



Al-Hikmah Journal of Politics and Public Administration

ISSN (Print): 3121-8814

Volume 1, Number 3, June 2026



PERCEPTION OF CIVIL SERVANTS ON THE ROLE OF MASS MEDIA MESSAGES IN PROMOTING GOOD GOVERNANCE IN KWARA STATE

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Abstract

The study, titled Perception of Civil Servants on the Role of Mass Media Messages in Promoting Good Governance in Kwara State, examined how civil servants perceive media contributions to good governance. Guided by framing theory, the objectives were to assess the Kwara State civil servants' level of awareness of the role of mass media in governance; examine the Kwara State civil servants' perception of mass media effectiveness in promoting transparency and accountability; identify challenges that hinder the effectiveness of mass media in fostering good governance in Kwara State and investigate the media platforms that expose the Kwara State civil servants to issues on good governance. The study adopted a quantitative research design, specifically the survey method. The population comprised 18,466 civil servants in Kwara State, from which a sample of 392 respondents was determined using Yamane's formula. Data were collected through questionnaires administered via the multi-stage sampling technique. A total of 392 valid responses were retrieved and analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts and percentages. Findings revealed that civil servants perceived mass media messages, especially through television and internet platforms, as effective in promoting good governance. Media messages were found to enhance awareness of government policies, expose corruption, and foster accountability. The study concluded that mass media messages are vital in promoting good governance among civil servants. It recommended intensified dissemination of governance-related content, improved media practitioner welfare, and expansion of future studies to other regions using mixed-method approaches.

Keywords: Civil Servants, Good Governance, Kwara State, Mass Media, Perception

Introduction

Good governance remains essential for social advancement, political order, and national growth. It reflects values such as transparency, accountability, responsiveness, respect for the rule of law, inclusiveness, fairness, and meaningful citizen involvement in public affairs (Zaitul et al., 2023). Glass and Newig (2019) maintain that good governance underpins sustainable development and

democratic progress because it strengthens openness, public accountability, civic participation, and compliance with legal standards. Mass media stands out as a central institution that advances these ideals. Through newspapers, radio, television, and digital channels, the media connects public officials with citizens. It circulates information, enlightens the public, and scrutinises the conduct of those in authority (Zou, 2024). Within democratic systems, the media also acts as a watchdog. It exposes corruption, inefficiency, and violations of human rights, and it fosters dialogue between government representatives and the public (Wasistha, 2025).

In Nigeria, the mass media has played a notable role in shaping public discourse, influencing policy directions, and reinforcing democratic values (Ekwueme & Okoro, 2018). Since the restoration of democratic governance in 1999, media organisations have supported transparency, monitored electoral processes, and championed social justice. Investigative journalism and civic education programmes have strengthened anti-corruption campaigns and encouraged citizens to engage actively in governance (Wasistha, 2025). However, several factors continue to hinder the media's capacity to promote good governance. Government pressure, ownership control, limited access to official information, and security risks confronting journalists restrict effective media performance (Phiri & Ndhlovu, 2025).

Digital media has further transformed the communication of governance issues. Online news outlets, social networking platforms, and citizen journalism have expanded access to information and increased public participation in policy discussions (Vasist et al., 2025). These developments have improved civic engagement, yet serious concerns persist. The spread of misinformation, rising political division, and unequal access to digital tools pose significant challenges to the media's effectiveness in supporting governance processes (Asomah, 2024).

Though they have been various researches on mass media and government, most of these studies were focus on the impact of mass media on governance especially as it relates to accountability and transparency and majority of these studies were conducted outside of Kwara State. This is why this topic “the perception of civil servants regarding the role of mass media in promoting good governance in Kwara State” is timely because it is essential for evaluating the effectiveness of media interventions, identifying areas for improvement, and formulating strategies to enhance media-government relations. Similarly, the reason for selecting civil servants as population for this study because of their administrative experience, access to government information and

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involvement in policy implementation place them in a unique position to evaluate the contribution of mass media to good governance in Kwara State.

Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the Kwara State civil servants' level of awareness of the role of mass media in governance.
2. Examine the Kwara State civil servants' perception of mass media effectiveness in promoting transparency and accountability.
3. Identify challenges that hinder the effectiveness of mass media in fostering good governance in Kwara State.
4. Investigate the media platforms that expose the Kwara State civil servants to issues on good governance.

Review of Literature

Civil Servants

Civil servants are employees of government institutions who implement policies, provide public services, and maintain administrative functions within the state. They differ from elected officials because they serve as permanent career staff whose appointment depends largely on merit, qualifications, and formal recruitment procedures (Adegoke, 2020). Their work supports stable governance, continuity in policy execution, and national development.

Fasakin and Lawal (2023) define civil servants as public officials who occupy non-political positions and carry out government decisions while delivering essential services to citizens. They work across ministries, departments, and agencies, where they handle responsibilities such as record keeping, budgeting, financial administration, and monitoring public projects. Civil servants also contribute to policy development and execution. Kovalchuk (2024) explains that their technical knowledge and administrative skills allow them to transform political decisions into workable programmes. These responsibilities require professionalism, neutrality, and efficiency, even when political leadership changes.

The civil service as an institution operates on principles such as permanence, anonymity, impartiality, and promotion based on merit. These principles preserve stability and reduce undue political influence in public administration. Ezeh and Bello (2022) observe that a skilled and ethical civil service enhances good governance through reliable service delivery and adherence to legal and ethical standards. In Nigeria, civil servants function under established regulations

such as the Public Service Rules and the Civil Service Handbook, which outline their obligations, ethical conduct, and disciplinary procedures. Adebajo and Alabi (2022) argue that strict compliance with these frameworks strengthens transparency and accountability in the public sector.

Mass Media

Mass media refers to structured communication systems designed to transmit information to large and diverse audiences simultaneously. These systems include traditional outlets such as newspapers, radio, and television, as well as digital platforms like websites, blogs, and social media networks. McQuail and Deuze (2020) describe mass media as channels of public communication that reach broad audiences through technologies such as print, broadcasting, and the internet. The evolution of these channels has influenced public opinion, governance structures, and social values. Scholars such as Opperhuizen et al., (2020) emphasise that media institutions perform critical democratic functions, including watchdog activities, agenda-setting, and facilitating public debate.

The watchdog function involves scrutinising government conduct and promoting accountability among officials (Opperhuizen et al., 2020). Investigative reporting has uncovered corruption and inefficiency, particularly in societies where formal oversight systems are weak (Wasistha, 2025). Media content such as reports, commentaries, and feature articles informs citizens and encourages civic participation, prompting leaders to act responsibly. Mass media also shapes public priorities through agenda-setting.

Protest and McCombs (2016) explain that media influence extends beyond identifying important issues; it also shapes how audiences interpret those issues. Media organisations highlight certain themes and frame them in specific ways, thereby influencing public understanding and policy responses. This influence becomes evident in discussions of corruption, human rights, and electoral reforms, where media framing can affect political outcomes. Mass media also connects citizens with government institutions by creating channels for feedback, critique, and engagement (Ezeh & Bello, 2022). This communicative role promotes openness and responsiveness within governance systems.

Good Governance

Good governance refers to the effective, transparent, accountable, and equitable management of public resources and institutions for societal benefit. It concerns the structures and processes

through which public authority operates to advance collective interests. Glass and Newig (2019) state that good governance reflects a government's capacity to formulate sound policies, maintain transparency, uphold the rule of law, protect human rights, and respond to public demands. Almuqsi (2025) identifies good governance as a driver of social progress and national development. Mass media supports good governance by informing citizens, exposing misconduct, and providing spaces for public dialogue (Zaitul et al., 2023). Transparency plays a central role because it grants citizens access to accurate information about government activities and financial management.

Yu (2017), notes that transparency builds public confidence and reduces opportunities for corruption. Public scrutiny encourages officials to act in the public interest. Accountability represents another core element, as it requires public officials to justify their decisions and actions. Afolabi (2019) explains that accountability depends on strong institutions such as anti-corruption agencies, independent courts, and a vibrant media environment. These mechanisms empower citizens to question and evaluate government conduct. Respect for the rule of law also defines good governance. This principle requires impartial law enforcement, equal treatment before the law, and protection of civil liberties. Pankratova (2025) maintains that governance achieves legitimacy only when constitutional procedures guide public administration and citizens' rights remain protected.

In the Nigerian context scholars like Fayomi, J. O. (2017), Jimada, U. (2019), Martins, C. N. (2023), Msughter, A. E. (2019) and Mukhtar (2022) generally revealed that mass media play a significant role in exposing corruption, promoting transparency, enhancing accountability, and influencing governance practices. Findings from studies showed that many civil servants acknowledge the media as an important instrument for monitoring government activities and encouraging responsible governance.

In the foreign context scholars like Bakir, V. (2018), Fengler, S., Eberwein, T., & Karmasin, Hallin, D. C., & Mancini, P. (2004), Li, A., Raiha, D., & Shotts, K. W. (2019) and Odugbemi, S. (2008) consistently revealed that mass media serve as an important mechanism for monitoring government activities and influencing the behaviour of public officials. Findings from these studies revealed that media exposure enhances awareness of ethical governance, encourages administrative reforms, improves accountability, and promotes greater responsiveness among civil servants.

Research Gaps Identified from the Reviewed Empirical Studies

First, geographical gap, most of the foreign studies were conducted in countries such as the United Kingdom, Taiwan, Chile, India, and South Africa, while the local studies focused on Lagos, Anambra, Oyo, Osun, and Kano States. None of the reviewed studies specifically investigated civil servants' perceptions of the role of mass media in promoting good governance in Kwara State. This creates a geographical gap that the present study seeks to fill.

Secondly, some of the reviewed studies included mixed categories of respondents, such as public servants, government officials, and members of the public. Even where civil servants were involved, the studies often did not focus exclusively on them.

Thirdly, several of the studies examined the actual impact of media on governance outcomes rather than the perceptions of civil servants regarding that role. Since perceptions influence attitudes, behaviour, and cooperation with media initiatives, there is a need to understand how civil servants themselves perceive the contribution of mass media to good governance. The present study seeks to bridge this gap.

Theoretical Framework

Framing Theory

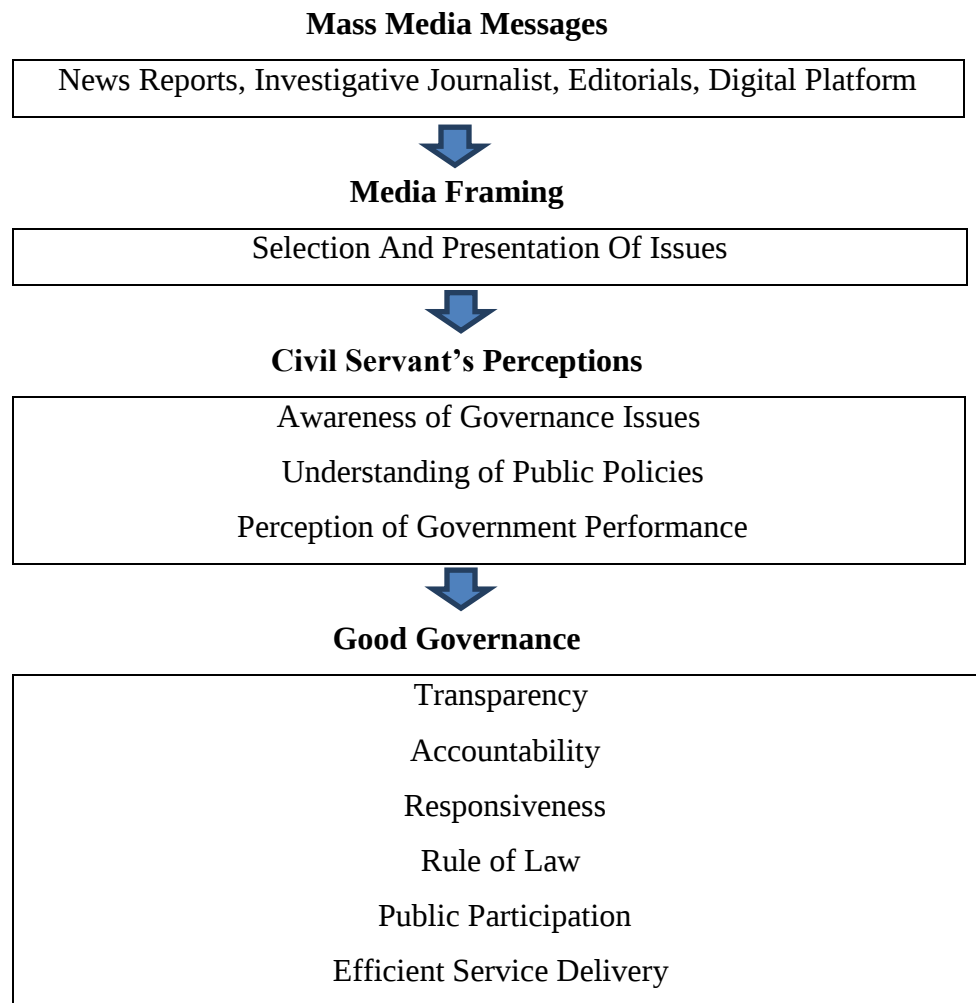
This research draws on framing theory, first introduced by Erving Goffman in 1974 and later expanded in media studies by Robert Entman in 1993. Framing theory explains how media presentations influence audience interpretations through selective emphasis. Entman (2020) states that framing involves highlighting certain aspects of reality within a message in order to define problems, attribute causes, make moral evaluations, and suggest remedies.

Within this study, framing theory proposes that media portrayals of issues such as corruption, transparency, and accountability shape how civil servants interpret governance practices in Kwara State. Media content does not simply present facts; it arranges those facts within interpretive structures that prioritise some viewpoints while downplaying others (Akinyemi & Okafor, 2021).

Digital and social media environments amplify framing effects because information circulates rapidly across platforms. Media organisations can emphasise government shortcomings or highlight reform efforts, thereby influencing how governance issues are perceived (Ogunlana, 2022). These frames shape public discourse and affect both citizen and civil servant responses to governance challenges.

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Framing theory holds strong relevance for analysing media influence on governance in Kwara State. When media narratives consistently stress themes such as corruption or transparency, civil servants may adjust their attitudes and professional conduct in response. Aliyu et al. (2021) observe that sustained media emphasis on accountability can encourage alignment with anti-corruption measures and improved administrative practices.



Methods

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researchers to collect data from a large number of respondents and describe their perceptions regarding the role of mass media messages in promoting good governance in Kwara State. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), a survey design is suitable for studies that seek to obtain information on attitudes, opinions, perceptions, and behaviours of a defined population. The population of the study comprised all civil servants employed by the Kwara State Government. According to records obtained from the Kwara State

Ministry of Finance (2024), the total population of civil servants in the state was 18,466. Since it was impracticable to study the entire population, a representative sample was selected for the study. The sample size was determined using Yamane's (1967) formula for finite populations:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n=sample size

N= population size (18,466)

e = level of precision or margin of error (0.05 for 95% confidence level)

substituting into the formula:

$$n = \frac{18466}{1 + 18466(0.05)^2} = \frac{18466}{1 + 18466(0.0025)} = \frac{18466}{1 + 46.165} = \frac{18466}{47.165} \approx 391.53$$

The figure was approximated to 392 respondents, which constituted the sample size for the study.

The study employed a multi stage sampling procedure. At the first stage, stratified sampling was used to categorise civil servants according to Ministries, Departments, and Agencies (MDAs). Eight MDAs were purposively selected because of their strategic involvement in policy implementation, public administration, information dissemination, and service delivery within the state. These included the Ministry of Communications, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Water Resources, Ministry of Local Government and Chieftaincy Affairs, Ministry of Planning and Economic Development, Agency for Mass Education, Ministry of Health, and the Muslim Pilgrims Welfare Board.

At the second stage, proportional allocation was employed to distribute the sample across the selected MDAs according to their staff strength. This approach ensured that each MDA was represented in proportion to its population size and reduced the possibility of over representation or under representation.

At the third stage, simple random sampling was used to select respondents from each MDA. Staff lists obtained from the selected MDAs served as sampling frames. Unique identification numbers were assigned to eligible staff members, after which respondents were selected through a random number generation procedure. This ensured that every civil servant within the selected MDAs had an equal chance of being included in the study.

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire titled *Perception of Civil Servants on the Role of Mass Media Messages in Promoting Good Governance Questionnaire (PCSRMMPGGQ)*. The questionnaire consisted of two sections. Section A contained items on respondents' demographic characteristics, while Section B contained items designed to address the research objectives and research questions. Responses were measured using a five point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

The instrument was subjected to face and content validity. Face validity was established through the assessment of the questionnaire by three experts comprising two senior lecturers in Mass Communication and one lecturer in Measurement and Evaluation. Their observations and recommendations were used to improve the clarity, relevance, and appropriateness of the questionnaire items. Content validity was established by ensuring that all questionnaire items adequately reflected the objectives and variables of the study based on existing literature and theoretical constructs relating to mass media and good governance.

A pilot study was conducted among 30 civil servants in selected ministries in neighbouring Osun State who were not part of the main study population. Data obtained from the pilot test were analysed using Cronbach's Alpha reliability technique. The instrument yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.84, indicating a high level of internal consistency and confirming the suitability of the instrument for data collection. According to Taber (2018), a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of 0.70 and above is considered acceptable for social science research. The researchers personally administered the questionnaires with the assistance of two trained research assistants. The respondents were given adequate time to complete the instrument, and completed copies were retrieved immediately after completion. Out of the 392 questionnaires distributed, all were correctly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 100 percent.

Ethical considerations were strictly observed throughout the study. Approval to conduct the study was obtained from the relevant authorities within the selected MDAs. Participation was voluntary, and respondents were informed about the purpose of the study before completing the questionnaire. The researchers assured participants of anonymity and confidentiality, and no identifying information was collected. Respondents were also informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any stage without penalty. The data collected were coded and analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 27. Descriptive statistics, including

frequency counts, percentages, mean scores, and tables, were used to analyse the data and answer the research questions.

Step 3: Calculation of Proportional Allocation for Each MDA

Table 1: Presentation of Proportional Allocation of Respondents across the selected MDAs

MDA	Population (N_i)	Proportion (N_i/1290)	Allocated Sample (n_i)
Communications	298	298/1290	91
Finance	56	56/1290	17
Water Resources	191	191/1290	58
Local Government	217	217/1290	66
Planning	64	64/1290	19
Agency for Mass Education	89	89/1290	27
Health	322	322/1290	98
Pilgrim Board	53	53/1290	16
Total	1290	1.00	392

Stage Three – Selection of Respondents within each Stratum: Within each MDA, the allocated number of respondents was selected using simple random sampling. This process involved assigning unique identification numbers to all staff members in the MDA and then randomly selecting the required number of respondents using a random number generator. By applying simple random sampling at this stage, every staff member within an MDA had an equal chance of selection, thereby minimizing bias and enhancing the representativeness of the study sample. The data was analysed with the Special Package for Science (SPSS) and results were presented in descriptive statistics analysis using percentages, tables, and frequency count.

Results

The gender distribution of respondents indicates a near-equal representation, with 49.49% male and 50.51% female, reflecting a balanced sample. In terms of age, the majority of respondents are 18–26 years old (43.37%), followed by those in the 27–35 age group (20.92%). The older age brackets, 53 and above (15.05%) and 45–53 (12.24%), are also well represented, suggesting a diverse age range of civil servants. The marital status data shows that 45.66% of respondents are single, 30.87% are married, and 23.47% are divorced. Educational qualifications show that

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38.27% hold HND/BSc, followed by 19.39% with MSc/MBA and 18.88% with other qualifications. In terms of working experience, 37.50% of respondents have less than 5 years of experience, while 26.02% have 18 or more years, indicating a mix of newer and experienced civil servants.

What is the level of awareness among Kwara State civil servants regarding the role of mass media in governance?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
1	I am aware that the mass media plays a vital role in governance	139 (35.46%)	242 (61.73%)	2 (0.51%)	9 (2.30%)	3.30	0.56	Agree
2	I regularly access reports, news or programmes on governance	162 (41.33%)	202 (51.53%)	11 (2.81%)	17 (4.34%)	3.30	0.71	Agree
3	I am aware that mass media reports influence government policies	104 (26.53%)	257 (65.56%)	28 (7.14%)	3 (0.77%)	3.18	0.70	Agree
4	I am aware of the role of mass media in promoting democracy	104 (25.53%)	263 (67.09%)	23 (5.87%)	2 (0.51%)	3.20	0.64	Agree
5	I am aware that public office holders with bad records are scared of the media	182 (46.43%)	173 (44.13%)	33 (8.42%)	4 (1.02%)	3.36	0.74	Agree
	Grand Mean					3.27	0.67	Agree

The table reveals that civil servants possess a high level of awareness regarding the role of mass media in governance. All the items recorded mean scores above the criterion mean of 2.50. The highest mean score was recorded for the statement that public office holders with bad records are

scared of the media ($\bar{x} = 3.36$), while the lowest mean score was recorded for awareness that media reports influence government policies ($\bar{x} = 3.18$). The grand mean of 3.27 indicates a high level of awareness among civil servants regarding the role of mass media in promoting good governance.

How do Kwara State civil servants perceive the effectiveness of mass media in promoting transparency and accountability?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
1	The mass media expose corruption in governance	185 (47.19%)	177 (45.15%)	28 (7.14%)	2 (0.51%)	3.39	0.68	Agree
2	The mass media influence public servants to be transparent	187 (47.70%)	165 (42.09%)	39 (9.95%)	1 (0.26%)	3.37	0.73	Agree
3	Journalists hold officials accountable	101 (25.77%)	252 (64.29%)	28 (7.14%)	11 (2.80%)	3.13	0.68	Agree
4	Mass media foster citizen participation	150 (38.27%)	218 (55.61%)	16 (4.08%)	8 (2.04%)	3.30	0.62	Agree
5	Without mass media, some communities would lack amenities	114 (29.08%)	247 (63.01%)	21 (5.36%)	10 (2.55%)	3.19	0.65	Agree
	Grand Mean					3.28	0.67	Agree

The results indicate that respondents perceive the mass media as highly effective in promoting good governance. All the items achieved mean scores above the benchmark of 2.50. The highest mean score was recorded for the statement that the mass media expose corruption in governance ($\bar{x} = 3.39$), while the lowest mean score was obtained for the statement that some communities would lack amenities without media intervention ($\bar{x} = 3.19$). The grand mean of 3.28 shows that civil servants generally perceive the mass media as effective in fostering transparency, accountability and citizen participation in governance.

What challenges hinder the effectiveness of mass media in fostering good governance in Kwara State?

S/N	Items	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	SD	Decision
1	Government censorship limits media effectiveness	189 (48.21%)	157 (40.05%)	35 (8.93%)	11 (2.81%)	3.34	0.78	Agree
2	Bias of journalists and media owners	131 (33.42%)	224 (57.14%)	32 (8.16%)	5 (1.28%)	3.23	0.67	Agree
3	Lack of access to credible information	98 (25.00%)	256 (65.31%)	32 (8.16%)	6 (1.53%)	3.14	0.66	Agree
4	Many citizens do not trust the media	84 (21.43%)	181 (46.17%)	106 (27.04%)	21 (5.36%)	2.84	0.97	Agree
5	Poor remuneration of journalists	141 (35.97%)	215 (54.85%)	30 (7.57%)	6 (1.53%)	3.25	0.66	Agree
	Grand Mean					3.16	0.75	Agree

The findings show that respondents identified several challenges affecting the effectiveness of the mass media in promoting good governance. Government censorship emerged as the most serious challenge with a mean score of 3.34, followed by poor remuneration of journalists ($\bar{x} = 3.25$) and media bias ($\bar{x} = 3.23$). Although citizen distrust of the media recorded the lowest mean score of 2.84, it still exceeded the acceptance benchmark. The grand mean of 3.16 indicates that civil servants strongly agree that these factors constitute major obstacles to media effectiveness in governance matters.

Which media are civil servants in Kwara State more exposed to regarding issues of good governance?

S/N	Items	Television	Online News Website	Social Media	Radio	Newspaper	Total
1.	Which media platform do	130 (29.34%)	100 (27.30%)	90 (26.53%)	42 (10.97%)	30 (5.86%)	392 (100%)

	you rely on most?						
S/N	Items	New reports	Talks Shows/ Phone in	Interview	Editorial/ Opinions	Documentaries	Total
2.	Which do you find most informative?	217 (55.36%)	68 (17.35%)	53 (13.52%)	30 (7.65%)	24 (6.12%)	392 (100%)
S/N	Items	31-60 min	More than 3 hours	61-120 min	Less than 30 min	121-180 min	Total
3.	Time spent with chosen media	208 (53.06%)	79 (20.15%)	37 (9.44%)	56 (14.12%)	12 (3.06%)	392 (100%)
S/N	Items	Often	Sometimes	Always	Rarely	Never	Total
4.	Frequency of exposure to governance content	135 (34.44%)	99 (25.26%)	89 (22.70%)	41 (10.46%)	28 (7.14%)	392 (100%)
S/N	Items	Little	Moderate	Lots	None		Total
5.	Attention to governance content	166 (42.35%)	144 (36.73%)	51 (13.01%)	31 (7.91%)		392 (100%)

Television is the most popular medium for accessing governance news, with 29.34% of respondents relying on it, followed by online news websites (27.30%) and social media (26.53%). News reports are considered the most informative, with 55.36% of respondents citing them, followed by talk shows/phone-in programs (17.35%). When asked about the time spent with media, 53.06% spend 31–60 minutes, and 20.15% spend more than 3 hours. In terms of exposure, 34.44% are often exposed to governance content, while 25.26% are sometimes

exposed, and 22.70% are always exposed. Finally, 42.35% pay little attention to governance content, indicating that while there is exposure, the level of engagement varies.

Discussion of findings

This study examined the perception of civil servants on the role of mass media messages in promoting good governance in Kwara State. The discussion of findings is presented according to the research questions. In response to research question 1: The findings revealed that civil servants in Kwara State possess a high level of awareness regarding the role of mass media in governance. This is evidenced by the grand mean score of 3.27, which is above the criterion mean of 2.50. Respondents agreed that the mass media plays a vital role in governance, influences government policies, promotes democracy, and serves as a watchdog that compels public office holders to act responsibly. This finding suggests that civil servants understand the importance of the mass media as an institution that facilitates information dissemination, transparency, accountability and democratic governance. The result supports the assumptions of Framing Theory, which argues that the media shapes how individuals understand and interpret social and political realities. Through continuous reporting and framing of governance issues, civil servants have become more aware of the functions performed by the media in society. The finding corroborates the study of Salisu (2020), which reported that civil servants demonstrated a high level of awareness of the governance functions of the media and acknowledged its contribution to accountability and public enlightenment. The finding also agrees with Kalu and Iwuchukwu (2019), who found that Nigerian civil servants rely on media reports to remain informed about governance issues and public policies.

In response to research question 2: The findings showed that respondents have a positive perception of the effectiveness of the mass media in promoting good governance, with a grand mean score of 3.28. Respondents agreed that the media exposes corruption, promotes transparency among public servants, holds government officials accountable, encourages citizen participation and contributes to community development. This finding indicates that civil servants regard the mass media as an important instrument for strengthening democratic governance. The result demonstrates that respondents believe media institutions contribute significantly to exposing wrongdoing, encouraging accountability and promoting public participation in governance processes. The finding aligns with Framing Theory, which posits that media narratives influence public understanding and evaluation of governance issues. Through

investigative reports, editorials and governance-focused programmes, the media frames issues of corruption, transparency and accountability in ways that influence perceptions and encourage responsible governance practices. The result supports the findings of Chen and Wong (2019), who observed that media coverage contributes to policy reforms and enhances government responsiveness. The finding is also consistent with Rodriguez and Perez (2020), who reported that media exposure encourages support for accountability and ethical governance among public sector workers. Similarly, Smith and Johnson (2018) found that investigative journalism remains one of the most effective mechanisms for exposing corruption and promoting transparency in public institutions.

In response to research question 3: The findings revealed that several factors hinder the effectiveness of the mass media in promoting good governance. The grand mean score of 3.16 indicates that respondents generally agree that government censorship, media ownership bias, lack of access to credible information, low public trust in the media and poor remuneration of journalists constitute significant challenges. Government censorship emerged as the most prominent challenge. This suggests that restrictions on media freedom may limit journalists' ability to report governance issues objectively and independently. Media bias was also identified as a major concern, indicating that ownership interests and political affiliations may influence news content and reduce public confidence in media reports. The finding supports Framing Theory because media frames can become distorted when political interference, ownership influence and censorship shape the information presented to the public. Such distortions may undermine the credibility and effectiveness of media messages intended to promote good governance. This result agrees with Adebayo (2019), who found that political interference significantly affects media performance in promoting accountability and transparency. The finding is also consistent with Eze (2021), who identified limited access to credible information as a major obstacle to effective governance reporting. Furthermore, Obasi (2022) reported that poor remuneration negatively affects journalists' motivation and professional performance, thereby reducing the quality of governance reporting.

In response to research question 4: The findings showed that civil servants in Kwara State are considerably exposed to governance-related media content. Television emerged as the most relied upon medium, followed by online news websites and social media platforms. News reports were identified as the most informative content category, while a substantial proportion of

respondents reported frequent exposure to governance-related information. The finding indicates that both traditional and digital media platforms serve as important sources of governance information among civil servants. The popularity of television reflects its continued relevance as a trusted source of information, while the growing use of online news platforms and social media demonstrates the increasing importance of digital communication channels in contemporary governance discourse. The result supports Framing Theory because regular exposure to governance content provides opportunities for the media to shape public understanding of government actions, policy implementation and accountability issues. Frequent exposure enables civil servants to develop informed opinions regarding governance processes and public administration.

The finding is consistent with Dlamini and Khumalo (2022), who found that television remains a dominant source of governance information despite the growing influence of digital media platforms. The result also agrees with Ifinedo and Yusuf (2021), who reported that increased media exposure enhances civic awareness and participation in governance matters. However, the finding that many respondents pay only little attention to governance content suggests that exposure alone may not necessarily translate into deep engagement with governance issues.

Conclusion

The study concludes that for good governance to thrive in Kwara State, the media must continue to uphold professionalism, objectivity, and credibility. Civil servants, on their part, should embrace the media as a partner in achieving transparency and accountability rather than perceiving it as a threat. The study further established that the media does not only inform civil servants about government activities but also provides a platform for checks and balances, thereby compelling public officials to act responsibly.

Recommendations

1. Mechanisms for granting journalists timely and unrestricted access to credible government information should be institutionalized to enhance transparency.
2. Policies should be introduced to improve the welfare and remuneration of journalists to minimize unethical practices that may arise due to financial pressures.
3. Fact-checking units should be established within media houses to curb the spread of misinformation and restore public trust in media reports.

4. Professional associations, such as the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), should promote peer accountability by rewarding ethical reporting and discouraging sensationalism or politically motivated coverage.
5. Citizens should be sensitized to critically evaluate media content and actively engage with credible governance-related reports to strengthen democratic accountability.

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