**INFLUENCE OF BROADCAST MEDIA IN THE POLITICAL DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA**

**Abstract**

The broadcast media, an avenue for spurring the masses for political mobilization ensures the dissemination of political information to the masses and also ensures the free flow of information between the government and the electorate so as to create political awareness and participation. This research work has gone a step further to examine the influence of the mass media towards the political progress of our country Nigeria, through the use of social scientific method of field survey the researcher was able to gather authentic information. The findings after the research work indicate that the mass media have contributed tremendously to political participation of the masses towards the development of the country Nigeria.

**CHAPTER ONE**

**INTRODUCTION**

* 1. **Background of the study**

In a democratic set up of governance the role of the mass media can in no way be underestimated or undermined, this is largely due to the watchdog role performed by the media in shaping people’s believe and actions towards the activities of the government of the day. It is this huge role performed by the media as an agent and its human tools (i.e. journalists) that earned it the appellation fourth echelon of the realm. The first three are the legislature, executive and judiciary in no particular order of importance. For any government polity to enjoy popularity in the minds of right thinking members of the public, such polity needs the unreserved assistance of the mass media to enlighten the  masses, shape their opinion and create a favorable disposition from such members of the public. The media through its informative program showcases the polity of government and also reveal the benefits of such polity to the masses as a way of gaining acceptance from the public. There are policies which may look ambiguous to the public or sound weird to the masses, the media’s role is brought to bear under this circumstance as they beam the light on these policies and help the masses gain a better understanding. The mass media consists of the radio, television and all printed means of acquiring information across to the public. The media is also a means through which the feelings, values and aspirations of the people are related to the government. The media also serves the purpose of entertainment to the public, this is done through dissemination of program that are meant to relax the mood of members of the public and to lighten the tensive atmosphere especially when the individual’s mind is occupied by stress.

The mass media serve as the mirror through which the public have a comprehensive view of activities of the government. The media also help set the agenda for the activities of the government, setting a platform for participation of the event of the government of the day being ignorant of the wishes of the populace the media creates a forum of unveiling even the hidden facts about issues like this. It is this checkmating role played by the media that earned it the acronym “watchdog”

In an effort to place facts right about the role of the media in the political process in Nigeria. It would be of great help to have a review of the electrons that had taken place in the country and the extent of involvement of the media in every of this occasion. But to have a better understanding of the issue at stake it will be illogical to focus on electrons that took place before the era of the first republic, this is because such electrons wee not general election in the real sense, cause Nigeria was still under the tutelage of the British empire, more so such elections were done in a representative manner which only created room for involvement of the la crime de la crime in the society to have stronger access to power than the ordinary man. Such were the days when only a few voted for only a few to represent the interest of the masses, as such elections of that era, that is pre first republic era is not included in this work. During the first republic which had about five political parties which are the UPN, NPP and FRP. The press in Nigeria was deeply involved in the democratic process. The media highlighted the activities of the politicians especially the principal actors probing into their past and weighted the strength of their credibility to have a claim to office and thee after present these individuals to the public through the radio, television, newspaper and magazines. The politicians of this era also found the press a crackerjack to publicize their manifesto, so great was the influence of the media during this era that no political gathering was complete without the media.

During the 1983 general elections the press also played a significant role of watchdog of the society. This was made manifest through its incisive and critical reports of the performance of politicians after their first tenure. The press was hugely objective in unraveling basic hidden facts of the nefarious activities of politicians, this created a platform for the masses to understand the jakhill and Hyde nature of the men in power and created a hug crisis at the center and the resultant effect of this is that the power that be, lost their authority to the army in a coup de ’tact 1993 election was dubbed and is still acknowledged as the freest and fairest election in the country. Though the powers that be denied this assertion, but experts through conscious topical debate accepted this election as the best so far. The extent of the success of this election would be largely incomplete without mentioning the role performed by the media. This is because this was the era in which the Nigeria media had created or attained a high standard and was critical of the involvement of the military in the ruler ship of the country as such the media beamed it’s searchlight on the credibility of the politicians and also created massive awareness amongst the populace, this gesture of the Nigeria media created a perfect platform for the success of the election which was subsequently denied the light of the day by the military. The last general election and one before it, that is 2003 and 1999 were perhaps the elections that had the largest involvement of the media, this is because the media industry had received a boost with the introduction of modern day equipment’s for the broadcast medium and state of art printing machines to play a participatory role in the election process and also to get the masses involved in the proceedings. During the last election, a remarkable achievement was made for the first time in the history of the nation; results of election were relayed from the studio almost immediately after the election. Reporters were assigned beats at the polling centers and they were made to report events as they unfold. Also in the studio, there were experts who continuously access the situation base on their knowledge about the activities of electoral officers and the election itself.

            Prior to the election proper the critical stance of the media on topical election issues gave clarity to the masses on such issues. It is such stance on issues like number of political parties and credibility of the electoral commission that led to the registration of thirty political parties, the highest ever recorded in the history of the country. Not worthy id the fact that during these elections there was prevalent political apathy on the part of the masses. The people had a negative notion about politicians, politics and elections. It was no longer a hidden development that politicians continue to make ridiculous desire for power as they struggle for the soul of the polity, and yet they remain impervious that democracy in Nigeria was on the clay soil edged by crisis of confidence from the people to he ruler as such members of the public were indifferent on the political dispensation. The media on account of this made conscious efforts to involve the people in the election. Government itself carried out campaign to create awareness and acceptance by the people. All these were carried out by the media, in order to restore the eroded democratic spirit in minds the populace.

* 1. **STATEMENT OF PROBLEM**

Based on the background of the study which suggests that results of elections in Nigeria have never enjoined the wide acceptance from the populace, this is because more often than not results of election have concomitant comply by the losers and the followers. It becomes a matter of necessity to do a study on the actions and reactions of masses to electoral process in the country.

It should be stated clearly that the press or media as an agent through it watchdog role unveils the  negative and positive sides of electoral process and also serves the duty of being the voice of the people in an effort to air opinion about election and electoral process. As such this study is focused on knowing the reasons behind political apathy on the side of some masses that may have chosen to adopt an indifferent role and to wilfully disenfranchise themselves in a system that demands their utmost commitment. This study also aims at revealing the divergent roles played by the broadcast media during elections especially the mobilizing aspect of the role. This also concerns how the broadcast media create awareness among the people, this also will not leave out extent of information the media disseminate during election to guide them from making wrong choices during elections. Also this study will look at the influence of the political campaigns carried by the broadcast media during elections on the populace. The study will also look at how fair the press has been in carrying out political campaigns of various political parties during elections and will compare via a vis the outcome of such campaign, that is the result of the elections.

**1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

Practically the broadcast media fundamentally is not unaware of it’s important role during elections. Every media practitioner who has even only a vague idea of history of elections in the country knows the onus task of the fourth realm of the echelon in building up a positive participatory role of the masses during elections. In the light of the above stated view part of the objectives of this study lies in the effort of unraveling the reasons behind the sinister feelings of the masses which culminates into political apathy by a large majority. Another objective inherent in this study is evident in the background which reveals how the presses open-up the shady deals of elections and paints the true pictures of how events occur during elections. This is because when election are close by the public depend so topical issues in the country and this will go a long way in helping the polity makers know how best to carry out its polices to suit the masses. Lastly the objective of this study is to have a practical view of why there’s a reduction in number of those who vote as against the ever rising population of the country.

* 1. **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

In line with the above elucidated points on the objectives of this study, it is noteworthy that this research will help electoral. This is because electoral officers have in the past undermined the efforts of media during elections. The media can be used to educate the masses on the importance of their roles during elections and it can be used to sensitize them on the need for their involvement to allow for a popular choice during elections.The study will also create room for a better way of handling elections. Beside the above listed point, is the fact that this study will create room for students of mass communication to understand the role they stand to play during elections when they graduate. The intending media practitioner will find the finding of this study valuable cause it will help him/her not only to get rid of indifferent attitude towards election and also to educate the unaware or ignorant masses. This will go a long way in helping the society in general.

**1.6 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS**

**H1:** The broadcast media help to create awareness among the masses during elections.

**H0:** Broadcast media hardly create awareness among masses in the course of elections.

**H2:** The broadcast media help to reduce political apathy among electorates.

**H0:** The broadcast media does not reduce political apathy during elections.

**1.7 DEFINITION OF TERMS**

 As a way of giving a better understanding this study will give definitions to some related to the study which are: electorate, elections, Gerry mender, political apathy, franchise. These terms will be explained and defined conception ally and operationally.

**Electorate**

**Conception ally**- It means a segment of people in a country who are qualified to vote during elections.

**Operationally**- It connotes those who are eighteen years and above in Nigeria who are qualified to vote.

**Elections**

**Conceptionally**- Election means the process of selecting individuals who are qualified to take up elective post.

**Operationally**- Election means the various times Nigerians have gone to the post to select their democratically leaders.

**Gerry mander**

**Conceptionally**- This means the act of changing size of border of an area for voting in order to give undue advantage to one party.

**Operationally**- This term looks into the various antics by the powers that be to unfavourably delineate the country politically to give their party an edge over others.

**Political Apathy**

CONCEPTIONAL-The attitude of feeling indifferent to political activities by an individual who is supposed to be concerned.

**Operational**- This entails the altitude of electorates during elections by verse majority being unconcerned about elections.

**Franchise**

**Conceptionally** -It means those who have the right to vote during elections.

**Operationally**- It includes various individuals in Nigeria who are interested in Nigeria or who are yet to realize their rights.

**1.8 ASSUMPTIONS**

There is the assumption that the media hardly have any influence on the elections. This believe stem out of the fact that government feel it is the face to face contact they make with the populace that really influences the disposition of the masses during elections. Another assumption that is related to this study is the feeling that there’s no relationship between the political apathy and the extent change in mental disposition towards election as a result of the influence of the media. Lastly there’s the assumption that media exist only to entertain and inform the public on the happenings in the country, which is of little or no effect on the outcome of election

**CHAPTER TWO**

**REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

**2.1 Introduction**

In 1948 the United Nations Conference on Freedom of Information declared access to information an essential freedom one that underpins all others. In this sense access to information can be understood as an end in itself. Yet a 1962 UNESCO survey found that over 70% of the world lacked access to adequate information. In response the UN called for all countries to include a media development strategy within their economic development plans. In addition to securing this fundamental right, they said, “information media have an important role to play in education, social, and economic progress.” More recently, the UN recognized the important role of independent media in bringing about good governance something increasingly demanded by citizens across the globe. People want "their voices to be heard and they want institutions that are transparent, responsive, capable and accountable." In defining the central importance that information plays in sustainable development, a 2007 Panos report highlighted how information empowers people to determine their own development path. "At its heart, development – if it is to be sustainable – must be a process that allows people to be their own agents of change: to act individually and collectively, using their own ingenuity and accessing ideas, practices and knowledge in the search for ways to fulfill their potential." A plural, independent media plays an essential role in delivering the information people need to participate in the debates and decisions that shape their lives. Despite a general agreement on the importance of media development in broader social, economic and political progress, the international community governments, development agencies, donors largely views the development of an independent media sector as a secondary objective instead of a matter of critical importance. Consequently international donors allocate less than 1% of international aid budgets to media development. The purpose of this literature review is to present evidence suggesting that a quality, independent media has a positive impact on society and should be viewed as a critical development outcome in itself. The history of elections in Nigeria generally has afforded us the golden opportunity of assessment of the divergent roles of the media in Nigeria political process within the framework of our national political goal. The issue and question of education, information, mobilization and monitoring has become a very crucial factor in the realization of the national objectives in the context of the electoral process. This is as a result of the ugly incidences of various forms of electoral malpractices which have repeatedly threatened the possibility of credible elections and national integration in Nigeria. Though the issue at stake is the responsibility of all stakeholders in the body politic, there is however, a rationale in assigning this responsibility as a primary concern of the mass media on the ground of professional competence as the fourth estate of the realm. It has therefore, become very important to assess the roles of the mass media in the electoral history of Nigeria. To what extent has the Nigerian media discharged its statutory functions towards achieving a positive political national agenda? Iredia (2007:12) the former Director General of Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), states the problem in this regard very clearly that, the people must be assisted to premise their choices of rationality and vote wisely during elections. They must have all information that is needed to elect the right candidates who can ensure good governance. Where such public awareness is lacking, those of us in the media must accept a share of the blame of failed elections in Nigeria. This study presumes an understanding of the meaning of election or electioneering campaign in politics as a periodic selection of government representatives of the people at various levels of governance by the electorate themselves.

**2.2 CONSTITUTIONAL AND MORAL BASIS OF THE ROLE OF THE BROADCAST MEDIA IN POLITICS AND GOVERNANCE**

Dukor (1999:283) anchors the assessment of the role of the media in politics on the “fundamental right to receive and impart information”. This becomes not only the standard for assessing the role of the media, but also “the neglected role of… states to uphold the ethics of the right to know… in an ideal democracy”. This quest to propagate the inalienable right to know and impart information was influenced by the, Natural law doctrines, the articles of French revolution, the precepts of American declaration of independence, The United Nations Declaration of peoples’ and Human Rights, African Charter on Human and Peoples Right (Ibid). For instance, the “African Charter on Human and People’s Right” adopted in 1986 and ratified in July 1990, states among others that “every individual shall have the right to receive information,… shall have the right to express and disseminate his opinions within the laws”. It has become very pertinent to examine the extent to which these precepts of the fundamental rights of man have been observed in the context of Nigeria’s politics and media practice especially in the area of democratic elections. It must be emphasized that any talk of democracy without the right to receive and impart information is empty. Nigeria has a background of liberalism which dictates free flow of information, yet the country’s media according to Dukor have been for the most part, performing, within air of regulated freedom. Since independence, there has been several factors encumbering the right to know about government policies. This has been the case mostly during the military inter regnum. For instance, a good number of decrees were put in place to hinder press freedom and jeopardize the public right to know and receive information. Dare, L (1985) gives a rundown of such decrees to include, Newspaper (Amendment Act) 1964, the official secrets Acts 1962, the Defamation Act 1961, public officers (protection against false Accusation) Act No. 11 1976, the newspaper prohibition circulation act 1967 and public officers (protection against false publication) Decree No. 4 1984). On the other hand, Dukor (1999; 287), opines that there has been a democratic flowering of the independent press which has generally accompanied moves towards democracy and respect of human rights. But regrettably, the practice of journalism in Nigeria is bedeviled by some unethical problematic. The media, hitherto is politically polarized interms of axis, ethnic loyalty, and sectional party and selfish interests (Ibid). This is against the backdrop that the media is one of the institutions that sustain democracy. It is on this basis that Dukor examines the relationship between the state and the media in Nigeria and observes that it has been that of mutual distrust. According to the Nigerian press council, the Nigerian media, have fallen victim of manipulations by government and politicians. We are being witnesses to the fallen standard of journalistic profession and its negative contributions to nation building through a hackneyed uncouth and indiscrete reporting of events and issues… ethnic polarization of media houses and consequent undue influence on power and political tussles. As a result, in moment of crisis, the media become ready tools for those actively involved in the crisis of power. One of the main constitutional roles of the media in a democracy is to objectively monitor governance while remaining consistent, preserving and objective stance in holding those involved in the democratic process accountable to the people. These include those with executive, legislative and judicial functions in the polity together with all institutions of governance and democracy. Dukor’s argument is that the mutual distrust existing between the state and the media in Nigeria, has negated the benefits of the fundamental right to know and impart information. This paradoxical trend in Nigeria is for the state to negate its constitutional relationship to the media and citizenry. The consequence of this situation is that the development of the entire society is undermined with regard to the right to know and impart information. This tends to widen the gap in communication between government and society. It belongs to the responsibility of the media in Nigeria to for instance, inform the Nigerian public on how “vested interests have become policy matters, how obvious facts have hidden under honorific national interests, how violence has been condoned as law and order, how cold-blooded murders have been perpetuated as encounters” (Dukor, p. 288). The role of the media in any democratic society is to educate, to inform and to entertain people. However, they have to be vigilant watchdogs of public interest and under no special circumstances should they demean themselves into acting as lapdogs for establishment. Even in very normal and placid times, the media is expected to be a keen observer, alert and concerned even though non-intruding and nonpartisan in governance. (Ibid).

**2.3 BROADCAST** **MEDIA IMPROVES GOVERNANCE BY MONITORING THE ACTIONS OF THOSE IN POWER**

Corruption acts as a tax on productive activities in an economy, leading to the flow of resources to unproductive ones. An independent media that monitors those in power and delivers accurate information to citizens has been shown to be an effective check on corruption across multiple studies.7 A 2006 cross-country study of 51 countries over the period 1995 to 2004 found that even slight reductions in restrictions on journalists (e.g. reducing violence against journalists) have a positive impact on corruption. The study found that improving the economic viability and competitiveness of the media sector, leading to a one standard deviation increase in press freedom, “would be associated with a decline of corruption between 0.6 to 1.7 for economic influences and 0.7 to 1.4 for political influences.”8 A 2004 study of 97 countries and covering the time period from 1995 to 2002 found press freedom to have a significant impact on corruption. The study found that reducing free press restrictions by 1% leads to a 5.1% improvement in the Corruption Perception Index (CPI). “The presence of free press brings public corruption cases to the voters while voters in a democracy in turn punish corrupt politicians by ousting them from public offices. Hence elected politicians react to the voters by reducing corruption.”9 A widely cited 2003 paper in the Journal of Public Economics provides further evidence that a free press is a powerful control on corruption. Analyzing a cross-section of 125 countries from 1994 to 1998 the authors found a strong relationship between press freedom and less corruption, and one that suggests the direction of causation runs from higher press freedom to lower corruption. The evidence suggests that a one standard deviation improvement in press freedom could reduce corruption by between .4 and .9 points on the 0 to 6 scale.10 Media can also indirectly reduce corruption. A 2000 study found that in countries with weak civic monitoring capabilities (including a strong, independent media) high levels of education might not have the expectedly positive impact on corruption (i.e. better educated bureaucrats should provide better public services). Without being monitored, politicians may use their education to become more efficiently corrupt. The study “examine(s) the impact of higher education on corruption…, while controlling progressively for other variables that have been identified to influence corruption (e.g. press freedom).” The results support the study’s hypothesis that “in countries with low levels of civic monitoring of those in power, education may actually increase corruption.

**2.4 ACCESS TO INFORMATION HELPS CITIZENS HOLD THEIR GOVERNMENTS ACCOUNTABLE**

By providing easy access to information to users of public services, the media empowers citizens to demand quality and accountability from their governments. A 2004 study by the World Bank examined a Ugandan newspaper’s campaign to inform teachers about education grant funds and the impact the campaign had on improving the education system by reducing regulatory capture.12 The hypothesis was that more informed teachers would hold officials accountable for the proper use of the funds. The study used distance to the nearest newspaper outlet as an instrument for wider exposure to the campaign (via parents, for example) and found a strong relationship between proximity to a newspaper outlet and lower capture.13 A 2004 paper by David Stromberg found that better-informed citizens are more likely to vote, which in turn encourages politicians to be responsive. The results of his research on how radio penetration impacted relief program fund allocations indicated that governors allocated more relief funds to areas where a larger share of the population had radios. The effects were both statistically significant and economically important. “The estimates of this study imply that for every percentage point increase in the share of households with radios in a certain county, the governor would increase per capita relief spending by 0.6 percent.”14 While there is still debate, recent research has emphasized the leading role independent media plays in the process of improving democratic governance. Evaluating decades of data on press freedom and political development, Karin Deutsch Karlekar and Lee Becker found that a healthy press sector is highly correlated with broader political freedoms. Taking a closer look at countries that experienced sharp increases or decreases in political freedom, the researchers found that press freedom is often a lead indicator for the direction a country’s political system is headed.

**2.5 MEDIA AND POLITICS IN NIGERIA A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE ON THE PROBLEMATIC**

At independence, African leaders borrowed the authoritarian attitude in respect of the curtailment of press freedom from regimes of Eastern and central Europe “action seemingly justified by the urge to fight against western imperialism and colonialism”. This according to (Becker, S. and Lower, E 1976) gave rise to, the culture of one voice… institutionalized … one voice culture entailed that there be only one official press… the effect (of which) was that authoritarianism grew into conformist press. While during the colonial struggle, indigenous newspapers became a rallying dissent point against colonial iniquities and injustices to “propagate political ideas, to fight colonial injustices, to seek and demand freedom, to protect the people’s interests, and to educate them about the present and the future” (Dare, L (1985), the reverse became the case on attainment of political independence. However, as a colonial heritage, when in 1953 the motion for self-governance was made by the Action Group, Sir John Macpherson, the then colonial Governor, made a radio broadcast castigating the party. When Chief Obafemi Awolowo, the leader of the party, sought a “right of reply” to the broadcast, the management of the radio service rejected the request on the directive of the colonial government. According to scholars this introduced into the Nigeria media the culture of imbalance and partisanship. According to Adedeji, A. (1991), in 1961 the same government media were used to announce landslide victories for the ruling political parties in the regional elections. According to , it was on Adedeji, A. (1991), the contrary a public knowledge that the victories attributed to the Northern People's Congress (NPC) in the north and the National Council for Nigeria and Cameroon’s (NCNC) in the East were achieved using in part all forms of electoral chicanery, political intimidations and even coercion including imprisonment of opposition leaders.

In 1964, the government media again were used to announce that over fifty percent of the candidates of the ruling party were returned unopposed without voting in many places in the election into the federal house of representative that year. This again was contrary to the fact as Dare (1989:6) observed that Nigerians were aware that the announcements were false, because in some cases, the returning officers disappeared and could not be contracted after receiving papers for the official candidates. In 1965 Okolo (1993:16) noted that different versions of the results of the same election held in the western region in October of that year were announced by different media houses operating in Ibadan the regional capital. The affected media were Eastern Nigerian Broadcasting Services (ENBS), the Western Nigerian Broadcasting Service (WNBS) and radio Nigeria. In the second republic civilian government, the newspaper and electronic media were owned by different state governments and the federal government. These media were therefore loyal to the governments in control of their states. This situation though it has the tendency of promoting healthy rivalry further dampened the image of the media. “This is because, the practitioners of journalism wrote reports and news in their preconceived images, thereby destroying their integrity and profession leaving behind a vulgarized journalism” (Dukor p.286). The implication of this scenario of unprofessionalism is that the Nigerian media became concerned not with “the truth, but with rumours”. This has largely led to the opinion that journalism as is practiced in Nigeria is a “hogwash of exaggerations and speculations”, where, facts are distorted to suit the ends of those who own the media”. Therefore, it can be argued that journalism in Nigeria with regard to its constitutional roles is not scientific. This position is authenticated by many other findings, especially with regard to election in Nigeria. For instance, Egbon, M. (2004) in his study of the 1983 elections alleges That television houses made it impossible for any politician opposed to the government in power to appear on the screen and when he appeared at all, his picture would be distorted and television mechanism upset in order to deliberately render his voice inaudible. As Okolo opines, Nigerian political parties and their functionaries have always been known for using the media in an unwholesome manner. In 1983 for example, the incumbent state governors used the media controlled by them to announce their own re-election. The announcements by the governors were made well before the Electoral commission could include the collation of votes cast at the same election (Alao, D (1992). In 1991, the Governorship election held in Edo on December 14 was nullified because the state owned broadcasting service breached the rules on political broadcast (Alao, D (1992). A report of the European Union (EU) Election observation mission in respect of the 2003 general elections opines that media performance during the Nigerian elections was flawed, as it failed to provide unbiased, fair and informative coverage of political parties and candidates contesting the elections. Federal and state owned media were biased in favour of parties and candidates in power. A cursory insight into the history of elections in Nigerian political development suggests a verdict of irresponsible media. This is because the media has unduly left itself to the manipulation of the negative factors in Nigerian election and politics, thereby, becoming irresponsible. First of these influences is the influence of tribalism in political party formation. Right from the period before and after independence, till date, political parties in Nigeria are formed along ethnic and tribal lines. These parties have championed parochial and ethnic interests at the expense of national unity and stability of the polity. According to Agba (2007:70). From the NCNC, AG and NDC of the precolonial days and the first republic (1951-1966), through the NPN, NPP, GNPP (1979-1983) of the second republic and the third republic and the NRC and SDP (1991-1993) of the botched fourth republic, and even to the present day PDP, APGA, ACN, CPC and others (1999-2011), political parties formation has been an ethnic affair. As a result of this tribalistic scenario, Marcia grant, as reported in Edogbo (1994:33), carried out a comprehensive study of the relationship between the press and the political system in Nigeria and discovered that the character of political reporting and commentary was entirely dependent on media ownership structure and the owner’s relationship with the political system. He therefore concludes that most newspapers often spoke for one political party or one region against another, which meant that the press has always acted not as impartial estate, but as mouthpiece of the political divisions in Nigeria. Also Mohammed, J. (1994), observes that much did not change in the role of the media with regard to its impartiality in subsequent democratic elections and electioneering campaign. For him press partisanship has always manifested in political reporting. As Agba (2007:71), points out, these scenario represents a failure on the part of the media to engage in thorough analysis of party manifestoes and de-emphasis of ethnic politics. Agba’s verdict on electioneering campaign in Nigeria is that of the absurd. According to him, electioneering campaign seem to portray a consortium of insincere political figures, whose failure to keep promises dampens the spirit of the electorate and the masses. He concludes that electioneering campaign in Nigeria is characterized by electoral dirtiness and insecurity. Consequently, Uzuegbunam (1993:49), opines that these have been the basis for most of the cases of irregularities, election malpractices, misappropriation, mismanagement and insensitivity to the masses. To this effect, Stappel (1973:6), has called on the media to work on Nigeria’s political culture. Unfortunately, this unwholesome use of the media which has become a norm in Nigeria, usually brings with it untold mayhem, chaos and political instability. In 1965 for instance, following the conflicting election results announced by the media, political opponents in the Western Region engaged themselves in what was referred to as “OPERATION WETE”, a process of setting property ablaze with petrol (Agba, P.C (2007) Many lives and much property were lost in that exercise. In 1983, the Federal Television Station in Abeokuta, Ogun State, was set ablaze ostensibly to show public dissatisfaction with the station’s broadcast during the election. Similar incidents were recorded in different parts of the country. The root cause of these problems was traced to the media by some politicians. The implication is that election rigging in Nigeria usually attracts negative reactions from the public, reactions which become very destructive when exacerbated by media publication of inaccurate information or controversial results. What this suggests is that it is time to search for strategies that can improve the performance of the nation’s media, particularly in matters of politics and elections. The media should help to build enlightened electorate. Public enlightenment is a pre-condition for free and fair elections

**2.6 THE MEDIA IN EFFECTIVE ELECTIONEERING CAMPAIGN REPORTAGE IN DEVELOPING CONTEXT**

The fore knowledge of Nigeria’s unhealthy political culture should form the springboard for media action. Its present status as an elite media, that is, the preserve of the powerful and the harbingers of government, does not augur well for the media, government and society. Agba (2007:261) argues that the media should go back to the concept of journalism in public interest to be able to discharge its proper role in times of election. In this regard, the very first task of the media is how to make politicians respect people's right to candid electioneering. In this regard, news should not mean alienating the audience and keeping the electorates groping in the dark. According to Nwaozuzu (1997:87), electioneering campaign reportage should seek out relevant truths for the people who cannot witness or comprehend the events that affect them. Cohen (1970:27), collaborates the above viewpoint and clearly defines its implications for good political culture. According to him news has gotten so complex that mere reportage is not good any more. What is required is for the journalist to add analysis to campaign news. This implies that the media must interpret campaigns in the light of the electoral needs of the people, that is, implications and actions to people and to realization of a vibrant political system. This simply means directing the goals of electioneering campaign to the desirable goal of responsible democratic principles that recognize the sovereignty of the people's votes. The media, Agba points out, should aim towards getting all political actors to truly believe in one Nigeria, to accept the rules which are made to guide the conduct of elections. These form the purview of media self-examination. Agba (2007:71), acknowledges the fact that electioneering campaign for political power in Nigeria has become part of the problem of national cohesion and integration. It has therefore, become “part of a profound socio-political rot”. Electioneering campaign has become part and parcel of national development, in that most often, it has become “intriguing and intricate and bloody”, as ethnic rivalry and struggle to get big chunk of the national cake is a recurrent political experience”. It is also an acknowledged fact that the mass media has a very important role to play in channeling electioneering campaign to serve the goal of national development. This is because the mass media is described as “a pivot of social interaction, seeking to use the power of mass information to solve the problem of national cohesion and integration, which are both critical to the growth of healthy electioneering campaign” (Agba: 2007:69). But to achieve the above objective, the mass media in Nigeria needs to solve its internal problem of cohesion and integration; “for there are as many media houses as there are many political interests. There are therefore, external and internal obstacles in the realization of the positive role of the media in electioneering campaign. In all, it is argued that the media require a political ideology that guarantees freedom of speech and access to information. This is particularly true as noted by Kalu (1985:14), that We can depend on free speech and democratic ideas only if we accept that free flow of information is necessary for the propagation of political freedom especially during election. This argument hinges on the fact that without a free press, the reporter becomes a public servant, a stooge of the powerful and a robot who acts out the scripts of callous politicians. Under this scenario, the media fails to become worthy representatives of the people. Apart from the issue of critical self-examination of the role of the media at elections, the media also shares in the responsibility of channeling the electoral process towards the desirable goal of national development and integration. For instance, Kalu (1985:19), points out that “the ordinary expectation is that the mass media will focus on serious matters that portend serious consequences for the people and their political choices”. For Akpan, E. (1985) the media must clarify issues during campaigns, bring aspirants close to the electorate, and teach the differences between party and candidate to enable the electorate make a wise choice. If this is not done “political reporting will lose much of its luster if it does not deal adequately with such issues as national problems, policy guidelines, party programme and government performance” (Kalu 1985:19). The mass media should enable the electorate to analyse campaign messages of politicians. Media focus should be to set the correct political agenda for the audience and not allowing the politicians to do so Ciroma, A (2005) Journalistic writing … commentaries, editorials, articles, reviews, columns, broadcast discussion … should raise and answer pertinent question that help to elucidate confusing issues, particularly those relating to policies and leadership… . Agba argues that questions like these and more could suggest workable techniques that can help Nigerians deal decisively with problems of corruption, ethnicism, lack of accountability and weak checks and balances in government. As pointed out earlier, the political trend in Nigeria with regard to the electoral process demands specialist political reporters. This should cover critical areas as knowledge of legal issues in campaign reporting, investigation and balanced judgement that allows the establishment of gathered facts. It is on this note of expertise that general reporting can be said to have become increasingly handicapped. As Louis (1971:151) puts it, thorough voters’ guidance should be the heart of campaign reporting by the mass media. To achieve this objective, the reporter must do with absolute detachment. He should instead carry critical and objective analysis of candidates with the aim of educating the electorate. In this capacity of impartiality, the campaign reporter acts as a catalyst between the candidates and the electorate. Becker, S. and Lower, E (1976) gives an articulate summary of the functions of the mass media in electioneering campaign as follows” reporting and interpreting events, defining issues, portraying personalities, investigating support” There is a very serious angle to the public enlightenment dimension of the role of the mass media in the electoral process. As Agba, P.C (2007) observes, people are eager to join the plethora of electoral malpractices without realizing that it is they who will be victims of bad government resulting from involvement in electoral fraud. Agba, P.C (2007) argues that 43% of our population is still illiterate, a rather large group which requires the special attention of the media. For this group, it is necessary that every electoral information be repeatedly disseminated and in the local languages too. This is why the media must go beyond the mere dissemination of information and engage in political education. For example, it is necessary to educate non-voting population on why they cannot vote instead of scaring them with numerous penalties for breaching the electoral law. As for the voting population, voter education programs must be user friendly, especially for the disadvantaged groups like the non-literate and physically incapacitated. The programs of voters’ education must offer opportunities for all issues at stake in election to be highlighted and explained. These include basic issues such as who can vote or contest an election, date of the election and where to vote. Iredia (2007), opines that electoral commission does not have the capability to undertake voter education. According to him, there is a big difference between voter education and the image-making ventures which many information departments of electoral commissions undertake. “The powerful channels, the most potent strategies and the technical format for effective public enlightenment belong to the media”. The media’s role in an election also extends to monitoring of the electoral process. To this extent, media’s emphasis should no longer be limited on when and how the leaders voted or were registered. How the entire process fared would serve a greater public interest. For instance, were the arrangements for each exercise adequate? Were people registered or able to vote? For example, Nigerians have till date not known how the Electoral Commission in 1991 in respect of the delimitation of electoral constituencies arrived at 5, 575 wards for the country. This has led to the fear in certain circles that there is what is known as Gerrymandering in Nigeria’s electoral process, a feature in which a favoured candidate has more election centres in his areas of strength while very few centres are allocated to areas where his opponent has his main supporters.

**CHAPTER THREE**

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

* 1. **Research design**

The researcher used descriptive research survey design in building up this project work the choice of this research design was considered appropriate because of its advantages of identifying attributes of a large population from a group of individuals. The design was suitable for the study as the study sought to examine the role of the media in political development in Nigeria.

* 1. **Sources of data collection**

Data were collected from two main sources namely:

(i)Primary source and

(ii)Secondary source

**Primary source:**

These are materials of statistical investigation which were collected by the research for a particular purpose. They can be obtained through a survey, observation questionnaire or as experiment, the researcher has adopted the questionnaire method for this study.

**Secondary source:**

These are data from textbook Journal handset etc. they arise as by-products of the same other purposes. Example administration, various other unpublished works and write ups were also used.

* 1. **Population of the study**

Population of a study is a group of persons or aggregate items, things the researcher is interested in getting information on the study the role of the media in political development in Nigeria. 200 staff of silver bird television was selected randomly by the researcher as the population of the study.

* 1. **Sample and sampling procedure**

Sample is the set people or items which constitute part of a given population sampling. Due to large size of the target population, the researcher used the Taro Yamani formula to arrived at the sample population of the study.

n= N

 1+N(e)2

n= 200

1+200(0.05)2

= 200

1+200(0.0025)

= 200 200

1+0.5 = 1.5 = 133.

**3.5 Instrument for data collection**

The major research instrument used is the questionnaires. This was appropriately moderated. The secretaries were administered with the questionnaires to complete, with or without disclosing their identities. The questionnaire was designed to obtain sufficient and relevant information from the respondents. The primary data contained information extracted from the questionnaires in which the respondents were required to give specific answer to a question by ticking in front of an appropriate answer and administered the same on staff of the two organizations: The questionnaires contained structured questions which was divided into sections A and B.

* 1. **Validation of the research instrument**

The questionnaire used as the research instrument was subjected to face its validation. This research instrument (questionnaire) adopted was adequately checked and validated by the supervisor his contributions and corrections were included into the final draft of the research instrument used.

* 1. **Method of data analysis**

The data collected was not an end in itself but it served as a means to an end. The end being the use of the required data to understand the various situations it is with a view to making valuable recommendations and contributions. To this end, the data collected has to be analysis for any meaningful interpretation to come out with some results. It is for this reason that the following methods were adopted in the research project for the analysis of the data collected. For a comprehensive analysis of data collected, emphasis were laid on the use of absolute numbers frequencies of responses and percentages. Answers to the research questions were provided through the comparison of the percentage of workers response to each statement in the questionnaire related to any specified question being considered.

Frequency in this study refers to the arrangement of responses in order of magnitude or occurrence while percentage refers to the arrangements of the responses in order of their proportion.

The simple percentage method is believed to be straight forward easy to interpret and understand method.

The researcher therefore choose the simple percentage as the method to use.

The formula for percentage is shown as.

% = f/N x 100/1

where f = frequency of respondents response

N = Total Number of response of the sample

100 = Consistency in the percentage of respondents for each item contained in questions.

**CHAPTER FOUR**

**PRESENTATION ANALYSIS INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

**4.1 Introduction**

Efforts will be made at this stage to present, analyze and interpret the data collected during the field survey. This presentation will be based on the responses from the completed questionnaires. The result of this exercise will be summarized in tabular forms for easy references and analysis. It will also show answers to questions relating to the research questions for this research study. The researcher employed simple percentage in the analysis.

**Data Analysis**

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed in tabular form with simple percentage for easy understanding.

A total of 133(one hundred and thirty three) questionnaires were distributed and 133 questionnaires were returned.

**Gender distribution of the respondents.**

Table I

|  |
| --- |
| **Gender distribution of the respondents** |
| Response | Frequency | Percent | Valid Percent | Cumulative Percent |
| Valid | Male | 77 | 57.9 | 57.9 | 57.9 |
| Female | 56 | 42.1 | 42.1 | 100.0 |
| Total | 133 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

From the above table it shows that 57.9% of the respondents were male while 42.1% of the respondents were female.

**The positions held by respondents**

Table ii

|  |
| --- |
| **The positions held by respondents** |
| **Response** | **Frequency** | **Percent** | **Valid Percent** | **Cumulative Percent** |
| **Valid** | Presenters  | 37 | 27.8 | 27.8 | 27.8 |
| Journalists  | 50 | 37.6 | 37.6 | 65.4 |
| Managers  | 23 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 82.7 |
| Broadcasters  | 23 | 17.3 | 17.3 | 100.0 |
| Total | 133 | 100.0 | 100.0 |  |

 The above tables shown that 37 respondents which represents 27.8% of the respondents are presenters, 50 respondents which represents 37.6 % are journalists, 23 respondents which represents 17.3% of the respondents are senior managers, while 23 respondents which represents 17.3% of the respondents are broadcasters.

**TEST OF HYPOTHESES**

Media hardly create awareness among masses in the course of elections.

**Table III**

|  |
| --- |
| **Broadcast media hardly create awareness among masses in the course of elections.** |
| **Response**  | **Observed N** | **Expected N** | **Residual** |
| Agreed | 40 | 33.3 | 6.8 |
| strongly agreed | 50 | 33.3 | 16.8 |
| Disagreed | 26 | 33.3 | -7.3 |
| strongly disagreed | 17 | 33.3 | -16.3 |
| Total | 133 |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Test Statistics** |
|  | Broadcast media hardly create awareness among masses in the course of elections. |
| Chi-Square | 19.331a |
| Df | 3 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 33.3. |

Decision rule:

There researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that state that Media hardly create awareness among masses in the course of elections, as the calculated value of 19.331 is greater than the critical value of 7.82

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that state thatThe media help to create awareness among the masses during elections.

**TEST OF HYPOTHESIS TWO**

The media does not reduce political apathy during elections.

|  |
| --- |
| Table V: **The broadcast media does not reduce political apathy during elections.** |
| **Response**  | **Observed N** | **Expected N** | **Residual** |
| Yes | 73 | 44.3 | 28.7 |
| No | 33 | 44.3 | -11.3 |
| Undecided | 27 | 44.3 | -17.3 |
| Total | 133 |  |  |

|  |
| --- |
| **Test Statistics** |
|  | The broadcst media does not reduce political apathy during elections. |
| Chi-Square | 28.211a |
| Df | 2 |
| Asymp. Sig. | .000 |
| a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected frequencies less than 5. The minimum expected cell frequency is 44.3. |

**Decision rule:**

There researcher therefore reject the null hypothesis that state that The media does not reduce political apathy during elections, as the calculated value of 28.211 is greater than the critical value of 5.99

Therefore the alternate hypothesis is accepted that state that the media help to reduce political apathy among electorates.

**CHAPTER FIVE**

**SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

**5.1 Introduction**

It is important to ascertain that the objective of this study was to ascertain the influence of the broadcast media in political development in Nigeria. In the preceding chapter, the relevant data collected for this study were presented, critically analyzed and appropriate interpretation given. In this chapter, certain recommendations made which in the opinion of the researcher will be of benefits in addressing the challenges of the media in developing Nigerian politics.

**5.2 Summary**

There is no doubt that sustainable political governance in Nigeria can be achieved, but the strategies for executing it should include the contributions of independent, robust, and free news sources capable of informing the citizens and challenging their political thoughts to participate in democratizing their political system. Nigeria is a dynamic and heterogeneous nation; therefore, it requires a vibrant and vigorous press that can effectively address and evaluate the nation’s complex political, tribal, and leadership issues. As the country prepares to elect new political leaders in 2015, a fundamental focus in the nation’s development scheme should be to improve and empower communication channels and to establish a credible and responsible relationship between news sources and political leaders. Evidently, Nigeria’s most critical need, as a pluralistic nation, is the promotion of political sophistication and socio-political integration that will unite all ethnic/tribal groups. Unfortunately, recent political and tribal issues in some parts of the country over several months indicate that the country still faces disturbing situations reminiscent of the past three decades. Prominent among these problems are institutionalized ethnicity, internecine class/elite interest, tribal disunity and warfare, unequal treatment of citizens in political appointments, and the devastating absence of dedicated political leadership. More than anything else, political governance urgently needs the cultivation of a national awareness that transcends parochialism and selfish ethnic considerations. To establish a responsible governance structure, elected leaders cannot divorce the press from its constructive role in the quest for a long-term development agenda. Therefore, the press participation-based integrative model is a significant value proposition because it provides a balanced approach needed for national and political development to exist.

**5.3 Conclusion**

This study has focuses on to the role of the media in political development with emphasis in Nigeria. In doing so it has examined the various obstacles that have affected the performance of the media in Nigeria’s electoral process. While in a sense it can be said that some improvements have been recorded by Nigerian media in the critical area of electioneering campaign since 1993, however, from what we have said, the Nigerian media may need to improve their coverage of politics and elections. But any assessment of the media must take into consideration the legal, normative and economic factors which constrain their performance. We need to note that although media functions are the same everywhere, they are not and cannot be performed the same way in every society. Indeed the performance of each nation’s institutions is contingent upon the nation’s level of development, its literacy rate, its culture and general disposition. To this extent, every nation gets the media it deserves. It therefore, implies that the media in any country are propelled not only by news content but more by societal values. The Nigerian Constitution does not empower the media.

**5.4 Recommendations**

Haven completed the study, the following recommendations were put forward by the researcher; Political parties in Nigeria should give due attention to the use of new media for the dissemination of political activities. The new media should be regularly used to carry out political activities. Communication is more effective when it is done on a regular basis. There is the need to combine the new media with other means of communication, especially interpersonal communication. This is because, interpersonal communication brings the communicator and the audience together, in a face to face communication, thereby making the communication to be more effective. There is the need for political parties in Nigeria to always combine different advertising strategies when carrying out political advertising. Testimonials and sloganeering may be combined to make an advert to be more effective.

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