findings

Four dominant central themes are emerging from the study. These themes support theories advanced by this research on the importance of not-for-profit investigative journalism in Africa. Interviews and analysis of Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism, Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism, INK Centre for Investigative Journalism and many other not-for-profit organizations in Africa helped in the formulation of these themes. Below are the study's key findings.

1. Impactful work of not-for-profits

While the impact of the not-for-profit organizations in Africa is generally profound, it differs from country to country. In South Africa and Nigeria, the impact in recent years has been more sudden as compared to Botswana. This, however, does not erase the fact that organizations such as INK continue to produce good investigative journalism work. What it means is that

these countries (South Africa and Nigeria) have strong oversight institutions (such as the Judiciary, Ombudsman, and Parliament) to complement the work of investigative journalism. Overall the impact of these organizations' supports an argument advanced by the social responsibility theory that investigative journalism has a responsibility to bring about change and to reveal wrongdoings by those in positions of power. According to Nee, new not-for-profit organizations, in particular, are picking up the mantle of socially responsible journalism."²²⁹

2. Agenda setting investigative journalism

As much as it is creating impact in the continent, not-for-profit investigative journalism is also setting the agenda in Africa. Agenda setting as we have already defined it elsewhere is the ability of the mass media to bring issues to the attention of the public and or the policy makers. The three centres have proved that traditional news organizations such as newspapers and TV stations are slowly losing their ability to set the agenda. For example, in South Africa, it was mostly Amabhungane's exposes that brought to the fore the alleged corrupt relationship between President Zuma and the Gupta family. In Botswana, it was INK that revealed that former President Ian Khama was constructing an airstrip and a holiday home using the military. The centres agenda setting function fits well into Feldstein's catalyst model²³⁰. With the Catalyst Model Feldstein's argument is that investigative journalists' exposés lead directly to changes in public opinion²³¹. In the cases of both Premium Times, INK and Amabhungane their reports have led to changes in the public opinion of the public as we have seen in Chapters 5, 6 and 7.

3. Frustrations with media ownership

²²⁹ Nee, Rebecca C. 2014. "Social Responsibility Theory and the Digital Nonprofits: Should the Government Aid Online News Startups?" *Journalism* 15 (3): 326–343.

²³⁰ Feldstein, M. (2007) *Dummies and ventriloquists: Models of how sources set the investigative agenda*. Sage Publications

²³¹ Ibid

Founders of the three organizations argue that frustrations towards media owners pushed them into establishing not-for-profit organizations. For example, Brümmer says that while working for the *Mail and Guardian*, they felt that they needed to do more outside the confines of a news establishment. They also needed more time and resources to work on investigative stories, which the newspaper was not providing. For INK the frustration was more about publishers' unwillingness to invest in investigative journalism. Further entrance into the media ownership space by wealthy businesspeople in Botswana crippled journalists' ability to monitor power. For PTCIJ, the need to be independent of the compromised government, business and advertisers in Nigeria pushed them to consider a not-for-profit model as an option. The frustrations by the founders of the organizations are consistent Chambers theory that the fate of investigative journalism is tied to the dynamics of media ownership and control.²³² For Altschull media content is often directly correlated with the interests of those who finance the media²³³. Frustrations with owners of traditional news organizations and their profit fixation informed the founders to find refuge in a not-for-profit model.

4. Unsustainable Funding model

Another dominant thing emanating from this study is the unsustainable funding model of these not-for-profit organizations. While the organization's contribution towards holding power to account is not in dispute, this might be hampered by the fact that the organizations are currently riding on a very flawed funding model. Below are some of the reasons why the model is flawed in the context of investigative journalism.

Philanthropy in Africa is underdeveloped. Most not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in Africa, including those studied for this research rely heavily on funding from international donor organizations. And this is mainly because of two reasons, 1) there are fewer home grown donor organizations in Africa, 2) donor organizations and wealthy

²³² Chambers D, (2000) 'Critical Approaches to the Media: The changing context for Investigative Journalism'. *Routledge: Taylor and Francis Group*

²³³ Altschull, J. H. (1995). 'Agents of Power: The Role of the News Media in Human Affairs'. *New York: Longman*

individuals are not interested in supporting investigative journalism in some cases for political reasons, 3) Some of the wealthy individuals are also involved in dubious dealings and maybe subject of investigations themselves 4) Home grown philanthropic organizations are more focused on other causes such as HIV/AIDS, poverty, and eradication of malaria.

Overreliance on single donor. Majority of these organizations in Africa were founded with seed funding from Open Society Foundations though their regional bodies such as OSISA and OSIWA. While Premium Times and Amabhungane have managed to diversify funding streams, most organizations have not. For INK funding from OSISA constitute about 60% of their annual budget. Similar organizations in Zimbabwe and Lesotho get 100% funding from OSISA.

Short term funding. Most donor organization prefer to award organizations grants on yearly basis. What this means is that every year organizations are supposed to submit proposals for funding. This is a time-consuming exercise that also brings about uncertainty and has a potential of destabilizing the organizations.

Lack of grassroots support. Except for Amabhungane which managed to raise 19% of its annual budget from crowdfunding in 2019, most centres in Africa do not have the ability to mobilise funding from the grassroots. In most cases this is because a significant number of citizens do not have the technology and the financial infrastructure to donate or subscribe online.

Lack of fundraising muscle. The organizations studied and many other similar organizations do not have fundraising teams. In the case of Amabhungane, and INK fundraising activities are handled by managing partners, who are also journalists. Premium Times is one of the few not-for-profit organizations in Africa that has a team within the business development department dedicated to fundraising, putting together proposals and establishing partnerships.

8.3 Recommendations

Not-for-profit investigative journalism in Africa needs to be strengthened to ensure that it continues to hold power to account and also to serve the public effectively. To protect and defend this very important genre of journalism this study recommends interventions to both not-for-profits organizations as well as grant makers.

Recommendations: Funding, Sustainability and Management

1. *Investment in not-for-profit outlets.* Philanthropic and donor organizations in particular in Africa should be encouraged to come on board and invest in not-for-profit investigative journalism. Not-for-profits organizations should reach out to some credible donor organizations in Africa to complement funding from organizations such as Ford Foundation, Open Society Foundations and MacArthur Foundation. Relying solely on international donor organizations may be problematic in future in the long run.
2. *Increased funding and commitment.* International grant making organizations supporting investigative journalism in Africa should consider multi-year funding, which is by far a preferable arrangement by the not-for-profits. According to Amabhungane's Brümmer it will reduce the administrative burden on both sides and will also give greater insulation from what can be called "passive editorial interference" in the sense of funders not replicating funding if they don't like the editorial line a grantee has taken. Secondly, it allows grantees to put in place long term strategic goals for the organizations.
3. *More not-for-profits.* Grant makers should offer financial support for not-for-profit investigative start-ups in the continent. The not-for-profit phenomenon is growing in Africa, but the major problem at the moment is lack of financial backing.
4. *Diversify donors.* It is unhealthy and dangerous to have one donor contributing more than 50% of an organization's annual budget. Organizations should diversify donors and

ensure that at least one donor contributes less than 10% to their annual budget. This is important to allow the organization's programme to continue in the event one funder pulls out.

5. *Build up a grassroots funding model.* While this may not be attractive to some organizations for various reasons already alluded in this study, it is important that not-for-profits encourage citizens to support investigative journalism by making regular monetary contributions. Amabhungane received around 19% of its annual funding from crowdfunding in 2017 alone. Other organizations can replicate this. This model may not provide enough funding to the organizations, but it remains important and at times more efficient than traditional fundraising activities.
6. *Put up that porous paywall.* This is controversial. Most not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations shun the idea of a paywall and would prefer to give away content for free. However, the reality is that not for profits spend lots of money producing top grade investigative stories, only to receive no monetary benefits from their work. Readers should be made to either pay or subscribe to have access to at least certain investigative stories. Also, not-for-profits organizations should find innovative ways to generate revenue away from donors.
7. *Engage professional fundraisers.* Most not-for-profits in Africa should engage professional fundraisers to handle their fundraising activities. Fundraising in most organizations in Africa is handled by journalists, who are in most cases are unqualified to enter into the fundraising terrain.
8. *Investigative journalists are not managers.* Not-for-profit organizations in Africa are started by journalists, who immediately assume positions of leadership. In most cases, they juggle between editorial and administrative duties and this can affect the smooth running of the organizations. These organizations should engage managers to manage

the centres, and allow journalists to concentrate on the editorial side of things. Alternatively, journalists managing these organizations should undergo rigorous management training.

9. *Create an endowment fund for the continent.* Grant makers or donor organizations and not-for-profit organizations should consider creating a continental endowment fund managed by distinguished Africans with donors having representative. The fund should be formed with a clear mandate of:
 - a. Supporting the work of not-for-profit investigative reporters and their organization
 - b. Capacitating not-for-profit organizations on issues of sustainability, personal and data protection, ethical and professional standards.
 - c. And protect not-for-profits from external threats such as litigations, harassment, and imprisonment

Recommendations: Production, strategy and operations

1. *Country to Country collaborations.* African Not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations should collaborate more to hold those in power accountable. International journalism organizations like the International Consortium of Investigative Journalism have done more to foster the spirit of collaboration amongst African journalists. In particular, ICIJ has worked well with African journalists on projects such as Fatal Extraction, Panama Papers, and the Paradise Papers, projects that looked at the illicit financial flows. To augment this, there is a need for internal homegrown collaborative efforts on issues such as poaching, human trafficking, antiterrorism, refugee crisis and many others.

2. *Break it down.* Most high-grade investigative stories by organizations in Africa studied in this study are not appealing to an ordinary person on the street. The public find them too long, complicated, convoluted to comprehend and at times abstract. Organizations should consider ways of breaking down the stories into understandable stories. They can do this through audiovisuals, graphics, cartoons, and even comedy.
3. *Ditch newspapers, go online now.* Not-for-profits work closely with other organizations such as newspapers, TV and Radio stations in addition of course to regular social media posts. INK, Amabhungane and other not-for-profits organizations have memorandum of Agreements with news organizations to provide them with content. This is not sustainable in that newspapers are no longer setting the agenda because of decline in circulation. Nigeria's Premium Times has demonstrated that it is possible to publish content online and still create impact. Not-for-profits should take all their content online and not share it with newspapers to build their own brands.
4. *Keep it small, but efficient.* Not-for-profits are not meant to be big organizations because they operate on a shoe-string budget. While this may appear to be a major disadvantage, smaller organizations are easy to manage. A fully fledged investigative centre should not have more than 10 editorial staff. With six journalists Amabhungane has been able to produce groundbreaking investigative work.
5. *Stay on the story.* Investigative reporters are journalists, and often times there is a temptation to follow the story of the day. This study recommends that it is important for not-for-profits to leave breaking stories to other outlets and focus on connecting the dots and holding those in power to account. This is important in saving time and costs for the outlets.

8.4 Areas for further research

This exploratory study had a narrow focus. The study studied three not-for-profit investigative journalism organizations in Africa and argued that these organizations are important in holding power to account and that they needed to be supported and protected. The study assessed and profiled the organizations' funding models and their impact. This is by no means a comprehensive study, and it is for these reasons that the author suggests the following as potential areas of further research.

- Firstly, there is need to do a comparative content analysis that examines how traditional news organizations and not-for-profit organizations in Africa frame their investigative news articles for public consumption. This might be important to understand how both are attempting to influence the public.
- Secondly, there is need to evaluate how audiences are receiving investigative stories from not-for-profit organizations. This will give an indication and gauge whether the audience in Africa trust not-for-profit outlets as democracy's watchdogs. Focus groups, may assist in this endeavour.
- Thirdly, a thorough research is needed in establishing the scale of investments (donations) by donor organizations in the not-for-profit investigative journalism in Africa. There are no studies that specifically look at the amount received or have been received by these organizations in recent times.

8.5 Conclusion

The emergence of not-for-profit investigative journalism in the African continent in the last ten years is a new phenomenon that has not been well studied in the academic circles. Therefore, this exploratory study offers a glimpse into the operations of not-for-profit organizations in Africa while at the same time presenting an argument that that monumental failure by traditional news outlets to develop and invest in investigative reporting has led to a new movement of African journalists that seek more editorial independence. The argument advanced by this study is that these journalists and their not-for-profits organizations are

setting the agenda and creating respective impact in their respective countries. The study supports this argument by profiling three of the most successful organizations in the continent, *Premium Times Centre for Investigative Reporting* (Nigeria), *Amabhungane Centre for Investigative Journalism* (South Africa), and *INK Centre for Investigative Journalism* (Botswana). The study, however, cautions that while these organizations are currently discharging their social responsibility mandate of watching over those in power with gusto, they are operating with a flawed and unsustainable funding model that may in future come to haunt the organizations.

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Appendix (Interviews)

INTERVIEWEES	POSITION	ORGANIZATION	DATE OF INTERVIEW
David Kaplan	Director	Global Investigative Journalism Network, Washington DC	February 12, 2018 (Email)
Paul Radu	Executive Director	Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, Romania	March 2, 2018 (Email)
Steeffans Brümmer	Managing Partner	Amabhungane centre for Investigative Journalism, South Africa	April 30, 2018 (Skype call)
Dapo Olorunyomi	Chief Executive/Publisher	Premium Times Centre for Investigative Journalism, Nigeria	May 7, 2018 (WhatsApp, Phone Call)
Joel Konolo	Co-Managing Partner	INK Center for Investigative Journalism, Botswana	May 12, 2018 (Skype, Phone Call, Sit-interview)

