

Suffer the Children – Reporting of Minors by the Swazi Press

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Abstract

This paper offers the results of a research project undertaken into the ethical standards of newspapers in the kingdom of Swaziland. The project takes as its starting point the assertion that journalists have a duty to promote and protect the rights of children. Journalists in Swaziland have created their own codes of conduct which include responsible reporting of issues involving minors, but a qualitative analysis of the Swazi press reveals that journalists are failing to follow their own code of ethics.

Introduction

I take as my starting point UNESCO's assertion that the way the media portray children has a profound impact on society's attitude to children and childhood, which also affects the way adults behave. Even the images children themselves see, especially of sex and violence, influence their expectations of their role in life (International Federation of Journalists, 2002).

Children have a special place in journalism codes of conduct because they have special needs and require special protections within society. Most adults are capable of deciding what involvement they want to have with the media and can make informed decisions as to the extent of their cooperation. Children have neither the knowledge nor the experience to make such a decision. At the point at which journalists are gathering material for their news reports there is no equality between the journalists and the child and where there is a power imbalance there is potential for exploitation (International Federation of Journalists, 2002:13).

There have been no published studies of the representation of children in the Swaziland media, however, a recent study in neighbouring South Africa showed that children tended to be seriously under-represented or poorly represented and, in extreme cases, may have their basic human rights violated by the media (Media Monitoring Project, 2004:3).

This research project sets out to interrogate the following three hypotheses.

- H1. Swazi newspapers fail to follow their own code of ethics in relation to the reporting of children.
- H2. In some cases the reporting of children does not uphold the rights of vulnerable children.
- H3. In some cases the reporting of victimised children further victimises those children.

This research article identifies the main code of ethics for journalists that are in place in Swaziland and focuses on Article 16 of the code which guides journalists in the reporting of children (defined as people under the age of 18 years). A content analysis of newspapers is undertaken to identify prime facie breaches of the code.

Codes of ethics have been used as the control mechanism in this research because such codes exist to articulate the broad normative ideals of the journalism profession and it is these normative ethics that articulate what people and institutions ought to do or how they should conduct themselves (Oosthuizen, 2002:13.)

Within Swaziland the main journalists' organisation the Swaziland National Association of Journalists (SNAJ) created a code of ethics for journalists in the kingdom to follow. This code includes an article specifically dealing with the reporting of children.

A detailed discussion of these breaches confirms the authenticity of the three hypotheses, but concludes that this should be unsurprising since Swazi journalists work within a kingdom that violates human rights generally and children's rights in particular. Swaziland, a small country, landlocked between South Africa and Mozambique, with a population of about 1.1 million people, is not a democracy and the banning of political parties and legal restrictions on the media make it difficult to sensitise journalists and the population at large towards an understanding of their own human rights and the rights of others.

The discussion also identifies general deficiencies in journalism within Swaziland as identified by media practitioners themselves and media academics. The report concludes with a review of what might be done to improve the present situation.

Methods

A qualitative analysis of the editorial content of all of Swaziland's daily and weekend newspapers was undertaken for a period of eight weeks between 16 October and 10 December 2006 inclusive. This was a total of 56 editions of the daily newspapers *The Times of Swaziland* and the *Swazi Observer*; the Saturday newspapers *The Weekend Observer* and the *Swazi News*; and the Sunday newspaper, *The Times on Sunday*. All pages were scrutinised, including news, features, comment columns, entertainment, overseas' news, 'gossip' and photographs with the exception of material on pages clearly designated as 'sports'.

The SNAJ Code of Ethics was used as the model for this study. SNAJ states that this code provides a framework of reference to all practicing journalists in Swaziland, both full-time and freelance and the code is meant to ensure that members adhere to the highest ethical standards, professional competence and good behaviour in carrying out their duties. Its overriding concern is that members of the media should conduct themselves with a high sense of responsibility without infringing the rights of individuals and society in general (SNAJ Code of Ethics, 2005).

The code has nineteen articles and concerns itself with a number of areas of journalist endeavour which can be broadly divided into two: (i) the personal responsibility of the journalist and (ii) editorial content.

There are eight articles of the code which concern themselves with the personal responsibility of the journalist and these cover such matters as conflict of interest (do not accept bribes), plagiarism; protecting confidential sources; under no circumstances suppressing news (unless it borders on issues of national security); allowing a fair opportunity for organisations or individuals to respond to issues raised in publications; using ethical means to secure information and photographs; respecting embargoes and encouraging journalists to advise a survivor of a sexual offence to go for counselling.

All of the above articles concern themselves with areas of the journalist's working practice that involve activity prior to the writing and subsequent publication of editorial material. It is impossible through a scrutiny of newspaper pages to ascertain to what extent these articles are being adhered to.

The remaining articles concern themselves with editorial content in one way or another. These articles cover the right to unbiased, accurate, balanced and comprehensive information; respect for privacy and human dignity; respect for national and ethnic values; the granting of corrections where inaccurate information has been published; separating comment from facts; hate speech; dealing with the survivors of sexual assault; dealing with minors; intrusions into personal grief and distress and avoiding sensationalism in news headlines; reporting on HIV and Aids.

This research report concerns itself with Article 16 and its eight sub clauses that deal specifically with minors. The article is reproduced in full below.

There are some limitations to these research methods. Potentially, the main limitation is the qualitative nature of the item selection. In Swaziland no official independent self-regulatory body exists to investigate readers' complaints into alleged breaches of the codes of practice so it is not possible to compare the sample in this research project with previously adjudicated cases to ascertain whether it might be considered to have contravened the code of ethics. Nor is it possible to be guided by case histories that might shed some light on the likely outcome of an inquiry should any of the sample presented here be officially adjudicated. Therefore, it is best to consider the

breaches identified in this research report as prime facie breaches, deserving of further investigation.

As a result of the lack of official activity it has been impossible for those working in the news media to develop understandings of how their own codes might be applied in practice and no public space has been created in which discussions about the rightness or otherwise of the codes exists.

The sample size is restricted to one eight week block in October to December 2006. Potentially, this may have excluded some examples of code breaches or it may have accidentally hit upon a period of unusually unethical journalism. There are two responses to this. The first is that as a journalist academic I have been studying closely all the Swazi newspapers for the past two years and my observation is that the results from the eight-week period under investigation here are typical of the Swazi press for the past two years. The second response is that other studies of press content in African newspapers have used sample sizes smaller than that used here. The Media Institute of Southern Africa (MISA) undertook a content analysis of the Swazi press, which restricted itself to a sample of two weeks. MISA was utilizing methodology developed by the Media Monitoring Project that has been used to examine the news media across southern Africa (MISA, 2006:3).

SNAJ Code of Ethics

The majority of Swazi journalists and other media practitioners are organised in professional associations such as The Swaziland National Association of Journalists (SNAJ), which has a membership of 150 out of the estimated 200 journalists who are working in the country (MISA, 2005).

In 2002, SNAJ developed and approved a code of ethics to ensure professional standards are maintained by all journalists practicing in the country. The code was updated in 2005 (MISA, 2005:23-24).

The SNAJ code draws on the many already operational codes of media ethics that exist elsewhere and has adopted and adapted these to suit its own purposes. The SNAJ code of conduct would not seem out of place in other media environments. In a review of journalism codes of conduct within South Africa, for example, Retief identified common denominators that included articles on accuracy, truthfulness, fairness, impartiality, confidentiality, conflicts of interest, invasion of privacy, trauma, stereotyping and social responsibility (Retief, 2002:38-45). All of these characteristics exist in one way or another within the SNAJ code.

This present research project analyses Article 16, which deals with minors (defined by SNAJ as people under the age of 18). Article 16 states:

- 1 Journalists should protect the rights of minors and in criminal and other cases secure the consent of parents and guardians before interviewing or photographing them.
- 2 Journalists shall:

- 2.1 uphold the rights of vulnerable children;
- 2.2 strive to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct in reporting children's affairs;
- 2.3 be sensitive and accurate when reporting issues involving children;
- 2.4 consider carefully the consequences of reporting any information governing children;
- 2.5 avoid visually or otherwise identifying children unless it is overwhelmingly in the interest of the child;
- 2.6 seek independent verification of information provided by children and take special care to ensure this takes place without putting child informants at risk;
- 2.7 endeavour to avoid the use of sexualised images of children.

Analysis of items in the Swazi Press

A total of ten items for which a prime facie case of Article 16 infringement could be made were identified, but because of space constraints I shall only discuss five of them here. I shall give a brief description of each item along with what I identify as possible code infringements (indicated in brackets at the end of each item).

ITEM 1. Two pictures across the top of the front page show two schoolboys fighting. There is no news report and one caption covers both photographs. Contrary to the code of ethics the fighting boys and other children looking on can be clearly identified as can the school the boys attend. The published details of the incident are scanty and it looks certain that no responsible adult gave permission for the children to appear in the photograph. The caption says that the two boys exchanged blows but the cause of the fight could not be established (by the photographer presumably). *Times of Swaziland*, 8 November 2006. (Infringes 1; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5)

ITEM 2. A news report details a house fire in which a school pupil's belongings were destroyed. In the course of the report a claim is made that the pupil was having an affair with one of her teachers (the pupil's age is not given, but it is to be assumed she is under the age to give consent to sexual relations). The pupil is not named and her mother agrees to be interviewed by the paper so long as she is not identified. The report has a photograph, clearly posed, of the mother with some of the remains of clothing that was burnt. Although the mother's face has a black sticker across the eyes she is clearly identifiable by her clothes and her location. Anyone with knowledge of the location would be able to identify her and her daughter. *Observer*, 22 November 2006. (Infringes 2.1; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5)

ITEM 3. A newspaper states that a 14-year-old girl is selling herself for sex to get pocket money because her mother will not provide her with pants. She is not identified by name (her mother is described as a maid and the

location in which she works is given). The girl, who by any standards must be considered to be in a vulnerable position, is interviewed by the paper (it is not stated but it seems as if she was not interviewed with an adult present). The words used to describe the girl sexualise her. 'Dressed in her black stockings complemented with an above the knee mini skirt, the girl stood out from the rest of her friends as someone who has been "enlightened" about life more than anything'. The report makes the girl out to be a perpetrator of sex when she is in fact a victim. She describes how she had sex with a kombi driver and when her mother found out she severely beat her. The girl was also caned 15 times at her school. The report has an exploitative photograph of the girl in her miniskirt talking with the newspaper's reporter. The girl's face is blacked out but he would be easily recognisable by anyone in her locality. *Times* on Sunday, 2 October 2006. (Infringes 1. 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5; 2.6; 2.7).

ITEM 4. A newspaper reports that two sisters aged sixteen and seventeen were raped on the same day (but not at the same time) by a distant relative of the victims, who is still on the run. The victims appear to have willingly been interviewed for the report, but there is no evidence that an adult was present when the pair was interviewed. A photograph of the two victims who have their faces blurred out accompanies the report. They are easily identifiable by their clothing to anyone in the community in which they live. *Times of Swaziland*, 30 October 2006. (Infringes 1. 2.1; 2.2; 2.3; 2.4; 2.5).

ITEM 5. A photograph accompanies a report that a former policeman has forced his wife and five of his seven children to join in on a hunger strike to force the prime minister to intervene in a labour dispute. The report makes it clear that the wife and children aged nine to eighteen are unwilling participants in the hunger strike and that the mother has become sick. The photograph shows the mother, clearly identifiable, lying on her stomach on the bed thereby violating her privacy as an unwilling participant and a sick person. *Times of Swaziland*, 17 October 2006. (Infringes 2.1; 2.2; 2.4; 2.5).

Discussion

Swazi journalists and their employers need to reassess their commitment to the ethical reporting of children. The five items examined above show clear evidence of a gap between the ethical aspirations behind the SNAJ code of ethics and the actual work journalists in Swaziland performed. It is noticeable that the ethical lapses exist in all newspapers and are not confined to a single newspaper or newspaper owner.

A closer examination of the items reveals that each contravenes between four and eight of Article 16's sub clauses. These contraventions do not seem to be minor errors of commission made by journalists who might be facing tight deadlines and therefore have little time to reflect on their activities. Instead, the evidence suggests that journalists are not upholding the rights of vulnerable children and in many cases the reporters themselves are violating

those rights. This becomes clear if we examine the details of some of the published items.

The 14-year-old girl selling herself for sex (item 3) is exploited by the newspaper into telling a titillating tale of illicit sex. She is depicted as a willing participant when in fact she is the victim of sexual abuse. The offence is compounded by the publication of the photograph showing her dressed in a mini skirt.

The two rape victims (item 4), clearly identified by photographs despite a perfunctory effort to disguise their eyes, have had their terrible ordeal exposed to the community at large, for no obvious journalistic reason than to offer a dramatic report for the gratification of the newspaper's readers. It is possible that the two girls consented to be interviewed and photographed but it is doubtful that this consent was informed. What experience could the girls bring to the situation that informed them of the possible consequences of being identified within their community? Incidentally, the newspaper compounded its offence by returning at a later date (outside of the research period) to do a follow up on how the girls were coping after the ordeal.

One girl has the details of her sex life revealed in a report that is ostensibly about a house fire (item 2). The circumstances of the girl are private and irrelevant to the report. There is no justification in the public interest for the intrusion into her privacy and one must assume that the reporter and the newspaper believed that these details would 'sex up' an otherwise mundane report about a fire.

The schoolboys fighting in the street (item 1) have been subjected to ridicule by the newspaper. There might have been ethical justifications for publishing a photograph of children in a street (or other public place) laughing and playing, as it does not infringe their rights. The reason for publishing the photographs of the schoolboys fighting (and on the top of the front page) is incomprehensible. Not only does it violate the rights of all the children involved; the newspaper has failed to explain the item in terms of news value (the caption states that the newspaper was unable to discover the reason for the fight).

The report and photograph of the mother and her children who were forced to join her husband's hunger strike (item 5) is a clear invasion of privacy. The report of the husband's grievances could have been written and published without subjecting his family to grief. The SNAJ codes of conduct allow for privacy to be invaded if it is in the 'public interest'. SNAJ defines 'public interest' as 'all matters pertaining to and promoting public safety, security, health and the general well being of society'. Using this definition, it is impossible to justify the involvement of the mother and her children in the newspaper's report and photograph.

There are a number of possible reasons why there is a failure on the part of journalists to adhere to their own code of ethics. One main problem lies with the wording of Article 16 itself. In places it is vague and while offering

general remarks about the need to respect the rights of children it does not give precise information about what activities journalists should and should not engage in.

For example, what in practical terms is the meaning of sub clause 2.2, which states that journalists should ‘strive to maintain the highest standards of ethical conduct in reporting children’s affairs’? This offers the journalist something to aim for but there are no specific quantifiable objectives set out to show the journalist how this aim can be achieved.

Similarly, sub clauses 2.3 and 2.4 that instruct journalists to ‘be sensitive and accurate when reporting issues involving children’ and to ‘consider carefully the consequences of reporting any information governing children’ although laudable in their intentions to protect children offer little by way of practical guidance to working journalists. It should come as no surprise if journalists unsure of their grounding find it impossible to meet ethical standards.

Compare the SNAJ Article 16 with the UK’s Press Complaints Commission’s clauses six and seven on reporting children. The PCC takes a normative model and offers what amounts to a checklist that allows both the journalist and the reader to identify appropriate ethical behaviour.

6 Children

Young people should be free to complete their time at school without unnecessary intrusion.

A child under 16 must not be interviewed or photographed on issues involving their own or another child’s welfare unless a custodial parent or similarly responsible adult consents.

Pupils must not be approached or photographed at school without the permission of the school authorities.

Minors must not be paid for material involving children’s welfare, nor parents or guardians for material about their children or wards, unless it is clearly in the child’s interest.

Editors must not use the fame, notoriety or position of a parent or guardian as sole justification for publishing details of a child’s private life.

7 Children in sex cases

The press must not, even if legally free to do so, identify children under 16 who are victims or witnesses in cases involving sex offences.

In any press report of a case involving a sexual offence against a child -

The child must not be identified.

The adult may be identified.

The word 'incest' must not be used where a child victim might be identified.

Care must be taken that nothing in the report implies the relationship between the accused and the child (PCC, 2006).

There is also an ideological issue to consider. One cannot be surprised that journalists do not respect the rights of children when the state does not respect them either. In Swaziland children have no rights. Save The Children has reported that adults generally lack the understanding of the human rights framework protecting children. The corporal punishment of children is a case in point, since in Swaziland corporal punishment of children is a legalized method of child-rearing in the home, at school, and as a sentence by the court. Corporal punishment of children violates children's human rights to physical integrity and human dignity, as upheld by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) to which Swaziland is a signatory.

Swaziland ratified the CRC in 1995, but the kingdom's new constitution, which came into operation in 2006, states, 'A child shall not be subjected to abuse or torture or other cruel, inhuman and degrading punishment subject to lawful and moderate chastisement for the purpose of correction'. With this provision Swaziland has made moderate chastisement of children, which includes corporal punishment, constitutional in contradiction to its international human rights obligations outlined in conventions such as the CRC and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Soneson, 2005).

There is some way to go before adults recognise the rights of children in this area if the results of a survey undertaken by one of the Swazi newspapers is typical of the kingdom in general. A total of 76 per cent of readers who responded to a request to write in with views on corporal punishment of children, voted for its retention, prompting the newspaper to describe Swaziland as 'a society that strongly values its traditional methods of upbringing, despite the country being a signatory to the conventions governing the protection of the rights of the child'. (*Times of Swaziland*, 31 October 2006).

One might add to this that adults do not only misunderstand the rights of children they have restricted understanding of their own rights. Swaziland is not a democracy. King Mswati III, an absolute monarch, rules the kingdom and since 1973 the country has been under a state of emergency following a Royal Proclamation. A new constitution that underpins the position of the monarch and leaves political parties banned came into force in February 2006. It is as yet unclear whether the signing of the constitution will encourage some form of democracy in the kingdom but there are reasons to be pessimistic. There was controversy surrounding the constitution and its writing as only individual members of the public were allowed to make submissions on its

drafting, thereby excluding all civil society groups from the process (International Crisis Group, 2005:4).

There are also larger issues of ideology that involve the extent to which free discussions about the rights and responsibilities of journalists can take place and whether there is a real desire among the kingdom's ruling elements and the media houses to change the present situation.

In Swaziland the press is not free, all newspapers must pay a registration fee to the government and the majority of broadcasting is state controlled. There are estimated to be more than thirty pieces of legislation that could be regarded as restrictive to press freedom in Swaziland. These restrictions have a negative impact on the operations of the media. These restrictive laws have resulted in lack of growth in the media industry, harassment and intimidation, strained relationships and mistrust between government and the media, weakened media organisations and lack of professionalism (Maziya, 2003: 86-88).

As well as overt censorship, self-censorship in Swaziland is enforced by unwritten cultural rules that restrict conduct. The media are often subjected to such often-ambiguous rules and their limitations. According to these rules, certain public figures and institutions are exempted from media and public scrutiny. These are enforced mostly by traditional authorities who have power to declare what is "unSwazi" and what is not. In a society that still holds strongly onto its culture, traditional and cultural rules force journalists to tread carefully and cautiously when conducting their duties (Mamba, 2004: 99-101.)

Although Swazi journalists can take some of the blame for the lapse in ethical standards they are influenced by the circumstances prevailing in the kingdom in which they work. Swaziland is mired in corruption and dishonesty in public life is generally overlooked, so it is unsurprising that media practitioners reflect this in their own work.

SNAJ has discovered in the short time the code has been operating that the code is difficult to enforce. In the absence of an enforcement instrument to ensure the code of ethics is adhered to, SNAJ currently relies on willing editors in newsrooms to sensitise journalists about the code (MISA, 2005:23-24). SNAJ has also embarked on an awareness campaign to educate its members about the code (the Swazi News reproduced the code as full-page articles over three weeks in November and December 2006, for example)

One cannot also divorce the poor reporting of children from the more general weaknesses of journalism in Swaziland. A survey of the content of newspapers in Swaziland conducted by the media advocacy group MISA concluded, among other things, that there was a lack of diversity in the news, with the majority of reports poorly sourced, over relying on MPs and senators as voices while under representing women. News reports lacked depth of information and some reporting was unfair, failing to permit rejoinders from persons or groups who had an allegation laid against them (MISA, 2006: 4-5).

The MISA report, which examined the Swazi newspapers for a two-week period that coincidentally fell within the time frame of this present research project, identified that one in ten reports published had serious ethical violations. MISA used ethical principles developed by the Media Monitoring Project that are used to survey news organisations across Africa. MISA reported a range of ‘serious ethical violations’ taking place throughout the monitoring period with almost half these violations occurring in stories about child abuse or gender-based violence ‘where the report failed to protect the victim and / or trivialised the event.’ (MISA, 2006: 21). MISA concluded that this raised questions about the level of awareness among journalists of the need to report these issues responsibly and sensitively and, in particular, the standard of editing in the newspapers.’ (MISA, 2006: 21).

Senior journalists and media commentators in Swaziland in critiquing Swazi journalism identify intrinsic weaknesses within the kingdom’s media houses noting a lack of continuous training and lack of transparency on promotions with no job security, which manifest itself in high staff turnover. Low salaries and poor working conditions contribute to high staff turnover among journalists with senior and experienced journalists leaving for better paying jobs elsewhere, so that newspaper reporters are ‘in transit’ filling time while waiting for better paid jobs outside the industry. Editorial staff members at all levels lack knowledge, capacity and maturity.

This is compounded by sparse resources within media houses, which make it impossible for reporters to gain insight and become specialists in specific areas of journalism. A lack of professionalism in the sourcing, writing, editing, and positioning of news articles in the newspapers compromise content that often lacks information and is poorly expressed (Sibisi, 2005:12-13; Zwane, 2005:17; Makhubu, 2005:15).

What can be Done to Improve the Situation?

The International Federation of Journalists (IFJ) has developed guidelines to support media workers who have to deal with children and young people. The IFJ advocates media training to recognise that children’s rights are important and to reflect upon the social responsibilities they carry when they research, write and produce children’s stories. Media houses need to develop practical strategies for dealing with complex issues and keeping an appropriate balance between the protection of children’s rights and journalistic independence and freedom of expression (International Federation of Journalists, 2002:44).

The first duty of the media is to avoid inflicting further harm on a child and in many cases further harm will be brought by publicity, which identifies a child and brings him or her to public attention. The primary responsibility for ensuring that young people are not harmed lies with the media organisation (International Federation of Journalists, 2002:56).

The IFJ advocates media training, but the evidence so far in Swaziland suggests such an approach will have a limited impact. For example, a three-

day workshop on responsible reporting of children was held in Swaziland for media practitioners and others. It received extensive coverage in the Swazi media and codes of practice were published, but as this research report and that of MISA (2006) demonstrate the message has not travelled from the classroom to the newsroom.

There needs to be a multifaceted approach to establishing improvement in the Swaziland newspapers. At present the press faces a litany of obstacles that include a raft of laws restricting the media operations, compulsory registration of newspapers, state control of broadcasting and an expectation on the part of the government that the media will support the king and the status quo in the kingdom.

This lack of democracy is compounded by the general lack of efficiency and capacity of the journalism community itself. This deficiency can be detected at all levels in the media houses from the most junior to the most senior ranks.

The international community should exert pressure on the kingdom to allow the media proper editorial freedom with legislation to protect and promote the public interest. The public interest should extend beyond the interest of powerful groups to include the poor, powerless and voiceless. It might be that in a kingdom such as Swaziland, the printed press is not the best vehicle to achieve this and instead radio should be extended by dismantling the state controlled broadcasting and encouraging the creation of small, community-run stations that are better able to allow for the expression of a range of opinions of public concern.

Commercial media, based on advertising, would have a limited impact in Swaziland since the majority of people are too poor to be attractive to advertisers and those people advertisers might seek out are concentrated in urban areas and are likely to speak English. It is reasonable to suppose that stations broadcasting to such audiences would not seek out the rural poor. Experience elsewhere also suggests that such stations would fill their airtime with light entertainment rather than serious public interest content and that competition for audiences would force all stations to follow suit (Roth 2001:13).

Swazi journalists identified a need for practitioners with higher levels of writing, technical and intellectual skills. This leads to a conclusion that training might help improve capacities. The kingdom's only university, the University of Swaziland (UNISWA), has run a three-year full time diploma in journalism and mass communication for nine years and many of its graduates have taken posts in the media industry. After consultation with media stakeholders UNISWA is preparing to extend opportunities for education and training in journalism. Central to its plans is the privileging of human rights within the curriculum, comparative studies of journalism as practiced in democratic countries and the requirement that courses are sensitive to local needs and also that graduates are capable of making complicated topics

accessible to their audiences. Despite UNISWA's efforts the Swazi media industry needs to provide regular training for its own staffs to update skills and competencies.

Conclusions

This research report has proved the validity of the three hypotheses it set out to test. All five items from the newspapers discussed in this report, in which a case for *prime facie* breaches of the code of ethics were identified, support hypothesis one: Swazi newspapers fail to follow their own code of ethics in relation to the reporting of children. The evidence is that each item breached between four and eight clauses of SNAJ's Article 16.

A case could be made that the evidence of all five items also supports hypotheses two and three. But the hypotheses only suggest that 'some' news reports breach the rights of children and in this case one can point to the major evidence alone.

The major evidence to support hypothesis two that 'in some cases the reporting of children does not uphold the rights of vulnerable children' occurs in the cases of the children who were victims of sexual and physical abuse (most obviously the rape victims and the 14-year-old girl said to have had a sexual relationship with a kombi driver).

Hypothesis three that 'in some cases the reporting of victimised children further victimises those children' is most obviously supported by the news item of the 14-year-old girl and the kombi driver, the pregnant schoolgirl and the rape victims.

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Internet Use among Nigerian Journalists
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Abstract

The Internet has become a major phenomenon of the 21st Century, and, as should be expected in the Information Age, the most auspicious use of the Internet concerns the gathering, organisation and dissemination of information. It has become a mass medium of mass media. For the journalist, it is a source of information and a transmitter of information. Have Nigerian journalists tapped into its invaluable resources to enhance their professional roles? This article analyses a study on how and to what extent journalists in two Nigerian states have used the Internet and whether that use is tied to their professional assignments. The study found that a high percentage of the journalists surveyed are not computer literate, resulting in a very limited use