

The Media and Challenges of Promoting Democratic Governance in Nigeria

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Abstract

Media is an essential component of democratic governance, this is because of the crucial roles it play in checking the excess of power abuse and influences public policies and programmes for the general well-being and interests of the electorates and the society. However, in Nigeria these roles have been impaired by number of challenges that combine to become bottleneck in their way of ensuring conduct of smooth democratic governance in the country. Thispaper examines the challenges facing media in promoting democratic governance in Nigeria. Library research is used as major methodology of the study. While, social responsibility theory is adopted as theoretical frame. It argues that if democratic governance is to be nurtured, maintained and consolidated, media must be accorded opportunities for providing plural avenues of channelling mass opinion and choices, and also serves as watch dog against the authoritarian tendencies. However, the paper discovers that firm government control, non-tolerance to opposition and financial consideration as well as ownership structure of the media, operational, technical and ethical problems have been identified as major obstacles toward the realization of their anticipated roles of promoting democratic governance. This ensures that the media is free from unnecessary governmental interference, corrupt free, free from engaging in primordial and parochial inclinations, technologically revolutionized, highly professionalized, ethically sound and bold, characterized by openness to all shades of opinions in the society.

Keywords: Media, Democratic Governance, Democracy, Mass Opinion

Introduction

Access to information is essential to the proper functioning of democracy, because it enables and ensure that citizens make responsible and informed democratic choices rather than acting out of misinformation. It also serves as a link between the electorates and elected representatives by ensuring that they uphold their oaths of office and carry out the wishes of those who elected them. In view of this the media in Nigeria has been given much confidence and trust, so much such that to some extent whatever they offer their viewers, listeners and readers is absorbed as truth. Indeed, the level of reliance and value attach to the media by the Nigerian populace cannot be over-emphasized. Thus, an understanding of the public issues, public policies and programmes, governmental affairs, social issues, etc by most Nigerians is directly relational to the roles of the media

as the source of information and political rights. However, these roles have been impaired by some challenges that stand as obstacles against media as an effective medium of controlling the government, as well as in the role it plays in the democratic process and indeed democratic governance and consolidation. This is because the democratic content and relevance of any society rests upon the freedom to expression and articulate people's opinion, views and interests and air as well as channel them in such a way as to shape and mould the public policies in order to conform to these needs.

In view of the significant role play by the media in the democratic governance, this paper raises the following questions: What are the challenges been encountered by the media in promoting democratic governance in Nigeria's? And to what extent these challenges impaired the roles media play in democratic governance? The study adopts

library / documentary research as a major methodology.

Theoretical Framework

This study adopts Social Responsibility Theory. It grew out of the 1947 Hutchins's Commission report on the free and responsible press. It prescribes specifically certain goals or responsibilities which media should do, and argues that where they fail in that responsibility government should encourage them to comply. It is expounded by Dennis Mcquail (cited in Liman, 2004, p67) who summarizes these basic goals. This theory is relevance to this study on the ground that the media in Nigeria have been given confidence on whatever information they offer their viewers, listeners and readers, and it is more often absorbed as truth. Indeed the level of reliance and value attach to the media by the Nigerian populace cannot be over-emphasized. Thus, a proper understanding of democratic governance in Nigeria is directly relational to the understanding media as the source of information and political rights. In carrying out this responsibility media has an obligation to abide by, as suggested by Matthew (2010) its responsibilities which can be discharged wholly and solely within the strictest ethical considerations. This professional obligation is to seek and report truth which citizens may rationally act upon in making democracy work. It must be the guiding principle of the press given that human existence is impossible without an overriding commitment to truth. This tenet underlies social responsibility models of the press. However, these functioning have been impaired by several challenges which have become barrier to the proper role of the media in democratization process and democratic governance in Nigeria.

The Role of the Media in Promoting Democratic Governance in Nigeria

Sound Civil Society Organizations (Media among others) are considered to be essential in promoting democratic governance, because they give people a sense of unity and common purpose, it also provide social

networks through which they organize and challenge the power of the state. They also build trust among people which is essential for functioning of democratic institutions. Finally, involvement in civic associations also prepares citizens for their future political participation in a democratic regime (Welzel, 2010). In view of this, it has been argued that in political parlance, there are three arms of government: - Legislature, Executive, Judiciary, however, another intrinsic part of the government is the fourth estate of the realm is the press as represented by mass media (print and electronic). It is such an important aspect of governance that any government can overlook its activities at its own peril (Adeyanju, 2003:188). In a similar vein, Olowu (1995, p241) argues that the development of a democratic society is an unceasing task requiring daily attention. The values which have been acquired are perpetuated automatically and they regress if they are not kept alive.

Hence, in perpetuating these values media proves very significant, because they provide the instrument for opinion formation, sustenance and change through its capacity to transmit information from people to government and vice versa. This is because the basis of democratization process is the capacity of the system to open-up for public participation in the process per se. And, it is believed that the democracy is based on the idea that the leadership should be collectively determined by the popular will of the people; hence public opinion becomes its essential instrument (Uche, 1999, p131). If the tenets of democracy must be maintained or enjoyed the different ethnic and interest groups need to have sufficient and guaranteed avenues for their self-expression (Uche, 1999. p148). It can be aptly argued that the degree of success and or otherwise of democratization process and of course democratic consolidation depends to some extent upon the proliferation media in the society, as each represents an avenue for the fulfilment of democratic aspiration. In this respect Sulaiman (cited in Jega and Wakili, 2002, p183) maintained that media pluralism is necessary condition for the

success of any democratic process. In essence, there is a correlation between the existence of a free media and democratic governance. As a matter of fact, one of the main distinguishing features of a democratic form of government is the existence of free and independent media (Ubani, 2008).

In democratic context in general, the media tasks are generally subsumed under the 'accountability role' which the media have been normatively ascribed as one of their main functions in a democratic society (Votmer, 2006). The notion that the press should hold the government and political elites accountable, that is answerable to the electorate and subject to eventual punishment in case of wrongdoing. They are also expected to act as a 'watchdog', exposing the transgressions of the public officials and other power holders within the democratic system. In addition to elections, the media are seen as instrumental for both the main dimensions of political accountability (the ability of citizens to oversee actions of the power holders) as well as the system of 'checks and balances' between state institutions, public agencies, and branches of government (Whitehead, 2002). Simply, they serve as a means for voters to make decisions by disseminating information about government actions. The significance of media in the democratic governance and process in general can be seen from various angles. They are capable of producing changes in values, attitudes, and behaviours congruent with democratic citizenship. Thus, media can play an instrumental role in re-socialization and modernization by teaching a new way of participating in politics and socioeconomic life and by encouraging new individual and national aspirations (Gross, 2002, p 90). They serve as a mechanism for propagating generic democratic political attitudes (e.g. efficacy, trust, tolerance), or behaviours (e.g. voting, mobilisation), and for political socialisation in democratising countries. However, given citizens' limited first-hand experience of politics, the mass media are most likely to be the predominant source from which individuals develop political

understanding.

The general functions perform by media in promoting democratic governance can be summarized as follows:

- ✍ It does this by discharging its social, moral and professional obligations by providing a much needed platform for public debate, articulation and reflection on public policies and the free expression of opinions of the electorates. This has increasingly made the relationship between the media, the people and the government to be inseparable in the common pursuit of democratic governance. In view of this, Alhassan (2010) maintains that the way this awesome power is exercised can make or mar public policies, particularly in a fledgling society such as Nigeria, which is still passing through the complex processes of democratization and economic reconstruction.
- ✍ Further, it also provides the avenue for government to speak to the public, and offers an official channel of communication between and among arms of government.
- ✍ Provide education and enlightenment- this is through educating the people on all government policies, programmes and projects, and in the interpretative analytical capacities in which it help direct the minds of the audience on how to think about issues and events, thus, influencing both national and international opinions.
- ✍ Watchdog over Government: The media being non-state actor is ideally placed to act as watchdogs to the government by monitoring government's activities and digging up information about the political process and alerting the public. In so doing, the media pushes the government on the path of accountability and guard against the abuse of power and all ills of the government corrupt practices. As watchdog of the public interests the Nigerian media are imbued with a self-conscious tradition of outspokenness, it also criticize the policies of Government while suggesting alternative courses of

action. Thus, media serves as an effective check on those in powers, and also as the eye, ear and voice of the larger society. The most obvious example is the ideological differences between and among parties and the position of their various candidates on public policies and programmes.

In addition, the relevance of media in promoting democratic governance can be established based on conclusion drawn by Ekstrom (2016) which can be summarized as follows:

- ✍ The (mass) media have an enormous influence on people's thoughts and understanding of the world, on opinions and on definitions of the political (and what constitutes a political problem).
- ✍ The media are both powerful actors in their own right and constitute an arena used by other power groups in society to control the distribution of information. The activities and methods used to manipulate opinions are developed and intensified and are increasingly important in business and politics.
- ✍ The media are characterized by increasing commercialization and concentration of power, dominated by a highly professionalized, powerful and autonomous journalism, and what is called media logic.

The Challenges of the Media in Promoting Democratic Governance in Nigeria

The democratic process drive in contemporary Nigerian state aims at the establishment of democratic values geared towards the increased participation of the populace in decision making. This is clear from the history of democratization process in Nigeria which is associated with incessant demands, struggle and pressure geared toward responding to the challenges of ending military rule in the late 1990's by various civil society organizations and groups in the country. In line with that Caron (1992:427) observed that the sustenance of democracy in any society depends largely on the readiness of the

members of the civil society to enthrone and preserve it through sustained struggle. Thus the media assume a central position in the struggle for democratization process and governance in Nigeria. The existence, freedom and function of media in Nigeria is an issue that exists within a legal framework that is to say a constitutional matter. Virtually every country on the African continent has made constitutional provision guaranteeing freedom of expression, including special legislation safeguarding freedom of the media. Article 19, Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) states that:

Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression. This includes freedom to hold opinion without interference and to seek, to receive and import information and ideas through any media regardless of the frontiers.

In addition, the media is singled out by section 22 of the 1999 constitution as part of the fundamental objective and directive principles of the state policy. No institution is so much democratically challenged as the media by 1999 constitution. Thus, Section 22 reads:

The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people.

By this section, the constitution imposes a duty on the media to monitor the critical aspects of governance with a view to guarding and advancing the frontiers of Nigerians' liberties and freedoms. Further, in line with this responsibility section 39(1) and (2) of the constitution states that:

Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold

opinions and to receive and import ideas and information without interference... Every person shall be entitled to own, established and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinion.

In view of this consideration, in a plural society like Nigeria inhabited 154,729,000 (NPC, 2006) composed by 250 ethnic nationalities with equally varied languages, cultures and traditions, if the tenets of democracy must be maintained or enjoyed the different ethnic and interest groups need to have sufficient and guaranteed avenues for their self-expression (Uche, 1999, p148). This could only be possible through effective, vibrant, bold and plural media. In essence, the media play tremendous role in the practice of democratic governance in Nigeria. This is rooted in the belief as opined by Obiozor and Onyekwere (1999, p131) that in Nigeria with the emergence of modern nation states in the 21st century; information has become fundamental tool for national growth and development. The role of the media in the creation and maintaining democracy lies in its crucial role in the creation and maintenance of public opinion which is an essential instrument of democracy.

Various factors have been identified as posing serious challenges in Nigeria which impaired the role of the media in democratic governance. These can be categorized as follow:

(i) Ownership Challenge: The media in Nigeria especially electronic and print media are to a larger extent own by government. Thus, Uche (1999, p223) lamented that a critical look at the ownership structure of the electronic and print media reveals that they are firmly in government control. In a similar vein, KAS Democracy Report (2008) argues that, in Nigeria state-owned media exist and this indeed constitutes the majority of media channels in the country. Eighty of the 100 radio stations in existence are owned by the federal or various state governments; they

also own 62 of the existing 76 television stations and 32 of the 40 newspapers. Only in the magazine sector do the government own no publications, all 15 existing magazines being private enterprises.

Therefore, a medium owned and run by the government cannot possibly in most cases play the watchdog role nor can it set any meaningful agenda for society as expected under real democratic experiments. If anything, such a medium can only be the mouthpiece of government. In such an environment, it is critical of government will certainly be censored. Given the fact that most governments no matter how democratic they are have a tendency towards arbitrariness, this kind of medium cannot question government decisions and actions and therefore cannot inspire any confidence. This to a greater extent halts the formation of public opinion and expression of popular views in a democratic dispensation, thus negatively affect the democratization process.

In addition, Isola (2008,p23) observed that in general, pattern of media ownership and control in most African countries has shown that an overwhelming number of these media houses are concentrated in the urban centres, projecting mostly the views of the urban population. In addition, the prevalence of government owned media is acting as a constraint to effective performance of the media as watchdog. In essence, therefore, the state-owned media are generally perceived as merely propaganda instruments of the federal and state governments. This is captured more vividly by KAS Report (2008) as argues that state media have tended to ignore or even deny the most egregious of problems in society, aiming to defuse social tension and conflict. This is apparent in every instance of massive confrontation between the state or its ruling groups and any oppressed social groups.

(ii) Operational Challenge: The media in the developing countries is still at the developing stage, with lack of effective modern techniques and technological equipments compare to their western

counterpart, hence, even within their own geographical areas they tend to be dominated by the western media. This tendency affects the accuracy of information's dissemination and indeed their role in promoting democratic governance, and to some extent in the society as a whole. This coupled with poor infrastructure and facilities in most countries in Africa, particularly south of the Sahara still carry the burden of irregular power supply to their urban and village communities and this has seriously impeded the usefulness of the electronic media, especially television. Consequently, most of the citizens are not aware of what is happening in their communities, including the government policies and programmes that are being implemented. This has been rightly observed by Sobowale (1989) that poor transport conditions and seasonal accessibility to some remote, arid or riverside areas make access to rural areas difficult for newspaper circulation.

(iii) Ethnic and Sectional Challenges: This is the attitude exhibit by the media in their operation, which manifested in form of primordial sentiments such as ethnicity and sectionalism. In line with this negative development Enahoro (1995, p21) lamented that many of the todays so called national newspapers emanating from the south/west are in fact regional publications whose loyalties are to the personalities causes espoused by the apparent majority of the people of that areas. Thus, it is worth arguing that instead of promoting democratic ideals and integrating the people toward common front that is the democratic governance and consolidation, they apparently pay much attention to promoting parochial and sentimental agendas. Obviously, democracy relies on divergence of interests and opinions to survive in pluralistic societies, however, the pattern of horizontal and vertical segmentation among the multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-linguistic societies has given rise to parochialism and chauvinism in the body polity (Imoh, 2008). This segmentation has served as a self limitation on the growth of

the state and made it difficult for the mass media to effectively champion the cause of democracy. In Nigeria, for instance, the conflicting interests between ethnicity, politics and religion on the one hand and politics on the other hand has made the media and journalists victims of the endemic chauvinism, parochialism and sectionalism that now characterizes the media in Nigeria.

(iv) Governmental Challenge: This emanate from the continuous perception of Nigerian public office holders that the media and press are their enemy. Several media establishments and journalists have been maltreated by the governments in power in several African countries for publishing the truth that puts the government in bad light. In Nigeria, for instance, the Zamfara state government fired the managing director of the state owned newspaper, Mallam Bashir Sanda Gasau for criticizing President Musa Yar'Adua (Vanguard August 18th 2008, p18). Similarly the National Broadcasting Commission suspended Channels Television license leading to the closure of channels television office in Lagos and Abuja and the arrest and detention of 5 members of staff of the organization. This was as a result of a broadcast report purportedly originating from the News Agency of Nigeria that President Musa Yar'Adua may resign on health grounds (Vanguard September 18th 2008, p1).

Nigeria just recently passed the Freedom of Information Bill, thereby enhancing media access to public information and promoting accountability and transparency by government and public servants. However, the commitment of Nigerian government to liberalize media access to public information has been limited by the lack of culture of tolerance and accommodation by the government and its security apparatus. Similarly, it has been observed that excessive sensitivity by rulers and government functionaries to unfavourable news reports and criticism by mass media was featured as one of the prominent barriers which have a negative

impact upon democratization process in Nigeria. This unfortunate incidence in developing countries as Uche (1999,p223) observed forced the media to promote the interests of the people or party in power, and it is hardly or very unlikely that the media can take-up the challenges of promoting and sustaining democratic governance in Nigeria effectively. In addition, media personnel suffer harassment and in some cases brutality from the state security agencies. These trends have posed a direct threat to smooth operation of the media as well as its anticipated role in the democratization process in Nigeria.

(v) Corporate Challenges: this tendency is more apparent in private media organization. They are faced with primary challenge of balancing its social responsibility with business interest. Because of this conflict of interest, the operators have often been accused of operating below ethical standard compromising professional standards with commercial interest.

(vi) The Challenge of Corruption: this manifested in forms of what is popularly known as brown envelope in the context of Nigerian journalism which is a metaphor for bribery and corruption. According to Onyisi (1996, p80) the concept, 'brown envelop' is "generally used to refer to the practice of offering and receiving gratifications in the form of gifts, drinks, food, sex or money in order to influence the judgment of a journalist". He further added that (1990, p81) whenever cheap publicity seeker gives a journalist brown envelope, there is a "tacit agreement that it is meant to make the reporter feature the story prominently to over-value the newsworthiness of the event, to overlook the deficiencies of the convener and, in some cases, to suppress the rival point of view".

(vii) The Challenge of Repression from the State Security Apparatuses: Most times those in government abusively use their official positions to intimidate, harass and beat up journalists and pressmen at the

slightest provocation. According to Udeze (2012, p104), "the first and most gruesome case of killing of a journalist in Nigeria was that of Dele Giwa".

He further reports that ten Nigeria journalists namely: Bayo Olu (*The Guardian*); Samson Boyi (*The Scope*); Sam Nimfa Jan (*Details*); Fidelis Ikwuebe (Freelancer), Okezie Amarube (*News Service*); Tunde Oladepo (*The Guardian*); Godwin Agboroko (*ThisDay*); Bolade Fassi (National Association of Women Journalist); Chinedu Offoaro (*The Guardian*) and Bagauds Kaltho have been killed in the process of discharge of their duty, and this kind of insecurity creates a choking chill on the media practitioners and make some of them adopt the elephant posture of see, hear and say nothing. Furthermore, under the current democratic dispensation, these forms of state's repression have taken forms of seizure of working equipment. This is another extra-legal method of controlling the press that is prevalent in Nigeria is the frequent seizure of equipment used by journalists in the discharge of their duties.

Often times still and video cameras are destroyed including their films with utter disregard to their cost. At times, government and its agents can go far to the extent of destroying the plates used for printing the news and impounding media vehicles. Related to this the frequent closure of media houses while their publications are confiscated thereby subjecting the media organization concerned to heavy financial loss. Financial loss in the sense that when this is the case, the news medium loses the money invested in publishing the copies of newspaper or magazine confiscated; the money that could have been realized through circulation; the money collected or expected from advertisers for the advertisements placed on the confiscated copies. And where a news medium affected does not have strong financial standing may run the risk of liquidation when this occurs.

In addition, there is also a case of razing down or demolition of Media Houses: According to Udeze (2012, p101) this is one of the worst crimes by those in authority

against the media. Many media organizations in Nigeria have suffered this fate in the hands of unidentified and yet to be arrested agents of government in power. Most times, media organizations are either raised by government instigated fire or outrightly demolish the offices of media organization as a result of perceived opposition to it or critical comments on government policies and actions. Some notable examples can be drawn from these negative developments: for instance on **14th May 2006** State security agents raided the office of D A A R Communications Limited in Abuja and confiscated the master tape of a documentary on failed efforts by past Nigerian leaders to perpetuate themselves in office. The company owns and operates Ray Power radio and the Africa Independent Television (AIT). The documentary was on-air at the time of the raid and the security agents terminated its further broadcast (Udeze, 2012).

(viii) The Challenge of Attacks from Non-State Actors: Similarly, Nigeria has experienced a proliferation of militias, militants and insurgent groups since the inception of the fourth republic in 1999. However, these groups have generally refrained from attacking journalists or media organisations. Generally, however, thugs allied to politicians and political parties have been the greater source of attacks on the media in the past five years. The following is a selection of such attacks. **On 30 January 2008:** Thugs in Lagos beat up Bayo Onanuga, managing director of The News magazine, after he gave evidence in a libel suit brought against the magazine by Bode George, the south-west chairman of the ruling party, the Peoples Democratic Party (**The KAS Democracy Report, 2008**). Politicians and political parties are usually behind such attacks; and although such attacks are less frequent, yet, they occur very often enough to be a real threat to media freedom.

(ix) Legal Challenge: There exists no legal provision for state monitoring of the

production and distribution of print media products. The print media do not have to submit their contents for state vetting; they obtain newsprint on the general market, and the security agents have no legal powers to monitor the distribution of newspapers or magazines. However, the law makes the production, importation, or distribution of seditious or obscene materials a criminal offence. State security agencies and the police often take advantage of these and other laws to attack vendors and seize newspapers and magazines they consider offending. The following is a selection of cases: **On 28th January 2008:** A magistrate's court in Uyo, in the Akwa Ibom state, remanded Samuel Asowata, editorial board chairman of Fresh Facts newspaper, to prison custody after his arrest by police on 21 January for alleged sedition.

The police had also arrested Bright Essien Ewoh, a newspaper distributor, on 24 January and arraigned him before a similar court the next day. Mr Asowata's arrest was in connection with a 21 January story in the newspaper captioned 'Akpabio in N5.5bn Housing Scam?' Mr Ewoh was arrested for alleged sedition and conspiracy in connection with the distribution and sale of the Fresh Facts edition containing the story.

The call for Freedom of Information Act arose because of the need for greater public (particularly the press) access to information. The Bill was, therefore, enacted into law in 2011 to serve the following core purposes' as contained in the preface to the act: provide unhindered public access to public records and or information; protect public records and information to the extent consistent with national interest; protect individual right to privacy; protect serving public officers from adverse consequences for disclosing certain official information, and establish procedures for the achievement of those purposes and related purposes therefore. This clearly shows that the essence of the Act is to limit to a considerable extent, the impediments and sufficiently enhances access to the government information in the interest of the public. In a nutshell, the Act is meant to encourage free flow of information

by allowing individuals (including journalists) greater freedom to receive, hold and disseminate certain information that could hitherto pass for official secret without hindrance and or encumbrance. Although the Act is relatively new and has not been properly digested, some of the major provisions are worth discussing here. First, Section (1) of the Act clearly stated thus:

Notwithstanding contained in any other Act, Law or Regulation, the right to any person to access or request information, whether or not contained in any written form, which is in the custody or possession of any public official; agency or institution however described is hereby established.

The issue of concern here however is that by this very provision, there should be unlimited access to government's, agencies and institutions documents upon application. By implication, this provision tends to render invalid, the Official Secrets Act which empowers government and its agencies to classify documents and by so doing, impede access to and dissemination of such information. The question is: how can any application or request for information based on this provision receive favourable consideration when there is no evidence that the repugnant Official Secret Act has been repealed?

The snag with this provision is that it tends to underscore the very essence of freedom of information. The limitation imposed on the nature of information that should be made available to members of the public upon application appears to be further classification of document in line with the provisions of Official Secret Acts. A true freedom of information to my mind should emphasize conditions for responsible use of public information not to prescribe aspects of public information to be applied for and used.

This provision states that a public institution can deny an application for any

information where the information sought:

Constitute an invasion of personal privacy under section 15 of this Act. However, where the interest of the public would be better served by having such record being made having such record being made available this exemption to disclose shall not apply.

The enjoyment of the media rights are, however, restricted by criminal libel laws, libel, defamation, sedition, contempt of court, the Official Secrets Act which are among some of the archaic statutes still retained by many governments. In this regards, Ogbondah (1997) opined that the problem with press freedom in Africa is not that there is an absence of a body of laws or constitutional provisions guarantee that freedom. The problem is that arbitrary actions, extra-legal measures and instruments of violence and coercion are utilized by the state in attempts to curb the right of freedom of expression.

Conclusion

The Media is an integral part of democratic governance this is because of the fact that central to all discourses and practices of democracy lies the question of expression of public opinions. Hence, the degree of success of any democratic government depends largely upon the media. However, despite that significance media in Nigeria under the current democratic posture has been faced with numerous challenges such as non-tolerance from the government and its security apparatus, operational, ownership and corporate problems coupled with technical and corrupt practices. These indeed, affect the extent of their role and performance in democratic governance and consolidation in general. Thus, despite the passage of media bill in Nigeria, the media is yet to practice its full democratic responsibility as fourth realm of government.

Recommendations

- (a) Government should stop unnecessary interference in the activities of the media organization and this should take the form of minimizing its control over the public media and granting it autonomy for self-determination, so as to have a hitch free operations.
- (b) Government should eschew the culture of distrust and non-tolerance toward media and promote the culture of accommodation toward the media in general
- (c) Ethical Reformation by media Houses and their personnel: That they should stick with the code of conduct as enshrine in the constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999, imbibe the culture of professional ethics: This includes Honesty, Firmness, Boldness. They should also eschew parochial inclinations like ethnicity, sectionalism, corruption and media bias.
- (d) Technological Revolution: It is an obvious fact the media in Nigeria both private and public still use old technological that is less effective in comparison to what obtain in the developed world, and this affects their role and performance more in a plural society like Nigeria. Thus, they should embark on technological revolution more especially in the areas of information and communication technology, and in manpower development.
- (e) Government and private organisations and other stake holders should strive to ensure the proliferation of the media houses throughout the countries particularly in the rural areas, with effective national transmission coverage. And at least there should be a local media station especially radio station, which should be transmitting its most programmes particularly on political education and national issues in the local language(s) of the people in the area, in each local government area in the federation.
- (f) There should also be openness by media to all shade of opinions and interests for self-expression to have a hitch free access at any given point in time.
- (g) The operational nature of the media by projecting and airing what people should have to hear based on profit consideration should be de-emphasized to the issues bordering around nation-building, national unity and integration, national security and development.

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