

DOING CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION

A Toolkit for Community Radio Professionals in Nigeria



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the European Union



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Nigeria**

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By

Centre for Media and Society (CEMESO)
3, Emina Crescent, Off Toyin Street,
Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria.

Phone:
(+234) 813-709-2766

Emails:
info@cemesong.org;
cemesong@hotmail.com

Website:
www.cemesong.org

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Foreword

The role of community media is pivotal in fostering democratic processes and ensuring a fair, accurate, ethical and inclusive coverage of the electoral process.

Community radio in particular has developed in large numbers and are now seen as a significant component of broadcasting plurality in Nigeria.

However, for many years, their engagement of programming for advancement of the democratic process has been limited. This implies a deficit in their ability to function as agents of democratisation.

The Centre for Media and Society (CEMESO), the regulatory body (National Broadcasting Commission, NBC) with community radio operators and other stakeholders have organised capacity-building activities to address the trend. A major thrust of these conversations has been capacity development for professional engagement to deepen and diversify the delivery of civic and voter education.

This toolkit, one of the expressed needs of the community radio constituency, is a component of a package to help strengthen professionals for CVE programming in their media houses across Nigeria.

It will be a valuable companion for community radio professionals in their various locations — grassroots communities, campuses of educational institutions and others.

Dr Akin Akingbulu

Executive Director

Centre for Media and Society

CHAPTER

1

UNDERSTANDING CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION (CVE)

In this chapter, our focus will be on the following:

- What Civic and Voter Education (CVE) Is
- Importance of CVE
- How to Enhance CVE

What is Civic and Voter Education (CVE)?

Civic and voter education are two organically linked concepts, but they are distinguishable. Civic education is regarded as the bigger concept, while voter education is its subset. One view sees civic education in terms of inculcating in citizens those skills, values and behaviours that are thought to be necessary for a stable and effective democracy. According to this view, civic education has some broad goals, which are:

- To introduce citizens to the basic rules and institutional features of democratic political systems.
- To provide citizens with knowledge about democratic rights and practices.
- To convey a specific set of values thought to be essential to democratic citizenship, e.g. trust in the democratic process, rule of law, etc.
- To encourage responsible and informed political participation.

Voter education (a subset of civic education) focuses on the role of the citizen as a voter. Hence, it is designed to equip the citizen with knowledge about the entire spectrum of the electoral process. The issues on which citizens acquire knowledge could include duties and obligations of a voter, responsibilities of the election management body, timelines of activities in the electoral cycle, etc.

Some scholars have argued that civic and voter education (or CVE) is the “inculcation in the citizen, of positive orientations towards democratic structures and objects at the cognitive (knowledge and belief), affective (feelings) and evaluative (judgement of citizens) levels.”

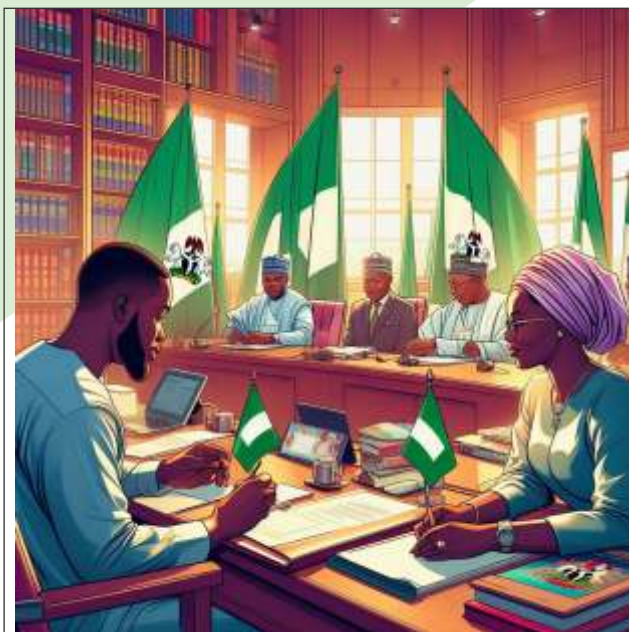
Importance of CVE

- CVE is very important in a democracy. Indeed, it is essential for the functioning of a healthy democracy.
- It helps to ensure that citizens are informed about their rights.
- It helps citizens to understand democratic institutions and electoral processes.
- It equips citizens to make informed decisions/choices during elections.
- It fosters civic engagement and accountability of political institutions.
- It helps to strengthen the legitimacy of elected governments.



CVE refers to all programmes and initiatives designed to inform and educate citizens about their rights, responsibilities and roles in the democratic process. It is designed to enhance voters' awareness and citizens' participation in both national and state electoral processes. Also, it encompasses a wide range of activities aimed at increasing public awareness and participation in civic life and elections. Overall, CVE aims to foster a well-informed and engaged citizenry, which is essential for the health and sustainability of democratic societies.

CVE has become an integral part of Nigeria's democratic process. It has continued to feature prominently in every election cycle-- before, during and after elections. Given its importance to elections, several individuals and groups have developed interest in the CVE practice. These include the political parties, candidates, civil society organizations, the media, religious and traditional bodies, among others. Apart from those listed above, the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), that is saddled with the conduct of elections, has also designated the National Commissioner for Information and Voter Education, IVEC; Heads of Voter Education and Publicity, VEP; and Public Affairs Officers at its various states' offices, to the role of voter



education and public information.

However, despite the involvement of several stakeholders in CVE, voter apathy and incidence of rejected (wrongly marked ballots) are still high. Several observers have noted that the number could have been markedly lower if the voters had received adequate voter education. The problems of rejected ballots and declining turnout at elections are widely attributed, both directly and indirectly, to inadequate civic and voter education.

When citizens are not familiar with the electoral process, the results are low levels of participation, a large number of improperly cast ballots, or an erosion of confidence in the integrity or legitimacy of the election results. Cynicism toward elections may also develop when elected officials or political competitors fail on their past electoral promises. Overcoming voter apathy has proven to be challenging. Therefore, programmes designed to raise the level of awareness and confidence of citizens in the democratic process are useful and necessary.

It is important to note that, although CVE is happening, effective CVE is not happening-- messaging are inadequate; messages are rushed and do not respond to audience informational needs; messages are created and disseminated by those who do not have skills for participatory election messaging; messages are not regular; and messages are not prompt.

Voter education is most effective when it integrates with civic education that puts the election into context for voters and provides an explanation of the election's purpose, the surrounding issues, and their significance.

National Election Management Bodies are primarily responsible for voter education and the institutional arrangements and strategies for connecting with the Voter. However, the government, the public and private media, political parties, non-partisans (civil society organizations), and international organizations, may be involved and can play a vital supplementary role in spreading the message, subject to overall guidelines of INEC and the strict conditions of non-partisan approach.

How to enhance CVE

To achieve effective CVE, there are some critical guiding questions to help the community radio in designing effective CVE messagings. Community radio stations have to come up with more dynamic and creative ways to get the message across,



i.e., message with strategic purpose and compelling content. The community radio has to designate a team to interface with the election management body, to mine data on the total number of registered voters within the community and other relevant quantitative data. Secondly, community radios need to take a critical look at previous election results. These processes will enable community radios to:

1. Know what percentage of voters in need of voter education are exposed to voter education which will facilitate their effective participation in voting. In most cases, first-time voters are often in high need of CVE.
2. Figure out if at-risk groups have been recognised, and their needs have been addressed. In most cases, most at-risks are historically marginalised groups.
3. Know what percentage of ballot cast is valid in the results that were previously released.
4. In terms of Voting Age Population (VAP), what percentage of those eligible to vote for the first time in an election actually voted.
5. A designated experienced team that is not made up of visibly politically-exposed persons should plan, produce and broadcast civic education programmes. It should not be an all-comers affair.
6. These creative messages will be designed so that they will be easily comprehensible, especially to early voters (young voters), the uneducated, the aged, the underserved women and Persons Living with Disability (PWDs).

Without these evidence, the message in the CVE initiatives and programmes will be generic and will not respond to the informational needs of each target group.

Goals of CVE:

1. Increase Voter Turnout and participation: By making the voting process more accessible and understandable.
2. Promote Democratic Values: Encouraging a culture of participation, transparency and accountability.
3. Empower Citizens: Equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills to actively engage in their communities and influence public policies.

An “informed electorate is the ultimate public good,” according to Paul Collier, in his book, “The Future of Capitalism.” However, it seems that it is not enough for the electorate to be informed. Electorates can be wrongly and rightfully informed, unknowingly or deliberately so. The “ultimate public good” would be when electorates are capable of critical reasoning and can make informed decisions. One of the core functions performed by community radios is to provide the right messages, at the right time to the electorates.

CHAPTER

2

ROLE OF COMMUNITY RADIO IN CVE

In this chapter, the focus will be on:

- Community Radio's Characteristics as CVE Tool
- How Community Radio Can Deliver CVE

In many communities, the community radio is the sole communication channel, hence the critical role it plays in enhancing information dissemination for community development.

Most communities trust and rely on the information and messages from their community radio to make informed decisions on issues that they care about, including CVE.

Community Radio's Characteristics as CVE Tool

Community radio possesses some characteristics which position it as an effective tool for providing education and information to the electorates at the grassroots level. Here are some of them:

1. **Accessibility:** Community radio reaches people in remote and underserved areas where other forms of media might not be available.
2. **Local Relevance:** Community radio stations often broadcast in local languages and focus on issues that are directly relevant to their audiences. This helps ensure that the



information is understood and valued by the listeners.

3. Trust and Engagement: Local radio stations are often trusted by their communities because they are run by people from the same area who understand local needs and concerns. This trust can enhance engagement and participation.

4. Interactive Platforms: Community radio can provide interactive platforms, such as call-in shows and live debates that allow listeners to ask questions, express their views, and engage directly with experts and political candidates.



Community radio stations have a crucial role to play in implementing civic and voter education at the grassroots level. They are the media outlets, whose primary (or sole) target audiences are the grassroots, and underserved or unserved populations. These radio stations are more accessible to the local (sometimes marginalised) communities. They can effectively reach populations that mainstream media might have overlooked. A rich understanding of the needs and concerns of these communities resides in the professionals in community radio. This positions them to design CVE messages which resonate with their community audiences.

How Community Radio Can Deliver CVE

Community Radio Stations Can Deliver CVE in various ways:

- Delivering targeted content through creative programming to their audiences.
- Providing platforms for election stakeholders to reach election audiences.
- Organizing and reporting community engagement activities that have bearing on democratic governance and electoral issues.
- Partnering with other democracy/election stakeholders, whether governmental or non-governmental, to develop and disseminate CVE programmes.

As agents of democratisation, community broadcasting stations in Nigeria should prioritise CVE in their programming. The gap that exists in CVE programming should be filled as a matter of urgency. In fulfilling this task, the community radios must be professional through and through.

CHAPTER

3

CONDUCTING AUDIENCE RESEARCH FOR CVE

In this chapter, we will discuss:

- Meaning of media audience research
- Relevance of media audience research to CVE in community radio broadcasting
- Basic approaches to media audience research — the quantitative and qualitative
- Sampling in media audience research

MEANING OF AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Simply put, media audience research is a systematic, focused and planned procedure of investigating and establishing the attitudes, knowledge, interests, preferences and behaviours of a targeted segment of media audiences. Put differently, media audience research is an organised procedure of finding out some characteristics (e.g. demographics and psychographics) of an identified group of media audiences and providing the implications of these characteristics for content production, modification, improvement and dissemination by a media organisation. Like other scientific methods of investigation, the media audience is systematic, scientific, organised, public, purposeful and targeted.

There are usually two broad objectives of conducting media audience research: (1) to estimate audience sizes and measure how the target audiences are changing their patterns of media consumption in terms of content preferences. (2) to explore the context-specific changing attributes and details of the audience's use of the media either for private or corporate purposes. To achieve the first objective above, we use the quantitative approach to media audience research, while for the second object, we need the qualitative approach as we shall explain later in this chapter. As a community broadcast content producer conducting audience research, you must

understand and meticulously follow the scientific procedures of doing media research. You must set your research objectives, select appropriate approaches and target an identified segment of the audience to establish their attitudes, knowledge, interests, preferences and behaviours.

HOW IS MEDIA AUDIENCE RESEARCH RELEVANT TO CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION BY COMMUNITY BROADCAST?

Things are changing rapidly due to technological advancement which has affected every aspect of our lives, including how we do research. Today, decision-making and policy formulation have become progressively evidence-based and data-driven. Like many international agencies, leading corporate organisations and public institutions that are investing massive resources in research for better performances, community broadcast stations must invest in audience research. They must generate reliable data to ensure adequate planning and effective services that meet what the audiences need, especially in the contemporary democratic society where the citizens need constant voter and civic enlightenment. The most reliable means of generating these data about attitudes, knowledge, interests, preferences and behaviours of the audience in a democratic society such as Nigeria is research. Therefore, any community media organization that wants to perform this sacred duty of voter and civic education must be constantly familiar with what the audiences in its communities want or lack. This is possible when community media organisations conduct periodic and effective audience research to perpetually provide quality voter and civic education.

BASIC APPROACHES TO CONDUCTING MEDIA AUDIENCE RESEARCH

There are two types of media audience research. These are Primary research and secondary research. On the one hand, primary research generates primary data. It is first-hand research executed by a media organization, an agency, or a team of researchers commissioned by the media outfit. On the other hand, secondary research relies on secondary data. The researchers review the information available in some sources already published or made public. Secondary research is also called data journalism or desk research. Sometimes, we



can use secondary data to complement primary data.

The two research types are relevant. The one we choose at a given time depends on the purpose of the research. However, our focus in this toolkit will be on primary research, which requires better planning, more skills and rigour. Since media audience research is social science research, especially when we choose to collect primary data, we must consider any of the two broad categories of social science research approaches to conduct media audience research—*Qualitative Approach* and *Quantitative Approach*.

Quantitative Approach to Conducting Media Audience Research

When we are more interested in providing measurable information, the quantitative approach is required. This is because the quantitative approach employs research methods which give priority to the objective measurement of quantifiable data. That is, quantitative research methods produce data (information) that have statistical, mathematical, or numerical values. Quantitative research studies are executed through methods such as surveys (e.g. face-to-face, telephone, SMS, online), quantitative content analysis, web analytics (i.e., monitoring online behaviours or digital interactions of the media audience), or experiments (i.e., establishing causality). Examples of instruments that we can use to collect information in quantitative media audience research are questionnaires, attitude rating scales and computer software. For instance, if we intend to measure the Percentage ages of the audience listening to, watching, or following our programmes during an election cycle, or those that prefer certain political programmes or certain presenters of our stations, or we want to characterise the audiences according to their demographics (e.g. age, gender, education, religion, economic status), the quantitative research approach is the one we should use. In some other instances, we can use quantitative research methods to establish a relationship between variables such as trying to describe how the economic status, the age or gender of the audiences determine their preference for certain programmes, the timing of such programmes, or the on-air personnel who anchors the programme.

To do quantitative audience research, we must identify the population (the specific audience segment we want to observe), select a sample through appropriate sampling technique(s) and administer the appropriate instrument(s) to the selected sample(s). The data collected from the sample are analysed through descriptive statistics (e.g. simple Percentage, range, standard deviation, mean, median) or inferential statistics (e.g. regression analysis, statistical hypotheses test, confidence intervals) as appropriate depending on the objectives of our study. The final step is to discuss the findings and generalize them across the population. This would enable us to explain certain situations or understand audience characteristics, knowledge and preferences, which should guide our subsequent decisions, nature of our programmes, or organisational policies.



Selected Quantitative Research Methods

In this toolkit, we shall discuss Survey and Web Analytics, which are more frequently used to conduct media audience research.

Survey Research Method

A survey is a research method used for collecting a large volume of information from individuals who are the representatives of a large, definite, group of people. The representative samples in the survey are usually selected through random samplings and, or other appropriate techniques. The idea is that the samples would provide the most accurate representations of the opinions, knowledge, attitudes or demographic characteristics of the whole group (the population) from which the samples have been selected for the research. Today, media organisations use results from surveys, among other methods, to understand their audiences and make appropriate decisions or policies regarding their programme formats or organisational structure.

When the survey method is used, we naturally prioritise the issue of sampling. This is done when we scientifically select and study a fairly large representative sample of a definite group, and we use the results from this sample to make general statements or conclusions about the study population. This is called empirical generalization.

One of the major strengths of a survey is that it can be used to study the audience in their natural settings. For example, we can use a survey to study how media audiences use the media to get information about political parties or electoral processes in their natural settings. Also, surveys can generate a large volume of data at a cheaper cost. However, surveys cannot always provide in-depth explanations and diverse perspectives required to explain complex situations. In this case, we would need to combine a qualitative method such as focus group discussions, in-depth interviews or key informant interviews.

Survey Questionnaire

The questionnaire is one of the instruments or tools used to collect data in a survey. There are three types of questionnaires that we can use in media audience research. They are as follows: (1) *Structured Questionnaire*: This consists of close-ended items (questions) with definite responses. In this type of questionnaire, the researcher usually anticipates all possible answers and pre-codes them as the responses from which the respondents choose their responses. (2) *Semi-structured Questionnaire*: This comprises a mixture of close-ended and open-ended questions. The semi-structured questionnaire enables the researcher to elicit a mix of qualitative and quantitative information from the respondents. (3) *Unstructured Questionnaire*: This consists of open-ended items that require the respondents to generate their responses. An unstructured questionnaire is used for survey interviews. The responses generated through open-ended questions are qualitative, and they can provide more in-depth explanations.

Web Analytics as Media Audience Research Method

Web analytics is the process of collecting, reporting and analyzing website information to provide some explanations. It is a way of collecting and analyzing activities on the website of an organization. These virtual activities cover everything that the visitors are doing on the website. Web analytics usually examines users' activities on the website of an organization with a specific focus on organizational and user goals. It is a quantitative research method employed to observe traffic on the website, measure variables provided by the traffic, present such measurements and make inferences that help stakeholders to make the right decisions. Web analytics is employed to enable an organization to use the website data to measure its success or failure, and the extent to which it has met its corporate goals and satisfied the users or audience. When the media station is aware of these variables, it will be able to deploy the right strategies and policies to improve the overall quality of its programmes. Web analytics is one of the contemporary research methods that are frequently used by corporate entities including media outfits across the world.

Examples of some of the tools that researchers can deploy to do web analytics are Clickstream Analysis Tools (e.g. Google Analytics [google.com/analytics]), [Yahoo Web Analytics](http://web.analytics.yahoo.com) [web.analytics.yahoo.com], [Crazy Egg](http://crazyegg.com) [crazyegg.com], Competitive Intelligence Tools (e.g. [Compete](http://compete.com) [compete.com]), Experimentation and Testing Tools ([Google Website Optimizer](http://google.com/websiteoptimizer) [google.com/websiteoptimizer], [Optimizely](http://optimizely.com) [optimizely.com]), and Social Analytics (Facebook Insights, [Twitalyzer](http://twitalyzer.com) [twitalyzer.com]). Some of these tools are free, while many are not free (Dubois, 2010).

When we visit the website of our media organisation to analyse its content, there are a lot of information metrics that we can track using different tools depending on our goals. As identified by Hughes (2019), some of the key web analytics that we should

be tracking include *i) Overall traffic* (i.e., the number of visits our site gets over a specific time, *ii) Desktop vs Mobile Visits* (i.e., the percentage of audience visiting our websites through the desktop or mobile browsers), *iii) Bounce Rate* (i.e., a situation when a user visits a website and leaves almost immediately without viewing a second page or scrolling further beyond what is prompted on the screen), *iv) New and Returning Visitors* (i.e., users who are visiting for the first time, and users who have been visiting the website repeatedly, respectively) and *v) Traffic sources* (i.e., the pages that link to our website. Most times, users who visit our website for the first time will locate our website not by typing the URL (public link) of the website, but through links to the site from other sites).

Qualitative Approach to Conducting Media Audience Research

The qualitative media audience research is different from the quantitative approach in orientation and methods. It adopts research methods that produce data which are capable of providing deep and unique explanations about a situation or a group of people. Qualitative research methods focus more on experiences, perspectives, life and situations as understood and described by the audience. It does not try to measure or determine the size of the audience or quantify their experiences.

If we want to conduct audience research using the qualitative approach, we must pay attention to the contextual factors (i.e., participants' beliefs, biases, values, experiences and preferences) to guide the research focus. Our attention must also be on the nature of the situations we are investigating and the relationship that exists between us as researchers and the media audience as the research subjects.

In essence, the qualitative research approach emphasises qualitative interaction between us as the researchers and the media audience as the research participants. Therefore, the qualitative research approach underscores depth, rather than size or number. Examples of qualitative methods that we can use for audience research are *In-depth interviews* (through face-to-face, telephone, Skype or Zoom), *Focus Group Discussions*, *Key Informant Interviews*, *Field Observations*, *Case Studies*, *Social Media Analytics* (qualitative), and *Ethnographic Interviews*.

We can use the foregoing qualitative research methods independently or alongside other quantitative methods where in-depth explanations and triangulation (i.e. complementary blending of quantitative and qualitative findings in a study) are necessary. For example, let us assume that as content producers in our community radio stations, we want to measure our audiences' knowledge of electoral and civic obligations, and we have conducted a survey study and established that a certain gender of the audience does not like to vote during elections. We may want to go further to understand, from multiple perspectives (which could be perspectives of the group of the audiences themselves, or of the other groups who could provide further explanations), why the particular gender does not like to vote during elections. The appropriate research methods that we should adopt in this situation are the

qualitative research methods that permit a close interaction with, and keen observation of, the audience's class. We can do simple Focus Group Discussions (FGD) or In-depth Interviews with the audience.

In Figure 2, the features of the qualitative research approach are summarised:



Selected Qualitative Research Methods

As we did for the quantitative research approach, we also consider it imperative to discuss two research methods that are more frequently employed when the research approach is qualitative. We shall, therefore, examine the *Focus Group Discussion* and *In-depth Interviews*:

Focus Group Discussion (FGD)

The Focus Group Discussion (FGD) is a qualitative research method that draws insights from the collective perspectives of a group of discussants as they respond to some open-ended questions which focus on a particular area of interest that addresses the research objectives. The researcher recruits and organises a group of participants and coordinates a discussion with them. The researcher, in FGD, serves as the moderator or facilitator. The number of participants may range from six to 12. The FGD is also called group interviewing or focus group. It is a research strategy used to explore and understand audience behaviours and attitudes.

The participants recruited must share certain similar characteristics which make them qualified for the discussion. For example, in a typical media audience research, all the participants to be recruited for the study could be people who listen to a particular programme on a particular radio station, and we may want to understand why the participants prefer to listen to the programme.

To conduct an FGD, the researcher is expected to take the following steps in a sequential order: 1) Define the research problem, 2) select the sample(s), 3) determine the number of groups needed, 4) handle study mechanics (i.e. recruit the participants, 5) determine the venues, 6) arrange for incentives for the participants,

7) get necessary recording gadgets, etc., 8) prepare the focus discussion guides (e.g., the questions) and other materials, 9) conduct the discussion session(s) and observe good interview procedures, 10) analyse data, and 11) prepare a summary report (Wimmer and Dominick: 2011).

One of the major advantages of FGD is that it permits the participants to discuss issues elaborately because of the flexibility of the questions. This allows for the cross-fertilisation of ideas. Besides, FGD is useful in providing preliminary data for a full-scale study. Lastly, the cost of conducting the FGD notwithstanding, the method generates rich and in-depth data that we cannot obtain through the survey.

FGD is expensive to conduct, especially when participants are reluctant to participate in the study. Also, apart from the fact that groups are difficult to organise, it is a difficult task, most times, to get the appropriate venue and time that would be acceptable to all the participants. Besides, unlike the case with the survey, we cannot use the findings from FGD to make an empirical generalisation (inferences or conclusions) or establish a pattern. We can only do this when we have many focus groups that would produce a fairly large representation of the whole population. This is quite expensive to achieve. Lastly, responses from the FGD could represent the views of just a few vocal members. This could happen when some members of the group are naturally shy, while some are domineering.

In-depth Interviews

In-depth interviews are also called intensive interviews. Wimmer and Dominick (2011) describe in-depth interviews as a hybrid of one-on-one interview approaches used to sample and explore diverse opinions or perspectives on topics or matters that address the research objectives. An in-depth interview is more elaborate and intensive as the name implies, and it uses smaller samples. The researcher (interviewer) recruits respondents (interviewees) with specialised knowledge or experiences on a particular topic. Such participants may include academics, community leaders, security experts, or skilled individuals who share certain knowledge or experiences about the focus of our research.

Like the FGD, the in-depth interview approach also has its unique procedure. Creswell (2013) identifies the following steps similar to those for group discussions, but with some unique aspects:

- Decide on the research questions that you expect the interviewee to answer. The questions should be open-ended and flexible focusing on the general research problem.
- Identify interviewees who have the expected knowledge and experiences to answer the questions. The selection here is usually through purposeful sampling.
- Determine what type of interview is feasible or practical. You may choose a

face-to-face or virtual method. It all depends on the reality on the ground such as the preference of the interviewee, the nature of issues to be discussed, cost, distance, time, or other social factors (e.g. national protests that could affect public traffic).

- Select adequate recording procedures or gadgets. Always have backups.
- Design and use interview protocol (interview guide). A good in-depth interview protocol should have the *title* showing the media organization or the agency carrying out the study; *time of interview*; *date of the interview*; *names of the interviewer and the interviewee*, *the position of the interviewee*; *a brief description of the study*; and *the questions*.
- Do a pilot study to refine (modify) the interview protocol (questions) and procedures.
- Determine the conducive place and time for conducting the interview.
- After arriving at the interview site, obtain consent from the interviewee to take part in the interview.
- During the interview, follow good interview procedures: Follow the questions; complete the interview according to the agreed schedule; show respect and courtesy to the interviewee; be a good listener, not a frequent speaker; be in control of the interview; and take notes during the interview.
- Immediately after the interview, playback the recorded conversations. Then start to transcribe and write the report.

SAMPLING IN MEDIA AUDIENCE RESEARCH

Sampling is the process of selecting a fraction of the whole population (i.e., the entire media audiences we want to study) with such a fraction serving as the representative of the whole population and through which the general conclusions about the population are made. Like in any other social science research, sampling is crucial to media audience research. In media audience research, the researchers always have a large audience to study. Because the audience is too large to be effectively covered, and there are limited resources and time, media researchers have to select a representative of the entire body of the target audience. This entire body of audience that researchers intend to observe or study in a particular situation is called population or universe. The representative fraction selected from the population is called a sample.

In scientific research, it is considered unnecessary to study the whole population that is fairly large. The following reasons account for this: (1) it is assumed that an approximation may be sufficient; (2) the sample is cheaper, in terms of time and resources, compared to a census; (3) it may be difficult to access the whole population, and (4) studying the sample provides more detailed and accurate information.

Sampling Methods in Audience Research

Sampling methods or sampling techniques are the specific ways of selecting the sample for audience research. Factors such as the nature of the audience, the study objective(s) and the research approach we want to adopt determine the appropriateness of any sampling method(s) we choose. The sampling methods or techniques from which we can select are divided into two broad categories: (a) probability sampling techniques (i.e., techniques that give each of the audiences we want to study an equal chance of being selected), and (b) non-probability sampling techniques (i.e., techniques that do not give priority to an equal chance of selection for every member of a group). Some of the sampling techniques that are frequently used in media audience research are explained in the following section.

1. *Simple random sampling*: This sampling technique randomly draws a sample from a study population. The selection ensures that every member of the population has an equal chance of being selected. The use of this sampling technique requires that we have a comprehensive list of all the elements in the study population. This list is called the sampling frame. From this list, we select the required sample. It is called simple random sampling because the researcher can choose indiscriminately, but orderly, from the list. The selection must be done to ensure that no element is picked twice or denied the chance of being selected.
2. *Cluster Sampling*: This is a sampling technique whereby the researcher divides the study population into separate groups (clusters). In each cluster, the researcher applies a simple random sampling or convenience sampling to select the sample. The clusters provide homogeneous characteristics of the population with each member of a cluster having an equal chance of being a part of the sample. For example, if we want to apply cluster sampling to study the radio listening habits of students of tertiary institutions in Lagos State, Nigeria, we will group the students according to the universities, polytechnics, and colleges of education in the State. To make the sampling two-stage or multi-stage, we can further divide the tertiary institutions by ownership (state/federal or public/private). From each of the clusters, we shall select our samples randomly or by convenience sampling. The homogenous characterization of the study connects the stratified and cluster sampling methods as the two sampling methods share some similar advantages and weaknesses.
3. *Stratified Sampling*: This is a method where we must first identify the sub-groups in the study population and then divide the population according to these sub-groups. This is to ensure that all the groups in the population are equally represented in the sample. For example, if we want to conduct a state-wide study to know the programme type that appeals to the audience most, we would first divide the State into senatorial districts. Then, we will

divide the districts by local governments, and finally by wards. From each ward, we will select the respondents that will constitute the final study sample. It is believed that the sample selected from the strata is spread across the population and can generate findings that we can generalise.

4. *Convenience Sampling*: This technique is also called *available sampling*. It is a process of selecting the participants who are found to be most accessible to the researcher. For example, let us assume that we are studying the attitude of members of our community to a particular programme on our radio station, and we just approach some colleagues to assist us in administering our questionnaire to community members. On the market day, we and our colleagues go out to administer the questionnaire to any community member we can find at the market, and who are willing to respond to the questionnaire. This is a good example of convenience sampling. What we have done in this case is that we only collect data from a narrow section of the community population, and this may not represent all the community members as the population of our study. Convenience sampling is an easy and inexpensive sampling method, but the technique does not give an equal chance of selection to every member of the study population.
5. *Quota Sampling*: This is a sampling method used to collect data from a homogeneous group. It involves at least two variables to screen information from the study population and shows how such variables define the homogenous group. It is useful in establishing a quick comparison based on the identified variables such as age, sex or religion of the same group. For example, in a study population with 60% males and 40% females where the total population is 400, and we want to use 50% (i.e. 200) of the population, quota sampling can be applied. In this case, it is assumed that we have a male-female ratio of 6:4. Therefore, we will select 120 males (i.e. 60%) and 80 females (i.e. 40%) of the population to give us the desired sample of 200 participants. This is how quota sampling is applied. Quota sampling ensures that a certain group is not over-represented, but it requires the researcher to have prior knowledge of the composition of the study population in terms of the variables to be applied for the selection.
6. *Purposive Sampling*: This sampling technique requires the researcher to consider certain criteria while selecting a sample. In other words, the participants must possess certain unique experiences or characteristics that qualify them for the study. Anyone who does not have such characteristics cannot participate in the study. This sampling method is also called judgmental sampling. The sampling method is useful in qualitative methods when the objective is not to make statistical inferences but to explore detailed knowledge about a situation or provide an in-depth explanation for certain phenomena, values or behaviours. An example is when we want to understand the opinions of the electorate who voted for a particular candidate during the last election, and how exposure to political messages

on our radio station informed their decisions.

7. *Snowball Sampling*: Snowballing sampling is used in a study where the population is hard to access or members are not easily accessible or identifiable. It is used when the researcher needs a member of the study population to refer the researcher to another member who in turn refers the researcher to another member in that chain of referral. The trend continues until the number “snowballs” (increases) and reaches the desired sample size for the study. Therefore, the researcher recruits participants through other participants.

CHAPTER

4

PROGRAMME PLANNING FOR CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION (CVE)

In this chapter, the attention will be on:

- What programme planning is
- Components/activities in programme planning

What is programme planning?

Programme planning is the process of designing and organizing radio programmes content, structure and schedule. This can be done on a quarterly or weekly basis. It is an avenue to review the performance of a programme or engage new ideas. It is the responsibility of a community radio station, bearing in mind its editorial standards and the needs/tastes of its audiences. It may be done on weekly or quarterly basis.

Activities/components of programme planning

There are basic components/activities involved in programme planning which include the following:

Synopsis This is a brief summary or overview of an intended programme. It helps the overall supervisor to develop and refine the ideas and evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the programme.

Needs Assessment This involves serious research work on the audience needs and preferences, to know what the audience wants and to give it accordingly. Research can be done by the use of quantitative method (e.g. questionnaire) or qualitative methods (e.g. focus groups or interviews), asking the audience what they

like and what they want to hear. Research is also done on the type of presenter to use and the guests to feature on the programme.

Flexibility This allows for adjustments in response to audience feedback or changing circumstances, i.e., do not be too rigid.

Sustainability This is to foster inclusion and accessibility in programme content, develop cost effective programmes and ensure long term viability through proper programme planning.

Content The content of a programme must meet the needs of the audience in terms of community development, unity and educational advancement. Content could be in the line of:

- o Voting system and process
- o Vote buying
- o Voter registration
- o Voter apathy
- o Voter security

Scripting

In radio, every programme is scripted to serve as guide on what to say and do on air, to avoid gaps or dead air or silence. This is very important.

Programme Title

This is the name that identifies and brands the programme. It must be catchy and concise to grab the attention of the audience. The title must be memorable, descriptive, straight to the point and relevant. The following are examples of titles for civic and voter education that must be sustained for 13 weeks or a quarter.

- Civic Voice
- Know Your Right
- Voter's Choice
- Community Connection
- Civic Matters
- Vote Up
- Civic Central
- Democracy Now
- Election Edge

- Empower Hour
- Civic Talk
- The Voter's Guide
- Vote Smart, Vote Now

Programme Scheduling

This is very important in programme planning for civic and voter education. It refers to strategic planning and timing of a radio programme to impact and reach its target audience.

These steps must serve as a guide while scheduling.

1200Hours-1630Hours

HOUR	SOURCE	DETAILS	DURATION
1200	STD/LIVE	COMMUNITY NEWS (News stories on community engagements)	5 Minutes
1205	STD/TAPE	PUBLIC SERVICE AWARENESS JINGLE (DEMERITS OF VOTE BUYING)	60 Seconds
1206	STD/LIVE	YOUR VOTE YOUR POWER (An interview programme on Voter's Rights in Partnership with INEC)	25 Minutes
1330	STD/LIVE	OUR HERITAGE (Chit-chat/phone in programme spiced with titbits on culture, arts, lifestyle and music presented by Enobong Ono)	30 Minutes
1400	STD/LIVE	NEWS IN BRIEF (News summary local dialect)	10 Minutes
1405	STD/RECORDED	SLOGAN (Public awareness slogan on environmental health and waste disposal)	60 Seconds
1406	STD/LIVE	MIRROR (Drama series that treats societal ills packaged by Ola John)	15 Minutes

Prime Time

This is the type of programmes that is aired during peak listening hours, i.e., morning, homeward bound or in the evening, to reach a large audience.

Target Audience

Identify and determine who the programme is for, and their needs for civic and voter education. The following are some of the target audiences:

- **Young people**
- **Eligible Voters**
- **Minority groups**
- **Women**
- **Children**
- **People living with disabilities**

CHAPTER

5

PROGRAMME FORMATS FOR CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION (CVE)

The focus of this chapter will be:

- What a programme format is
- Programme formats that can be adopted for CVE

What is a Programme Format?

Programme format is the style and structure of the content and programming of radio stations. Its various forms are music, talk-show, magazine, feature, interviews, vox-pop and more.

Radio's main aim is to inform, entertain and educate. Through these, radio stations engage and connect with their listeners.

Programme Formats Adoptable for CVE

The following programme formats can be adopted to achieve the desired results of easy understanding of civic and voter education.

1. News

News is a collection of information on current events and trends, scripted and delivered by one or more journalists. Its duration could vary, from as short as 5 minutes to as long as one hour. News is particularly conducive for participation when actualities of citizens voices are embedded in it.

2. Interview

Interview: This is a question-and-answer format on radio and television. It usually focusses on a range of issues which are within the competence of the interviewer to deal with. It usually has at least one interviewer and one interviewee. Sometimes this number could increase on either side.

An interview programme demonstrates its potential for CVE when members of the audience phone-in or contribute through the programme's social media platforms.

There are three types of interview: The Personality Interview focuses on the life, interest and experience of the notable personality; Informative Interview seeks to educate listeners on a specific topic, issue or subject matter; and Investigative Interview digs deeper into the specific issues or controversy with the aim of



uncovering new or hidden information.

3. *Vox Pop*

Derived from the Latin, *Vox Populi*, which translates to “Voice of the People,” the format involves brief interviews with ordinary citizens on current topics. It usually

consists of one or two questions to gauge public opinion. It captures diverse voices and aims to reflect public sentiment on an issue. Vox Pop is a ready tool to put citizens' feelings on specific issues during the electoral cycle.

4. Testimonies

A person speaking straight to the audience. A testimony makes use of the voice of ordinary people who have experienced newsworthy events, for instance a voter who escaped being beaten up at a polling unit by party members because he was making use of his phone camera during election. Usually the experiences shared are laced with lessons for Community members to gain something from. A person living with disability can share a testimony on how a voting unit uphold inclusiveness and participation in the electoral process.

5. Demonstration

Explanations of a process in steps and sequence. A presenter can explain the process of thumbprint and folding ballot papers without smearing with ink so as not to void a vote.

6. Discussion

It is a platform for exploring diverse viewpoints on an issue of public concern. Usually lasting 15 to 30 minutes or longer, a discussion involves a moderator and 2 or 3 participants known for their expertise or perspectives. The moderator facilitates the conversation, introduces the topic and participants, ensures equitable speaking time and covers all relevant issues. Discussion is a good platform for CVE, among discussants in the studio, and others who could participate through phone-ins or social media platforms.

7. Feature:

This usually focuses on a single theme or subject and explores it comprehensively through interviews, reports, commentary and personal narratives.

The format allows for creative storytelling and in-depth exploration of issues that may not be covered extensively in news bulletins or other programmes. The typical feature is relatively short and tightly edited. It has strong potential for CVE because audience engagement is one of its key aspects, with listeners encouraged to share their own stories, perspectives or feedback.

8. Explainer

An explainer programme aims to simplify complex topics or issues for the understanding of the audience. Usually hosted by a presenter, the programme breaks down various subjects into easily digestible segments. It focuses on clarity



and accessibility, often using examples, anecdotes and expert interviews to enhance comprehension. Sometimes, vox pops are also embedded in it. Explainer videos also engage listeners through interactive elements and seek to empower them with knowledge and insight.

9. Drama

It is the representation of men in action. It can be used to correct and point out the ills in the society, and pass across issues of national interest that would bring about desired change or results.

10. Magazine Programme

It is a programme that covers a variety of topics, often with a mix of interviews, music, reviews, vox-pop; it is the only programme format that accommodates all other programme formats.

The various types of magazine programmes include:

General Interest: This is the most popular format. It accommodates different topical issues and embraces everything of general interest.

Specialized Magazine: This form of magazine programme bears a variety of topics/issues targeted at, or intended for, a specific group of people, e.g. farmers, children, women, sports and health. It is devoted to one topic throughout.

News and Current Affairs: This takes on News items, some News behind the News, or background to the main Hard News. It may focus on one topic with several contributions by using different techniques/methods. It is based on facts.

CHAPTER

6

SAMPLE ISSUES FOR ENGAGEMENT IN CVE PROGRAMMES

The attention of this chapter will be on:

- Civic education issues
- Voter education issues (pre-election)
- Voter education issues (during election)
- Voter education issues (post-election)

Introduction

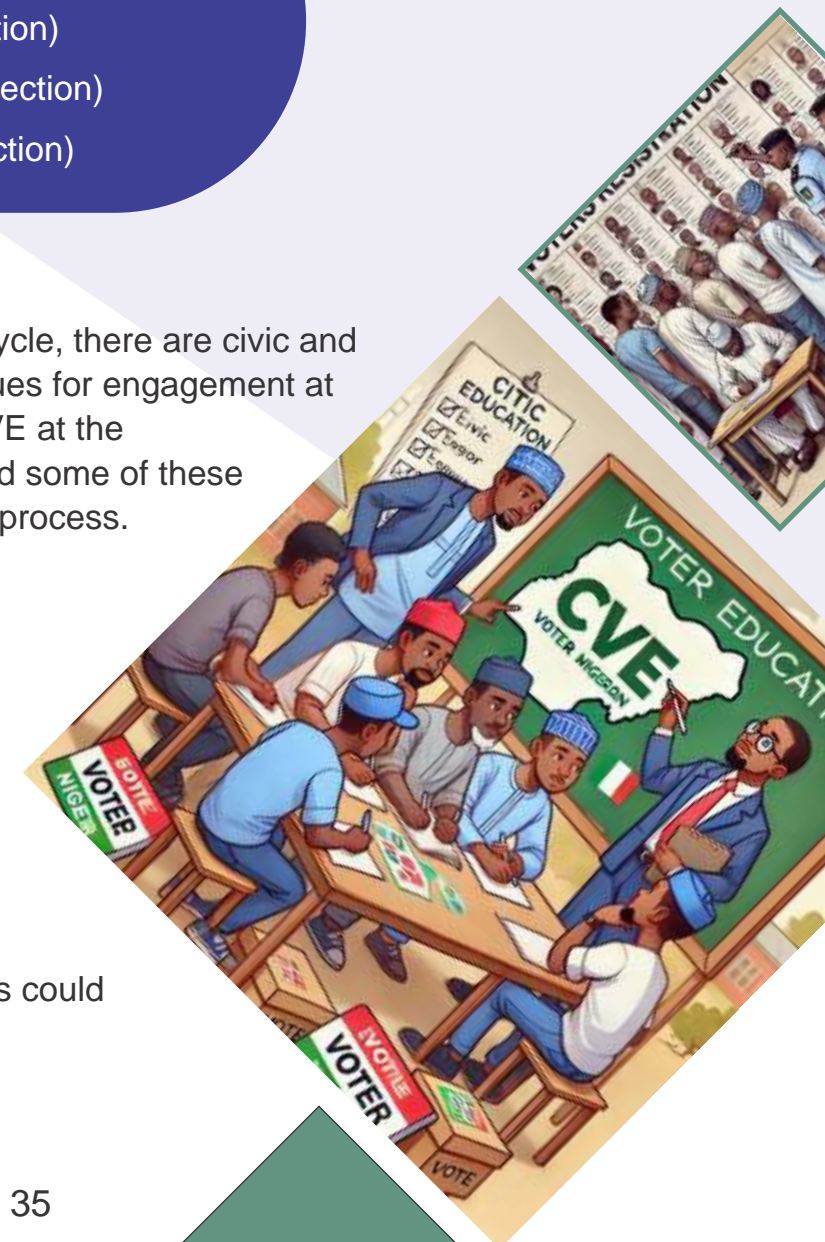
At the various stages in the electoral cycle, there are civic and voter education (CVE) programme issues for engagement at the grassroots. In order to improve CVE at the grassroots, it is important to understand some of these issues at various levels of the election process.

CIVIC EDUCATION ISSUES

Broad civic education issues can be engaged on community radio programmes throughout the electoral cycle. The key gap is that knowledge of democratic government varies among citizens.

Among the issues that the programmes could address are the following:

1. Why democracy is important



2. Institutions of democratic government
3. Rights and responsibilities of citizens
4. How the organs and tiers of government function
5. Transparency and accountability in governance
6. How citizens can participate in governance
7. The process of lawmaking
8. Budgeting and spending in democratic governance
9. Tenures of officeholders in government
10. Rule of law and democratic governance




Voter education should start early and continue throughout the electoral cycle. This cycle usually has three phases.

Pre-election: In the pre-election phase, the core gap is the low level of citizen awareness of the calendar of activities and role of institutions in their implementation. Hence, voter education should target such issues as:

1. Electoral management body's (EMB) notice of elections
2. Release of election funds to the EMB
3. Political parties' submission of lists after conducting primaries
4. How to cross-check and correct prospective voters' records on the voter register
5. How to make claims and objections on INEC Website
6. How to Submit Objections Against unqualified voters
7. How much can be donated to a candidate
8. Spending limits for election campaigns
9. Inspection of party logos on ballot papers and result sheets before election
10. What should happen during political campaigns

Election-day: For the election day, the main gaps are on awareness, the logistics of voting and result management. Hence, the issues for voter education are:

1. Who is eligible to vote in an election?

- 
2. How to locate your polling unit on election day
 3. How voters are accredited to vote
 4. Duties of electoral staff on election day
 5. Responsibilities of party agents on election day
 6. Agencies involved in election management
 7. What is a rejected ballot paper?
 8. What constitutes electoral offence on election day
 9. How a winner is determined in an election

Post-election: After casting of election ballots, concerns of citizens shift to the collation and announcement of results, and reactions to the declared results, which include disputes and their resolution. Hence, the issues for voter education now include the following:

1. How election results are collated and transmitted
2. Differences between re-run and supplementary elections
3. Grounds for challenging an election
4. Timeframe for challenging an election
5. Stages of appeal in election petition
6. Remedies in an election petition
7. Who can be a party to an election petition?

CHAPTER

7

ENSURING INCLUSIVITY IN CIVIC AND VOTER EDUCATION (CVE)

This chapter will focus on:

- What inclusivity in CVE means
- How community radio stations can provide for inclusivity in CVE

What does inclusivity in CVE mean?

Inclusivity in Civic and Voter Education (CVE) means that all individuals, regardless of their background, have access to the information and resources they need to fully participate in the democratic process.

To be inclusive, CVE must address the information and awareness needs of all categories of voters and achieve universal coverage of the electorate.

Some groups or sections of society are usually marginalized, underserved or otherwise disadvantaged in the electoral process and are unable to participate actively.

These groups often include:

- Women
- Young people, including those who are eligible to vote for the first time
- People with disability (PWDs)
- Elderly people
- Internally displaced persons
- Rural residents



- vii. Citizens with low literacy levels
- viii. Other minority groups

CVE must target these groups along with the majority of citizens who generally participate in the electoral and broader democratic processes.

How can community radio stations provide for inclusivity in CVE?

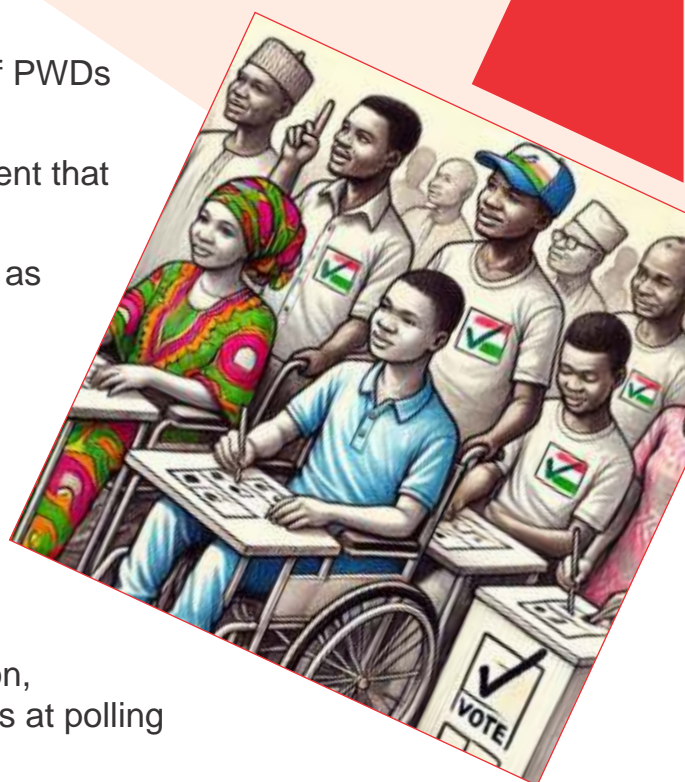
Community radio stations can provide inclusivity in CVE in ways, such as the following:

- (i) Address the concerns of disadvantaged groups in audience research, so that needs and preferences can be understood and addressed in programme production and dissemination
- (ii) Involve the participation of representatives of these groups in the production of CVE programmes
- (iii) Ensure that radio programme content reflect the diversity of the population
- (iv) Identify and address obstacles that prevent full participation of specific groups in the electoral process
- (v) Produce programmes with tailor-fit messages that address specific audience needs

Community radio CVE programmes can also be focused on specific under-served groups and the issues that affect them. Examples are PWDs, women and youth.

PWD-focused CVE should:

- a. Highlight the rights and privileges of PWDs during elections
- b. Include PWDs in the design of content that focuses on their issues
- c. Give PWDs equal access in airtime as with other citizens
- d. Provide platforms through which PWDs can give voice to issues related to their political participation
- e. Advocate for the provision of assistive devices (such as braille ballot guide, magnifying glasses, sign language interpretation, accessible platforms, etc.) for PWDs at polling units



- f. Project issues emerging from elections as they affect PWDs

Women-focused CVE should:

- g. Use women as sources and subjects of political news
- h. Amplify women's voices and balance their views with those of their male counterparts
- i. Balance the representation of women's and men's experiences, actions, views and concerns in elections and governance
- j. Create platforms for women to share their victories and challenges in the political process
- k. Provide positive portrayal of women and avoid derogatory representations
- l. Sensitise women about their important and active participation in the electoral process
- m. Highlight issues affecting the participation of women during the electoral process

Youth-focused CVE should:

- n. Involve young people in the design and production of CVE content
- o. Be focused on short and innovative programme formats
- p. Be accessible through multimedia, especially new media platforms
- q. Be packaged in youth-friendly language style
- r. Reflect youth concerns through the electoral process: pre-election, electioneering, post-election

CHAPTER

8

DEALING WITH MISINFORMATION, DISINFORMATION AND HATE SPEECH

This chapter will focus on:

- Understanding misinformation, disinformation, malinformation and hate speech
- How to identify and deal with misinformation, disinformation and malinformation
- Strategies for countering harmful content

Introduction

In the digital age, the proliferation of information has become both a boon and a bane. While the internet has democratized access to information, it has also paved the way for the spread of harmful content, including misinformation, disinformation, and hate speech. These issues pose significant challenges, particularly in the context of civic voter education (CVE) and community broadcasting.

In Nigeria, where community radio stations play a crucial role in disseminating information to local populations, the integrity of the broadcast content is paramount.

Misinformation and disinformation can undermine democratic processes, erode public trust and incite violence. Hate speech can exacerbate social tensions and fuel conflicts.

Therefore, it is essential for community broadcasters to be equipped with the tools to identify, counter and prevent the spread of harmful content.

Understanding misinformation, disinformation and malinformation

Misinformation is a false or misleading information that is spread without

malicious intent. Disinformation is a deliberately false or misleading information that is spread with the intent to deceive. Malinformation involves accurate information that is deliberately shared to cause damage or distress.

How to identify and deal with misinformation and disinformation

1. Fact-Checking
 - Verify information with credible sources
 - Use fact-checking websites and tools
 - Collaborate with fact checkers and fact checking Institutions
 - Establish fact checking desk in your station
2. Critical Thinking
 - Question the source and intent of the information
 - Analyze the language and tone used
3. Digital Literacy
 - Educate audiences on how to identify false information
 - Promote media literacy programs

Addressing Hate Speech

What is Hate Speech?

Hate speech is any communication that disparages a person or a group on the basis of attributes such as race, religion, ethnic origin, sexual orientation, disability, or gender.

Examples are radio broadcasts inciting violence against a particular ethnic group or online comments promoting discrimination against a religious community

Hate speech fuels social divisions and conflicts, threatens peace and security, and violates human rights and dignity.

Strategies for Countering Harmful Content, Including Hate Speech

1. Content Moderation:
 - Implement guidelines for monitoring and moderating content
 - Train staff to recognize and address harmful content
2. Community Engagement

- Foster dialogue and understanding among diverse communities
- Encourage community participation in content creation
- 3. Collaboration
 - Partner with fact-checking organizations and civil society groups
 - Share resources and best practices with other broadcasters
- 4. Legal and Ethical Considerations
 - Observe statutory regulations
 - Adhere to national and international legal provisions
 - Uphold journalistic standards of accuracy, fairness and impartiality

CHAPTER

THE LAW AND REGULATION

9

This chapter will focus on:

- Legal limits on broadcasting of CVE programmes
- Regulatory frameworks on broadcasting of CVE programmes

A. THE LAW

There are legal limits to broadcasting of CVE programmes.

1. Defamation (Libel)

Defamation has two dimensions, the civil and the criminal.

Firstly, defamation is recognized by Nigerian legal system. Section 373 of the Criminal Code Act, CAP C38, LFN, defines defamation as:

Defamatory is matter likely to injure the reputation of Any person, by exposing him/her to hatred, contempt, or ridicule, or likely to damage any person in his profession or trade by an injury to his/her reputation. Such matter may be expressed in spoken words or in any audible sounds, or in word legibly marked in any substance whatever, or by any sign or object signifying such matter otherwise than the words, and may be expressed Either directly or by insinuation or irony. It is immaterial whether at the time of the publication of defamatory matter the concerned, against whom such matter is published is living or dead. Provided that no persecution for the publication of the defamatory concerning dead persons shall be instituted with the consent of the ATTORNEY GENERAL OF THE FEDERATION.

The second dimension of defamation is a TORT (a civil wrong) given by an English jurist, Lord Atkin (in *sim-vs-stretch*, 1936). It says: *A statement is considered defamatory if it lowers a person in the estimation Of right-thinking members of society generally or exposes him to hatred, contempt, or ridicule, or injures him in his profession, business or employment, Or causes others to shun him.* The aim (purpose) of the law of defamation is to protect anyone's integrity, reputation, achievement in social or professional life and the protection of privacy.

What could amount to defamation?

- (i). A false statement that is made by a person about the character or achievement of another person and shared with a third party or other persons will amount to either slander or libel.
- (ii). A statement is defamatory if it tends to injure the reputation of the person of whom it was spoken or written.
- (iii). A statement is defamatory if it is calculated to bring the plaintiff to hatred, ridicule or contempt, or calculated to lower him in the estimation (eyes) of right-thinking members of the society.
- (iv). A falsehood which maligns a person directly.

Elements of Defamation:

In an action for defamation the plaintiff must prove three things:

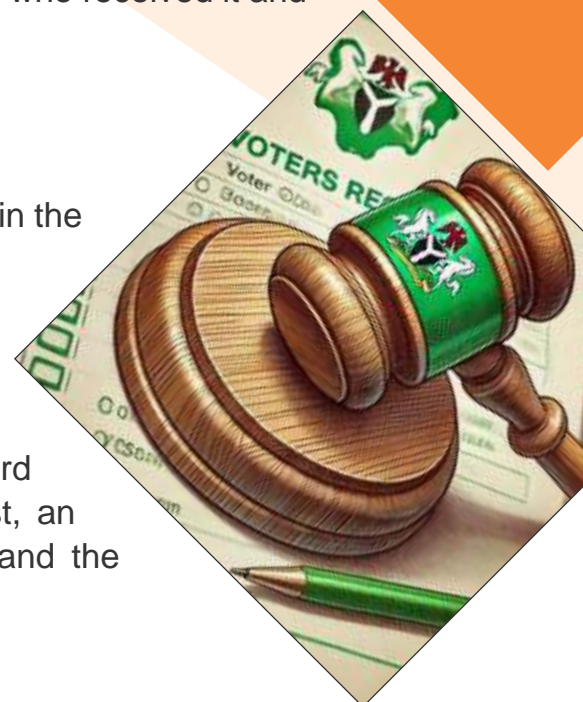
- (i). That the falsehood or defamatory statement refers to him.
- (ii). The falsehood or alleged words used by the defendant must have been published or spread to third parties.
- (iii). The falsehood must make meaning/sense to those who received it and can relate it to the defamed person.

Defences in defamation

Some defences are open to the defendant/respondent in the case of defamation. They include the following:

Justification: If the broadcast content complained about is true, the defendant can make a solid defence in justification.

Fair comment: It can be an acceptable defence if the word complained about is about a matter of public interest, an expression of opinion and not an assertion of fact, and the comment is fair.





Privilege: Defendants in an action of defamation can also plead privilege. This is a kind of benefit or immunity engaged by an individual or group which does not apply to the general public.

Privilege is of two types: absolute and qualified. Absolute privilege is a kind of unhindered liberty to make statements orally or in written form. Those who enjoy absolute privilege include judges and legislators. Qualified privilege is such that a plea will be destroyed if the plaintiff can prove that the publication (or broadcast) was by malice.

Consent to publication: If a person turns around and brings an action for defamation after he/she has invited someone to his/her event or granted interviews, then the journalist can plead consent. But the broadcast must be within the limit of agreed coverage of the event.

Res Judicata: This defence applies when an action for defamation has earlier been brought by a plaintiff on the same matter.

2. Privacy

Privacy is a normative (moral) concept that enjoys protection under the constitutions of many countries as well as it is the code of conduct of several professions. Nigeria's constitutions have been making provisions for the respect of individuals' privacy since 1960. Section 34 of the 1999 constitution provides that:

"The privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications are hereby Guaranteed and protected."

The 1999 constitution (as amended) echoes the same fundamental right to privacy in what it describes as RIGHT TO PRIVATE AND FAMILY LIFE, S.37.

"The privacy of citizens, their homes, correspondence, telephone conversations and telegraphic communications is hereby guaranteed and protected."

Privacy is one of the rights that have exceptions to their enjoyment by individuals. As a general rule, journalists should respect the privacy of individuals. But where the acts of an individual affects PUBLIC INTEREST, or the individual is holding a PUBLIC OFFICE, the right of PRIVACY becomes qualified under the following circumstances.

- o Where the individual's act borders on crime or serious misdemeanor.
- o Where there is allegation of anti-social conduct.

- o Where there is need to protect public health or morality.
- o Where there is need to protect the generality of the society from being misled by some statements or actions of the individual concerned.

3. The Law of Copyright

Otherwise known as Intellectual Property Right, IPR, Copyright refers to the right to protect the Words written by one person from being used (albeit illegally) by another person without consent/permission.

Every person has a right to his/her intellectual property, (which means the product of their brain, creativity or creative energy). It is an offence for another person to trespass on it or use it without express permission from the copyright owner. Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) affirms this right. Decree 47 of 1988 also makes total provision for the regulation of copyright in Nigeria. The decree lists the following works as those protected: literary works, artistic works, cinematography, films, sound recording and broadcast.

The copyright law therefore protects the owner against theft and misuse of his intellectual and artistic property. The law confers on him the right to the control of such works.

Section 39 of Decree 47 of 1988 spells the following as protected by copyright:

- a. Novels, stories and poetic works
- b. Plays, stage directions, film scenarios and broadcasting scripts
- c. Choreographic works
- d. Computer programmes
- e. Textbooks, treatise, histories, biographies, essays and articles
- f. Encyclopaedias, dictionaries, directories and anthologies
- g. Letters, addresses and memoranda
- h. Lectures, addresses and sermons
- i. Law reports, excluding decision of courts
- j. Written tables of compilation, stock exchange, or sports results

However, copyright laws do not cover the following works:

Letters to the editor, ideas, titles, pen name, criticism or review, and obscene and blasphemous works. The copyright in anonymous or pseudonymous work ends

after seventy years of the first publication. In the case of joint authorship, the copyright exists until seventy years after the death of the last surviving author.

The journalist or writer or creator should avoid falling victim of this law. There could be both civil and criminal actions against the offender as stipulated by Decree 47 of 1988. The penalty ranges from a fine and, in serious cases, imprisonment, ranging from six months to five years. The copyright owner can also take civil action and claim damages.

Therefore, if a person's work is cited, he must be acknowledged. Mere citation without acknowledgement is plagiarism while copying the entire work or a substantial portion and claiming ownership is a full infringement of copyright. Close to copyright is piracy, a situation where a person reproduces the original form for the purpose of making profit from the works of another.

4. Contempt of Court

Contempt simply means disrespect. The fundamental purpose of the law is to discourage people from interfering with the discharge of justice through disrespect for the court. Contempt of court is an action which tends to bring disrespect, disrepute and interferes with, or prejudices, any of the litigants (parties).

Contempt of court could be civil or criminal. Civil contempt deals with disobedience to court order and disobedience to subpoena, while criminal contempt deals with any action or demeanour that tends, or is likely, to interfere with the administration of justice. Publications which prejudice legal proceedings or which interfere with the administration of justice or, which scandalize the court, are regarded as criminal contempt. The law always seeks to maintain the dignity of the court.

There are two types of criminal contempt, namely, contempt in facie curiae and contempt ex facie curiae i.e. contempt inside the court and contempt outside the court. The first one deals with disrespect for the court within the court premises. This could be entering the court without bowing before the judge, shouting inside the court or within the court premises to the hearing of the judge, taking photographs inside the court without express permission of the judge, disturbing the court with a vehicle horn, attacking the judge physically or verbally, fighting and quarrelling or any other action that constitutes nuisance in the court or its premises, refusal to disclose source of information (such in *Tony Momoh vs. Senate 1981:1 N.C.L.R 105*).

On the other hand, the second type deals with disrespectful action against the court, but outside the court premises. This could be publication that prejudices court proceedings, publication of inaccurate and false reports of court proceeding, as well

as unfair and derogatory comment on the trial judge.

The journalist must be very careful when covering the judiciary. Careless journalists easily fall prey of the law of contempt. What makes contempt more grievous is the ability of the judge to try the contemnor summarily in the court, especially if the contempt is in *facie curiae*. He could be arrested within the court. There is usually no need for formal charges and witnesses and his plea may not be taken. He could be fined or imprisoned instantly. However, in contempt outside the court the normal procedure has to be followed.

B. REGULATION

There are two parts to regulation that community journalists should observe: self-regulation and statutory regulation.

Self-regulation

Journalism at the community level requires adherence to high professional standards. This is essential for ensuring and maintaining the trust of the community.

The community journalist should observe the following:

1. Accuracy and Fairness

- Factual, accurate, balanced and fair reporting is essential for good community journalism. It is important for the community journalist and broadcast station to earn community trust. A journalist should not broadcast inaccurate and misleading information. Where such information has been inadvertently broadcast, prompt correction should be made.
- A community journalist should strive to separate facts from opinion or commentary.
- A community journalist should provide a system of right of reply to members of the audience.

2. Privileged/non-disclosure

A community journalist should not disclose the source of information obtained in confidence.

3. Reward and Gratification

A community journalist should not be a prey to inducement. Hence, he/she should

neither solicit nor accept bribe or gratification to suppress public information.

4. Violence

A journalist should not present or report acts of violence, armed robberies, terrorist activities or vulgar display of wealth in a manner that glorifies such acts in the eye of the public.

Statutory Regulation

Regulation of broadcasting (including community broadcasting) content is also provided in the Nigeria Broadcasting Code. Among the provisions to be observed are the following:

1. Discussion Programme: Chapter 4.1.1 of the Code provides that the Broadcaster shall ensure that

- (a) panelists in discussion programmes reflect the various viewpoints
- (b) panelists are of comparable status and relevance

2. Children and Young Persons: Chapter 4.2 of the Code states that in handling content affecting listeners below 18 years of age, the Broadcaster shall

- (a) not transmit content that promotes or glamourizes exorcism, occultism and other paranormal activities
- (b) not transmit programmes, including cartoons, that glamourise violence and crime or leave criminality unpunished
- (c) not expose children and young persons to programmes that are likely to lower their self-esteem

3. Treatment of News: Chapter 5.1.2 provides that the Broadcaster shall present news as factual and in a correct and fair manner without

- (a) distortions, exaggerations or misrepresentations
- (b) material omissions or interpretations

Chapter 5.1.18 also provides that “the Broadcaster shall clearly identify news, commentary, analysis and editorial as such.”

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CEMESO Head Office:

3, Emina Crescent, Off Toyin Street,
Ikeja, Lagos, Nigeria. (+234) 913-427-3950
info@cemesong.org; cemeso2004@hotmail.com
www.cemesong.org



European Union Support to Democratic
Governance in Nigeria (EU-SDGN) Programme
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