


Perception of Media Coverage of *MohBad's* Death among Youths in Benin City

¹Nwaoboli, Precious Emeke, PhD, ²Onwubuoya, K. Jonathan, & ³Omale, Gloria Eneh

¹Department of Mass Communication, Benson Idahosa University, Edo State, Nigeria.

²Department of Mass Communication, University of Delta, Agbor, Delta State, Nigeria.

³Department of Information Science and Media Studies, Federal University of Technology Minna, Niger State, Nigeria

: emekenwaoboli@gmail.com, +(234)7038864995

Abstract:

This study was an examination on the perception of media coverage of *MohBad's* death among youths in Benin City. The objectives were to examine the exposure, perception and assessment of Benin youth to media coverage of *MohBad's* death. Moored on the Perception theory, the researcher utilised survey as design and questionnaire as instrument of data collection. The population of the study was 568,719 while the sample size was 384. Findings showed that Benin youth were highly exposed to media coverage of *MohBad's* death, primarily through new media platforms. More so, majority of the youth perceive the coverage as objective, accurate, informative and empathetic, however, there were also perceptions of bias, sensationalism, speculation and exploitation. Based on the findings, it was recommended, among other things, that media outlets should prioritise responsible reporting by ensuring objectivity, accuracy and avoiding sensationalism. They should also establish guidelines and ethical standards to maintain credibility and trust among youth consumers. Training programmes for journalists can be implemented to enhance their understanding of the impact of their reporting on youths' perceptions.

Keywords: Benin City, Media Coverage, *MohBad*, Perception, Youths.

Introduction

In today's world, where everyone is connected, the media has a lot of power to shape what people think and how they feel about different events, people and issues (Nwaoboli, Adelakun, & Asemah, 2023; Ezeah, 2015). When a tragic and untimely death befalls a notable figure, the media coverage surrounding the event assumes a critical role in disseminating information, reflecting public sentiment and shaping collective mourning process (Johnson, Williams & Adekunle, 2018) as observed with the demise of Ilerioluwa Oladimeji Aloba, popularly known as *MohBad*. As such, the impact of media narratives during such times resonates deeply within society, particularly when it involves the loss of a prominent individual (Nwaoboli, 2022). In the context of the Nigerian music industry, the demise of *MohBad*, sent shockwaves through the nation, leaving profound impact on fans, music enthusiasts and the wider public, especially among the youth (Adeyemo & Oginni, 2024).

MohBad, a rapper, singer and songwriter hailing from Lagos, Nigeria, had established himself as a rising star within the music scene. With a string of hit songs, including the chart-topping collaboration "KPK (Ko Por Ke)" with REXXIE and nominations for The Headies awards in 2022, *MohBad's* career trajectory was on a steady ascent (Makinde, Chikezie

& Onebunne, 2023). However, his life was tragically cut short on 12th September 2023, leaving behind a legacy of musical contributions and a void in the hearts of his fans (The Vanguard, 2023).

During times of loss, the media's role in shaping public perception, disseminating information and evoking emotions becomes paramount (Johnson, Williams & Adekunle, 2018). The media coverage surrounding *MohBad's* untimely death carried the weight of informing the public about the incident, reflecting the sentiments of grief and loss and providing a platform for collective mourning. The narratives presented by the media played a crucial role in framing the event and influencing the way it was perceived by the masses.

Exploring the perception of the media coverage of *MohBad's* death among the youth in Benin, Nigeria, becomes a compelling and significant topic of study. Benin, renowned for its vibrant music culture and its active youth population, serves as an ideal context to examine the impact of media coverage on the emotions, attitudes and behaviours of young individuals in response to the loss of a prominent artist. Through delving into the media's portrayal of *MohBad's* death and its subsequent effects on the youth in Benin, this study seeks to unravel the intricate interplay between media, youth culture and the broader implications for the local music scene.

Understanding how the media coverage influenced the perception of *MohBad*'s death among the youth in Benin carries profound implications for grasping the social and cultural impact of such events. The media's role as a conduit for disseminating information, evoking emotions and shaping public opinion during times of loss cannot be underestimated. Through examining the media coverage and its effects on the youth, this study aims to provide valuable insights into the coping mechanisms employed by young individuals in response to the loss of a beloved artist and the subsequent cultural reverberations within the music industry.

To ensure the inclusion of recent scholarship and diverse perspectives, this study draws upon the works of scholars who have explored media studies and youth perceptions. Through shedding light on the intricate dynamics between media, youth culture and collective mourning, this research fosters a deeper understanding of the broader sociocultural implications that arise from the untimely demise of notable figures like *MohBad*. Based on this background, the researchers examined the perceptions of media coverage of *MohBad*'s death among youths in Benin City.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the significant roles of media coverage in shaping public perception and

influencing societal attitudes, there is a noticeable gap in research regarding the perception of media coverage surrounding the untimely death of notable figures, particularly among the youth. In the case of *MohBad*, a prominent Nigerian musician, the media coverage surrounding his death has garnered significant attention and emotional responses from the youth in Benin and Nigeria at large. However, there is a lack of comprehensive studies exploring how the youth in Benin perceive the media coverage of *MohBad*'s death and the subsequent impact on their emotions, attitudes and behaviours.

Several authors have contributed to the study of media effects and youth perceptions, shedding light on the influence of media coverage in various contexts. Adegbola (2018) examined the role of media in shaping public opinion and attitudes towards political events in Nigeria, highlighting the power of media narratives in influencing societal perceptions. Ajayi (2020) explored the impact of media on youth culture and social behaviour, emphasizing the need for research that delves into the specific experiences and perspectives of Nigerian youth.

However, specific studies focusing on the youth's perception of media coverage of the death of notable figures within the Nigerian music industry, such as *MohBad*, remain scarce. Therefore, this study seeks

to address this research gap by investigating the perception of media coverage surrounding *MohBad's* death among the youth in Benin, Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the degree of exposure of Benin Youth to media coverage of *MohBad's* death
2. Ascertain the channels of exposure by Benin youth to media messages of *MohBad's* death
3. Find out the perception on the objectivity of media coverage on *MohBad's* death
4. Examine the perception on the accuracy of media messages on *MohBad's* death
5. Find out the perception on the general coverage slants of the media on *MohBad's* death

Conceptual Review

Media Coverage

Media coverage, as described by Adebawale (2012), refers to the comprehensive reporting and dissemination of news and information through various media channels. It encompasses newspapers, television, radio, online platforms and social media. Amiebaho, Nwaoboli & Asemah (2023) see media coverage as gathering, analyzing and presenting information to the public in a timely and accessible manner, thereby serving as a crucial conduit for communication, awareness and public engagement.

Furthermore, media coverage plays a significant role in shaping public opinion and influencing societal discourse. According to Ogunleye (2015), media coverage serves as a powerful tool for agenda-setting, framing and shaping public narratives. It can prioritize certain issues, events, or individuals, thereby influencing the salience and perception of those subjects in the minds of the audience. Through its selection of news stories, presentation styles and editorial decisions, media coverage contributes to shaping public attitudes, behaviours and even policy outcomes.

In the context of media studies, media coverage can be understood as the process of gathering, packaging and disseminating news stories or information to the public, as defined by Osifo (2011). The coverage can range from local events and human-interest stories to national and international news and it often involves journalistic practices such as fact-checking, interviewing and contextualizing information within a broader societal or historical framework (Ayeni & Nwaoboli, 2023).

Moreover, media coverage serves as a vital mechanism for democratic participation and accountability. According to Ezeani (2014), media coverage of political events, government actions and public affairs contributes to transparency, public scrutiny and the promotion of good governance. By

providing citizens with access to information and diverse perspectives, media coverage empowers individuals to make informed decisions, participate in public discourse and hold institutions and leaders accountable for their actions.

Media coverage can also be understood as the representation of individuals, groups, or events in the media, as defined by Igwe (2013). It involves the portrayal, interpretation and contextualisation of subjects within news stories, features, or documentaries. Media coverage reflects the values, biases and cultural perspectives of media organisations, journalists and society at large (Asemah & Nwaoboli, 2023).

Additionally, media coverage influences public perceptions and narratives by shaping the representation of various social groups. According to Okoye (2017), media representations can reinforce stereotypes, perpetuate social inequalities, or challenge dominant narratives. Media coverage of marginalised communities, for instance, can either perpetuate stigmatisation or provide opportunities for empowerment and social change. Understanding the nuances of media coverage is crucial for promoting inclusive and equitable representation in the media landscape.

Media coverage refers to systematic favoritism, distortion, or omission of information in news

reporting, as defined by Olorunnisola (2010). It occurs when media organisations exhibit a consistent pattern of promoting certain perspectives, ideologies, or interests while neglecting or marginalizing others, thereby influencing public opinion and discourse.

Furthermore, media coverage has implications for media pluralism, objectivity and the democratic exchange of ideas. As highlighted by Onabajo (2012), media coverage can lead to the dominance of particular voices, viewpoints, or narratives, limiting the diversity and inclusivity of public discourse. Recognizing and critically analyzing media biases is essential for fostering a media environment that supports a multiplicity of perspectives, promotes informed citizenry and encourages democratic deliberation.

Insights into the life of *MohBad*

MohBad, whose real name is Ilerioluwa Oladimeji Aloba, was a Nigerian rapper, singer and songwriter hailing from Lagos. Rising to prominence in the music industry, he was initially affiliated with Naira Marley's Marlian Records before parting ways in 2022. *MohBad*'s distinctive style and memorable tracks, including "Ponmo," "Peace," "Beast and Peace," "Sorry," "Feel Good," and the popular "KPK (Ko Por Ke)" collaboration with Rxxie, garnered him widespread acclaim. Notably, "KPK (Ko Por Ke)" received multiple nominations at The Headies

Awards in 2022, solidifying his place as a rising star (The Vanguard, 2023).

Tragically, on September 12, 2023, the music industry mourned the untimely passing of *MohBad* at the age of 27. His demise came as a result of complications arising from treatment by an unlicensed nurse, leading to widespread shock and sadness within the music community. However, even in the wake of his passing, *MohBad's* music continued to resonate with fans worldwide. His EP, "Blessed," released just a few months prior under his self-founded label, Imolenisation, soared to the number one spot on Apple Music in Nigeria, showcasing the enduring impact of his musical legacy (The Vanguard, 2023). Additionally, his tracks experienced a surge in popularity, with streams skyrocketing in the days following his death.

Marred by controversy and tragedy, *MohBad's* personal life was also marked by significant events. He shared a marriage with his wife, Omawunmi and together, they welcomed a son in April 2023. However, the joy of his growing family was overshadowed by the loss that followed just a few months later. The death of *MohBad* is still being investigated as at the time of this research with stakeholders promising to unravel the actual cause of his demise.

Review of Related Literature

Influence of Media Messages on Youth Perception and Attitudes

There are diverse ways in which media content shapes the beliefs and attitudes of young people in Nigeria. For instance, television programmes as well as social media contents have been identified as a significant influence on youth attitudes and beliefs (Nwaoboli, Ezeji & Osife-Kurex, 2022). Salawu (2016) noted that the messages conveyed through television programmes had a substantial effect on their perceptions of various aspects of life. The content they were exposed to, including news coverage, entertainment shows and dramas, played a role in shaping their attitudes toward crime, social issues and societal values.

Similarly, newspaper agendas have been found to impact youth perception and attitudes. Pate (2015) revealed that the issues highlighted by the media significantly shaped the importance and salience of those issues in the minds of young readers. The media's choice of topics and the emphasis placed on certain issues influenced youth attitudes and behaviours, particularly in the realm of politics. Social media platforms have emerged as powerful influencers on youth perception and attitudes. Adebambo (2020) showed that platforms like Facebook and Twitter played a significant role in shaping political opinions, mobilizing youth and

influencing their political behaviour. Through social media, young people were exposed to diverse perspectives, discussions and information, which influenced their attitudes and level of engagement in political activities.

In addition to traditional media, the impact of media on body image perception among Nigerian female adolescents has been examined. Ozoeze (2015) found that exposure to media, including magazines, television and social media, contributed to negative perceptions of body image among Nigerian girls. The portrayal of Western beauty standards, emphasizing thinness and specific physical attributes, influenced their self-perception, leading to body dissatisfaction and low self-esteem. Furthermore, the influence of media violence on youth aggression has been a subject of investigation. Ogunyemi (2017) revealed that exposure to violent media content, such as movies and video games, had a significant impact on the aggressive tendencies and attitudes of young individuals. The portrayal of violent acts and behaviours in the media influenced their perception of aggression and shaped their own behavioural responses.

Moreover, the influence of celebrities and reality television on youth perception and attitudes has been explored. Akinsola (2018) found that endorsements by popular figures significantly influenced young

people's attitudes and purchase intentions, as they were more likely to be swayed by the opinions and preferences of their favorite celebrities. Similarly, Oyedele (2019) focused on the influence of reality television programmes on Nigerian youth. The study revealed that reality TV shaped perceptions, attitudes and behaviours among young viewers. The portrayal of relationships, fashion and social interactions in reality shows influenced their views on these subjects, leading to the adoption of certain attitudes and behaviours in their own lives.

Furthermore, media portrayals of political leaders have been shown to impact youth political attitudes. Ezeah (2015) found that media representations played a significant role in shaping young people's opinions and attitudes toward political figures. Positive or negative portrayals influenced their perception of leadership qualities, trust and support for political leaders. Similarly, Adelabu (2016) explored the influence of music videos on Nigerian youth's attitudes towards gender roles. The study revealed that music videos reinforced traditional gender stereotypes, depicting women in submissive roles and men in positions of power and dominance. These portrayals influenced young people's perceptions of gender roles and expectations, shaping their attitudes and behaviours in relation to gender.

Empirical Review

Osakue (2018) conducted a qualitative study to explore the perception of media coverage of celebrity deaths among youth in Benin. The objectives of the study were to investigate their attitudes, emotions and engagement with the media in relation to these events. Using the Uses and Gratifications Theory, the researcher conducted in-depth interviews with 20 youth participants. The findings revealed a range of reactions, including emotional engagement, skepticism and detachment. Participants emphasised the importance of accurate and sensitive reporting and expressed a desire for more contextual information in media coverage. Based on the findings, the study recommended that media organisations in Benin consider the emotional impact of their coverage and strive for balanced reporting.

In a quantitative study by Nduka (2019), the influence of media coverage of celebrity deaths on youth attitudes and behaviours in Benin was examined. The study focused on the extent to which youth identified with the deceased public figure and how it affected their emotional engagement and subsequent behavioural changes. Drawing on Social Identity Theory, the researcher administered a survey questionnaire to 300 youth participants. The findings indicated that media coverage had a significant impact, with higher levels of identification associated with greater emotional engagement and behavioural

changes. Participants stressed the importance of responsible and ethical reporting. The study recommended that media organisations be mindful of the potential influence on youth audiences.

Igbinoba (2020) conducted a mixed-methods study to explore the role of social media in shaping youth perception of media coverage of celebrity deaths in Benin. The study aimed to understand the influence of social media platforms on attitudes, information-seeking behaviour and engagement. Combining a survey questionnaire with an analysis of social media content, the researcher found that social media played a significant role in shaping perception. Youth turned to social media for additional information, expressing their opinions and engaging in discussions. Concerns about misinformation and media literacy education were highlighted. The study recommended that media organisations and educators recognise the influence of social media and promote media literacy skills.

Omorogie (2021) conducted a content analysis study to examine the framing of media coverage of the death of public figures and its impact on youth perception in Benin. The study aimed to identify different frames used by the media and how they influenced attitudes and interpretations. Using the Framing Theory, the researcher analysed newspaper articles and online news sources. The findings revealed the presence of various frames, such as

sensationalism, heroism and controversy. Different frames influenced youth perception, shaping their attitudes and interpretations. The study recommended that media organisations strive for ethical and responsible reporting, avoiding sensationalism and providing a comprehensive understanding of events. These studies shed light on the perception of media coverage of celebrity deaths among youth in Benin, examining different aspects such as attitudes, emotions, engagement, identification, social media influence, framing and recommendations for responsible reporting. However, while the previous studies explored various aspects of media coverage of celebrity deaths and their impact on youth, they did not specifically examine the perception of media coverage of *MohBad's* death. The current study is unique in its specific focus on *MohBad* and how youth in Benin perceive the media coverage surrounding his death.

Theoretical Framework

Perception Theory

The Perception Theory, also known as Perceptual Theory focuses on how people perceive and understand the world around them, including the information they receive through various sensory modalities, such as sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell (Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwam-Uwaoma, 2022).

The origins of perception theory can be traced to the field of psychology, particularly within the realm of cognitive psychology in the 20th century (Smith, 2019). Early pioneers in this field, such as Gestalt psychologists Max Wertheimer, Wolfgang Köhler and Kurt Koffka, laid the foundations for the study of perception by examining how individuals organise and interpret sensory information to form meaningful perceptions and experiences (Johnson, Williams & Adekunle, 2018).

The theory emphasises that individuals actively interpret and organise sensory information to create meaningful perceptions and acknowledges that individuals perceive objects and stimuli as relatively stable and unchanging, despite variations in sensory inputs. Perceptual constancy allows individuals to maintain a consistent perception of objects' size, shape, color and other attributes across different viewing conditions (Smith, 2019).

The theory applies in several ways: Firstly, it highlights how individuals, in this case, the youth in Benin City, actively interpret and organise the sensory information they receive from the media about *MohBad's* death, creating their own meaningful perceptions and experiences. Secondly, the theory emphasises the role of individual differences in perception, implying that the youths in Benin City may have diverse perceptions and interpretations of

the media coverage, influenced by their unique experiences, biases and cultural backgrounds.

Methodology

The researcher utilised a survey research method, employing a structured questionnaire as the instrument for data collection. The target population for this study consists of the youths residing in Benin metropolis. According to Osakue (2018), the estimated youth population in Benin City is 568,719. To determine the appropriate sample size, the researcher used the Roger Wimmer Sample Size calculator, which resulted in a sample size of 384. The calculator was employed as it takes into account factors such as population size, confidence level and margin of error to provide an optimal sample size that is generalisable.

The researcher employed a multi-stage sampling technique. In the first stage, Benin metropolis was purposively divided into two sectors: the north sector and the south sector. In the second stage, cluster sampling was used to divide Benin City into clusters based on local government areas (LGAs), namely Egor, Oredo, Ikpoba-Okha, Ovia and North-East LGAs. In the third stage, random sampling was employed to select a predetermined number of areas from the list of clusters created in the second stage. Consequently, Uselu, Kings Square, Ikpoba-Hill and Ugbowo were selected as the areas for data collection

because they represent a diverse demographic within the youth population of Benin City and cover different socioeconomic backgrounds, educational institutions and cultural influences, providing a comprehensive representation of the youth population in Benin metropolis. In the fourth stage, 384 copies of the questionnaire were randomly distributed among respondents in the selected areas. The collected data was analysed using simple percentages and presented in tables, based on a response rate of 98.2% (n=377).

To ensure ethical clearance, informed consent was obtained from respondents through a cover letter accompanying the questionnaire, which explained the study's purpose, assured confidentiality and anonymity and emphasized voluntary participation. Via returning the completed questionnaire, respondents indicated their consent.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Table 1: Degree of exposure of Benin Youth to media coverage of *MohBad's* death

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Very High	203	53.8
High	174	46.2
Undecided	-	-
Low	-	-
Very Low	-	-
Total	377	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 1 showed that majority of Benin youth (53.8%) reported a very high degree of exposure to media coverage of *MohBad's* death. This indicates a

significant reach and influence of media messages on the youth population.

Table 2: Channels of exposure to media messages of *MohBad*'s death

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Print media	24	6.4
Broadcast media	113	29.9
New Media	262	69.4
Others	-	-
Total	377	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 2 showed that new media platforms, such as social media and online sources, were the primary channels of exposure to media messages about *MohBad*'s death for Benin youth (69.4%). This highlights the increasing role of digital platforms in shaping perceptions and disseminating news. Traditional media channels, such as print media (6.4%), played a relatively minor role.

Table 3: Perception on the objectivity of media coverage on *MohBad*'s death

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Very Objective	36	9.5
Objective	224	59.4
Neutral	61	16.2
Biased	39	10.3
Sensationalised	17	4.5
Total	377	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 3 showed that a majority of respondents perceived the media coverage of *MohBad*'s death as objective (59.4%). However, a notable percentage perceived bias (10.3%) and sensationalism (4.5%).

Table 4: Perception on the accuracy of media messages on *MohBad*'s death

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Very Accurate	39	10.3
Accurate	188	49.9
Undecided	51	13.5
Inaccurate	90	23.9
Very Inaccurate	9	2.4
Total	377	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 4 showed that while a significant proportion of respondents found media messages about *MohBad*'s death to be accurate (49.9%), a considerable number expressed uncertainty (13.5%) or perceived them as inaccurate (23.9%). This highlights the importance of ensuring the dissemination of reliable and verified information in media coverage to avoid misinformation and confusion.

Table 5: Perception on the general coverage slants of the media on *MohBad*'s death

Variables	Frequency	Percentages
Empathetic	123	32.6
Informative	212	56.2
Balanced	23	6.1
Speculative	15	3.9
Exploitative	4	1.1
Total	377	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 5 showed that the majority of respondents perceived media coverage of *MohBad*'s death as informative (56.2%) and empathetic (32.6%). This indicates a positive perception of the media's role in providing information and understanding. However, the presence of perceptions of speculation and

exploitation emphasise the need for responsible reporting practices to maintain public trust and credibility.

Discussion of Findings

The findings from this study offer significant insights into how media coverage of MohBad's death is perceived by youth in Benin. Notably, a large majority of respondents reported high exposure to media coverage, predominantly through new media platforms such as social media and online sources. This trend aligns with Adebambo's (2020) research, which underscores the influential role of social media in shaping youth perceptions and attitudes. However, the reliance on digital platforms raises critical questions about the quality and reliability of the information being disseminated, highlighting the need for a more nuanced understanding of how these channels impact youth perceptions.

In examining the objectivity of media coverage, it is striking that while a significant portion of respondents viewed the reporting as objective, a substantial minority perceived bias and sensationalism in the media messages. This divergence echoes Ogunyemi's (2017) findings on media violence and youth aggression, which stress the necessity of responsible reporting. The conflicting perceptions regarding objectivity reveal the implications of media representation; some youth

may feel informed and engaged, while others may develop scepticism towards media narratives. According to perception theory, these varying viewpoints can shape how individuals interpret information, influencing their overall attitudes and beliefs.

Furthermore, when assessing the accuracy of media messages, it is concerning that, despite many respondents finding the coverage accurate, a significant number expressed uncertainty or believed the information to be inaccurate. This finding resonates with Ozoeze's (2015) research on media influence and body image perception, which highlights the dangers of misinformation. The discrepancies in perceptions of accuracy point to a broader issue: the rapid dissemination of information in the digital age can lead to confusion and misinterpretation among youth. Perception theory suggests that when individuals encounter conflicting messages, their ability to form coherent beliefs may be compromised, leading to a fragmented understanding of significant events.

Additionally, while majority of the respondents perceived the media coverage as informative and empathetic, there were notable concerns about speculation and exploitation in the portrayal of MohBad's death. This perception aligns with Akinsola's (2018) study, which indicates that

informative and empathetic media can positively influence youth attitudes. However, the presence of exploitative narratives raises ethical questions about media practices. These conflicting perceptions highlight the urgent need for media outlets to adhere to responsible reporting standards. As Oyedele (2019) suggests, ethical media practices are crucial in shaping how youth engage with and interpret media content.

Overall, the findings suggest that media coverage of *MohBad's* death has had a profound impact on youths' perceptions in Benin City. The convergence and divergence of viewpoints regarding accuracy and bias illustrate the complexity of media influence, underscoring the importance of critical engagement with media messages. In aligning these findings with perception theory, it becomes evident that the framing and presentation of information can significantly shape public understanding and attitudes. Thus, fostering responsible reporting, ensuring accurate information and adhering to ethical practices are essential in cultivating positive perceptions among youth and mitigating potential negative influences.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study reveals the significant role that new media plays in shaping youth perceptions, particularly regarding the coverage of *MohBad's* death. While

many young people in Benin view the media coverage as objective, accurate, informative and empathetic, there exists perturbing perceptions related to bias, sensationalism, speculation and exploitation. These contradictory viewpoints highlight an urgent need for media outlets to adopt responsible reporting practices, as ethical journalism is not just a professional standard but a societal necessity, especially for vulnerable populations like youth. The findings underscore the importance of reevaluating media content production and consumption, suggesting that stakeholders are expected to navigate the challenges posed by misinformation and sensationalism in the digital age.

Based on the findings, it is recommended that:

1. Media outlets should establish independent oversight bodies to monitor adherence to ethical standards. They can implement specific training modules focusing on ethical journalism, including workshops on avoiding sensationalism and ensuring accuracy.
2. Social media companies should introduce robust fact-checking mechanisms and develop specific guidelines for content creators that address bias and misinformation. For example, they could create partnerships with fact-checking

organisations to verify information before it is disseminated.

3. Educators and parents should take an active role in promoting media literacy among youth. Schools should incorporate media literacy education into their curricula, focusing on critical thinking skills and the evaluation of media content. Similarly, workshops for parents on discussing media consumption with their children can empower families to navigate media messages effectively.
4. Regulatory bodies should monitor media practices and enforce compliance with established guidelines. This could involve conducting regular audits of media organisations and imposing penalties for breaches of ethical standards.

Limitations and Areas for Further Research

This study is limited to the perceptions of youth in Benin, which may not be representative of broader trends in other regions. Future research could explore comparative studies across different geographical contexts to better understand the influence of media on youth perceptions globally. Additionally, investigating the long-term impacts of media coverage on youth attitudes and behaviours could

provide deeper insights into the implications of media practices in shaping societal narratives.

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