Review

News Media and Security in Nigeria: A Theoretical Analysis

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The basic functions of news media are to inform, educate and entertain. Through these functions, they sensitize, enlighten and influence members of the public to participate actively in developmental activities and otherwise causes. The information disseminated by the news media could be harmful or useful to the society. This study argues that news reporters have a lot of power. What they write can influence decisions, help form public opinions of people and contribute to the general attitude of readers and life in general. As indicated by Friday Je (1986), the mass media have the power and capability to bring about change in society for the improvement of the quality of life and "because the media have this ability to report and inform so effectively, it could be said with great confidence that as change agents, they have the power to alter, even where resistance is strong the way of life of a community positively or negatively." The study concludes that the mass media can contribute efficiently to national security, only if they perform their duties in accordance with the provisions of the constitution and the social responsibilities of the press. It recommends that security operatives should work in collaboration with media practitioners as watchdogs. Until news media rise to expectations and use their powers judiciously, national security will continue to be threatened.

INTRODUCTION

The role of news media in Nigeria's national security cannot be overemphasized. The primary functions of the media in any society are to inform, educate and entertain. Beyond these, they serve as watchdogs of the society, agenda setters and force multipliers. Through these functions, the mass media sensitize, enlighten and persuade members of the public to participate actively in developmental activities. To a large extent, the ability of the media to effectively carry out these functions depends on the amount of freedom they enjoy in societies where they exist and operate. However, press freedom is very crucial to the effectiveness of media in any society. The information disseminated by the news media could be either harmful or useful to the society. Sambe (2008, p.27) affirms that "as a reporter, you have a lot of power.

What you write can influence decisions, help form public opinions of people and contribute to the general attitude of your readers and life in general."

The mass media have the power and ability to contribute enormously to national security, and this can be achieved through the observance of professional ethics and in accordance with the provisions of the constitution. In other words, for the media to contribute meaningfully to national security there is the need for strict adherence to professional ethics of journalism profession. The media are watchdogs of the society. They set agenda for public discussions on issues of national interest. Sambe (2008) cited in Asemah (2011) notes that the mass media in Nigeria set agenda for national discourse. They have the capacities to

manipulate vision and get the people constantly fixed to issues that are given prominence in their agenda. The issues they give prominence are those issues we worry about. According to Sambe, "the press is a product of mass opinion." In a similar vein, Neuman cited in Asemah, submits that "to a large extent, it is the media which create opinions." The media affect people's thinking and perceptions on issues of national interest through their "agenda setting" power. Individuals are bound to form different opinions on such issues either positively or negatively. Ate (2008, p.81-82) remarks that "one of the basic assumptions about the media is that the mass media have an important influence on peoples' lives and sometimes change their beliefs and opinions." Daramola (2003) cited in Ate, points out that "a whole nation could become revulsed and react adversely to some national issues. The media can induce panic especially in periods of insecurity." Okunna (1999, p.115) postulates that "mass media serve as forums for public debate and discussion of important issues in the society. This is one of the ways in which the mass media help in the formation of public opinion, which is made up of what the majority of the people in a society think about a particular issue of public importance."

In a nutshell, the media shape the direction of individuals' thinking on issues that concern and affect them in the society. Akpede (2011, p.34) observes that "journalism as a profession has been regarded as the 'fourth estate of the realm' and some regard it as the 'watchdog.' The profession stands out clearly among other professions. It possesses the potential power to influence, not only the individual, but also the society as a whole." Best and Obateru (2011, p.35-36) states that "the news media are powerful agents of change and agenda setting in society and a major source of information for people the world over."

Because of their special power to affect the way people think, feel and behave, the mass media have been credited with incredible persuasive ability to change attitudes and behaviours. Like a bullet, the message would be received by the individual directly and it would have an immediate and powerful effect on the individual, persuading him or her to behave exactly the way the message advocated. This process is called the hypodermic syringe or needle theory because it is believed that the media message acts like the content of a hypodermic syringe, which, when emptied into an audience, would have an instant effect like the drug from a real syringe. Mass communication messages are passive, and the mass media can, therefore, control and influence members of the audience. The mass media are powerful and persuasive, and members of the mass communication audience are seen as weak and in danger of having their values and behaviour changed by mass media messages (Okunna, 1999). Owolabi (2008) cited in Owolabi and O'neill (2013, p.246) corroborates

this point when he notes that "decisions are made on the basis of the quality of available information at ones disposal."

Freedom of expression, including the freedom to hold on to one's opinion and to receive and impart ideas and information are fundamental human rights. It is also the right of citizens to be informed about the activities of the ruling elites, as this enhances accountability and transparency in governance and promotes democracy. Conversely, certain information about the affairs and administration of government are kept from the knowledge of pressmen and general public for the purpose of protecting the sovereignty and security of the state. In this connection, section 39 subsection 3 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria provides as follows:

Nothing in this section shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society –
(a)   for the purpose of preventing the disclosure of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of courts or regulating telephony, wireless broadcasting, television or the exhibition of cinematograph films; or
(b)   imposing restrictions upon persons holding office under the Government of the Federation or of a State, members of the armed forces of the Federation or members of Nigeria Police Force or other Government security agencies established by law.

Conceptualizing Mass Media and National Security

The media are very important assets a society should have. The mass media are by definition, the whole gamut of information dissemination institutions and agencies in a political system. They operate by dispensing information to the populace on all aspects and actions of state and governance (Utor, 2000 cited in Abagen, 2009, p.42). According to Asemah (2011, p.18), mass media could be described as "the channels or technological devices through which messages are conveyed to a large and heterogeneous audience. They are the vehicles that are used for conveying messages from a source to a large destination. In addition, mass media are the devices for moving messages across distance or time to accomplish mass communication."

In essence, mass media constitute all the means through which messages are relayed from different aspects of the society such as education, entertainment, health, politics, economy, and so on, to a large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience at the same time.

Security and national security have been defined by different scholars. Walter Lippmann (1943) says a nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its

legitimate interests to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war. Arnold Wolfers (1962) observes that security, in an objective sense, measures the absence of threats to acquired values, in a subjective sense, the absence of fear that such values will be attacked. *The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1968) describes security as the ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external threats. According to Amos Jordan and William Taylor (1981), national security, however, has a more extensive meaning than protection from physical harm; it also implies protection, through a variety of means, of vital economic and political interests, the loss of which could threaten fundamental values and the vitality of the state. Charles Maier (1990) notes that national security is best defined as the capacity to control those domestic and foreign conditions that the public opinion of a given community believes necessary to enjoy its own self-determination or autonomy, prosperity and well-being (cited in Olayiwola, 2013, p.31). Olayiwola explains that "it is now widely acknowledged that without a safe and secure environment, there can be neither sustainable, poverty reducing economic and social development nor political development. Therefore, the mass media need to cover all the aspects of security mentioned above in their reportage and coverage."

According to Ali (2013), national security means the protection of the lives, rights, dignity and property of citizens. It also means the protection of resources, cultural integrity, territory, sovereignty and lawful institutions of a country. The aim of national security is to secure the just and equitable living conditions for all the citizens of the country. But the leadership of the country (Nigeria) has failed in this respect. Security includes the means at the disposal of the government for protecting the state and its citizens from external aggression and internal insurrection. The state exists for the interest of defense, public safety, public morality, and so on. The freedom of expression and the press is an aspect of national security and it is necessary for a true democracy. Accordingly, Nigeria's national security means the protection of its resources, territory, sovereignty and lawful institutions of the country. The aim of national security is to secure the just and equitable living conditions of the country.

National security is the aggregation of the security interest of the individuals, communities, ethnic groups, political entities and institutions which inhabit the territory of our great country, Nigeria. The primary objectives of national security are: to strengthen the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to advance her interest and objectives, to contain instability, control crime, eliminate corruption, enhance genuine development progress and growth, improve the welfare and wellbeing and quality of life of every citizen (Obasanjo, 2001 cited in Ali 2013).

Shinkaiye (2004, p.4-17) defines national security as "the protection and preservation of the territory, sovereignty and stability of a country from threats. It entails the freedom to pursue its core values and interest without let or hindrance." Nnoli (2006, p.16) corroborates Shinkaiye's point when he notes that, "national security is a cherished value associated with the physical safety of individuals, groups or nation-states, together with a similar safety of their other most cherished values. It denotes freedom from threats, anxiety and danger." Nnoli argues that leadership and good governance eradicate insecurity of nations and sees this as a "re-conceptualization of national security." The author states further that this re-conceptualization of national security moves it away from a narrow focus on defense against external threats and anchors it on threats from domestic environment… it includes within it elements that are usually associated with good governance, human rights and democracy, what the Nigerian Constitution refers to as the fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy.

Bamidele (2012) remarks that national security should be seen, in the sense of protection of the polity through ensuring that the national interest is known, sustained, promoted and preserved. In a division of labour setting, national security is ensured through security agencies. He adds that national security is the decision-making process concerned with the identification of potentials and actual threats, and the mobilization of resources in frame that promptly ensures the safety and stability of the nation state, while simultaneously, enhancing the promotion of national development. According to him, the issue of national interest is settled in chapter two of the1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, as amended. The chapter deals with fundamental objectives and directive principles of the state policy. It deals with fundamental obligations of the government - the government and the people, political objectives, educational objectives and foreign policy objectives. Other issues that deal with fundamental objectives and directive principles of state policy are environmental objectives, directive on Nigerian cultures, obligations of the mass media, national ethics and duties of the citizens. All these are made up of the national interest.

News Media and Security in Nigeria

From independence to the present democratic dispensation, Nigeria has witnessed series of ethno-religious and politically-motivated crises. This has been one of the major causes of the country's political instability and economic challenges. Nwabueze and Ebeze (2013) point out that once the word "insecurity" is mentioned while referring to Nigeria, the first words to come to mind are *Boko Haram*, kidnapping, Niger Delta crises, and ethno-religious crises. These words constitute

a brand used in identifying the nature of insecurity peculiar to Nigeria among other African nations. Before the public manifestation of *Boko Haram* terrorist activities in 2009, Nigeria had been witnessing series of kidnapping of mostly foreign expatriates by militants in the Niger Delta region of Nigeria. The militants were said to be agitating against what they saw as injustice against their region. They were initially operating in the creeks but once their activities extended to the streets, they constituted palpable insecurity in the south southern region of Nigeria. Nwabueze and Ebeze explain further that, the state of insecurity in Nigeria is made obvious by the alarming trend of anti-social acts prevalent in the nation which in the not-so-distant past, were unthinkable and could not be associated with the country. Acts of terrorism by the *Boko Haram* sect, incidents of kidnapping in the Southeast and South South parts of the country, including agitations by militants in the Niger Delta have become "brands" of crime that have given a negative identity to Nigeria. This is in addition to other conventional crimes - theft, arson, violent ethno-religious conflicts etc. - which the law enforcement agents battle daily. These acts particularly those that involve threat to life have contributed in creating an alarming state of insecurity in some parts of the country. Various reasons have been adduced as the root cause of violence across the nation. Among these are the multidimensional, multicultural personality of Nigeria, corruption, poor governance, unemployment, mismanagement of diversity and conflict issues in the country.

In the past, relationship between the military and the media had been marked by periods of distrust particularly during the Buhari – Indiagbon and the Babaginda – Abacha era. But since the return of civil rule in 1999, there has been cordial relationship with the media without harassment and intimidation. With the recent clamp down and seizures of copies of newspapers, the relationship have again suffered some major setback and indeed reminding us of the "dark past" of the military and obnoxious decree 4 of 1984. The media have increasingly become important parties in the fight against insurgents because of the growing importance of information management in warfare whether they are non conventional as the case of *Boko Haram*. Furthermore, the military means and objectives of winning the war against terrorism have changed dramatically. The mass media, particularly the press have undergone some transformation in recent years. These developments cannot be under estimated, from 24 hours rolling news stations, on- line media platforms and websites the Nigerian discerning public and indeed the world has greater sources of information more than ever before, and the military has a more complex task in information management and intelligence rather than clamping on the press. Therefore the military and the media must build an enduring partnership and consensus to address the new

realities of war-reporting in the interest of national security (Orvwuje, 2015).

The need for emphasis on conflict and terrorism reporting in the interest of the public is essential to any discussion on the role of media in combating insecurity in Nigeria. The media have been accused of contributing in worsening the state of insecurity and conflicts in Nigeria due to reportage primarily aimed at maximizing profit and increasing audience base. After an analysis of media coverage of diversity and conflict issues by various scholars, Pate (2011) cited in Nwabueze and Ebeze (2013, p.867-868) listed out common practices adopted by the media which tend to contribute negatively to crises situations as follows: "selective reporting of prejudicial stereotypes about groups and individuals;" "reporting inter group conflicts out of their fundamental sociological, economic, political and other contexts;" "shallow and episodic coverage;" "total blackout on some groups, individuals or communities;" "use of inflammatory, misleading and sensational headlines to attract sales;" "publishing inflammatory statements against some people or groups as letters to the editor;" "attributing statements by individuals to groups making generalized statements not supported facts," and so on. These are activities which the media need to desist from to make meaningful impact in combating insecurity in Nigeria; otherwise they (mass media) will continue to be seen as fueling insecurity.

Factors Impeding Media's Performance in National Security

The mass media are indispensable tools used for nation building. Governments can hardly survive without effective use of the mass media. The role of media in Nigeria's national security is very crucial. In fact, they are key players in the arena of national security. Ali (2013) explains that the media function as watchdogs capable of blowing the whistle to call attention to serious national issues. This implies a clear recognition of the fact that the mass media play an important role on issues of national security. The power of the media to decide what the people should read, see or hear has never been in doubt. What has been in the centre of controversy is the capacity of those in whose hands reside such enormous powers to use that power judiciously and in public interest. Media professionals have the options to use the power of media instruments in their hands either to serve the nation or indulge in self-propelled interest. The media ought to be objective as they carry out their functions.

From Ali's assertion, it is evident that the concentration of the media in the hands of few individuals in the society, also known as "monopoly of the media," limits the role they ought to play in national security. Wali (2003) in Ali (2013) comments that, unfortunately however, the media

which ought serve as the major stakeholders in ensuring the security of the state sometimes trivialize this very sensitive issue. The Nigerian media are yet to exhibit maturity. Issues that affect the general well-being of the people of the country but which can cause disaffection and disunity should be de- emphasized or played down. The reverse has been the case in many Nigerian publications wishing to make quick sales on the platform of sensationalism and journalist scoops.

Udeajah (2004) illuminates that the existence of a state organ capable of persuasive power under the monopoly of the political elites led to the use and misuse of such powers for partisan ends. Political elites sought the establishment and operation of the regional and state broadcast stations primarily for self-aggrandizement rather than for common interest, and often to partisan objectives masquerading for national interest. Udeajah explain further in the following words:

The supposed policies to aid national integration had the contrary effects. For instance, the inadequacies of the strategy were glaring in the area of control of mass media. Before now, all the major broadcast media were owned and controlled either by the regional or federal governments. All were used to fight inter-ethnic and regional quarrels. It is argued that if there had been a well-articulated national ideology expressing the hopes and aspirations of the nation as well as the nation's perception of itself and social reality, the broadcast media would have easily seen their responsibility as consisting of disseminating that ideology. Unfortunately, the absence of a national ideology resulted in the broadcast stations constructing their different versions of reality dominated by parochial propensities. The bitter fact is that narrow partisan and sectional interests exploited the poor situation to sow seeds of discord and disintegration.

Akinwale (2010, p.50) lends credence to Udeajah's assertion when he explains that "press organizations which are expected to promote democracy and be promoted by democracy, may also be deployed to protect elites interests to the detriment of the larger society." Olayiwola (1991) observes that this situation (of partisan and regional press) helped in the intensification of old ethnic antagonisms and the atmosphere of political communication seethed with bitter rivalry and enmity. The press openly supported one political party against another (during the second republic), and fuelled the embers of tribalism, sensationalism, and ethnic chauvinism, all of which culminated in fragmentation and disintegration that again threatened the unity and stability of the Nigerian state.

In situations where the mass media are used as tools for the promotion of sectional interests, rather than for the promotion of national unity, peace, development and integration, the rate of crimes and insecurity will increase tremendously on a daily basis. The use of mass media for the solidification of ethnic and religious sentiments result to the political and economic instability of the country, thereby stunting national development. Ali (2013) supports this assertion when he notes that in recent times the Nigerian media tended to pose inherent dangers to national security in connection with politics, religion, ethnicity, power and revenue sharing which are crucial to a stable and enduring democracy. On the political sphere, newsmen are expected to report about the activities of the politicians and are expected to feed the public with objective information. The newsmen are expected to nose around for information beyond the ovation at political rallies. Mass media are expected to reflect balanced views of the opposing party. But most media houses do focus attention mostly on the ruling and bigger parties to the detriment of the smaller ones. Although politicians employ newsmen to give them publicity, the newsmen are expected by the members of the public to do what is right. The mass media could constitute threats to security where they collaborate with the political and bourgeoisie class to further marginalize and exploit the citizenry. This causes serious problems of poverty, illiteracy, ignorance, diseases, which have brought about the incidence of armed robbery and other violent crimes, youth militarism, ethnic, chauvinism, religious bigotry. Media professionals have indulged in self aggrandizement.

Akpan, cited in Ali (2013, p.59) writes that, "National security is threatened by mass media as the media are increasingly internationalized in content. Developing countries are expressing concern about the possible negative impact of the media on their cultural uniqueness." In a democratic society, the media have a responsibility to subject political leaders and security agencies to public scrutiny and to question their policies and competences. It is important, therefore, that the media and the security agencies work together to educate the public, question government about security policies, and hold leaders to account. Independent and socially responsible media facilitate democratic governance. The media can help expose wrong-doings, identify policy alternatives and enable a society to make informed choices about contending issues. The mass media face challenges in performing these functions vis-à-vis the security sector.

Another major obstacle to effective oversight of the security sector is lack of transparency and restrictions placed on the reporting of the activities, budgets and expenditures of the security apparatus. The media, along with independent civil society actors, play vital roles in monitoring security institutions and therefore, helping to ensure that they are effective and accountable. Mass media are vital elements in shaping public debate on security policy and decision-making. They have the capability of educating the general public to follow politics

and policies. However, a careful balance needs to be struck. Another element of the media-security sector relationship is the putative and real impact of public opinion on policy formation and decision-making. According to Martin (2001), public opinion is generally not taken seriously in Canada's security and defence community. Despite a perfunctory nod in the direction of public opinion, there is in practice little effort by Canada's defence department to probe the extent of public support for various options concerning its defence and security. Martin adds that even if one cannot hope to train and certify thirty million experts in foreign and defence policy in the coming years, the public's preferences should not be dismissed as mere whims and moods. It is incumbent upon the policy makers and the broader security policy community to engage the public in a dialogue and to use the available channels of communication – including, of course, the media – to explain the linkages between the aims of policy, which are widely shared by all citizens, and the means to achieve these aims, which are often matters of contentious debate. Two important trends affect this. First, when the media tend to rely on official sources to validate claims to objectivity in normal conditions. Relying on experts drawn from the establishment (in terms of September 11, most experts are drawn from the military and intelligence communities. Some expansion of the elite debate since war became likely). Both of these do not meet democratic standards. Secondly, when the media move away from objectivity and professional detachment in times of tragedy, danger and threats to national security, the security sector intersects with both.

When dealing with highly specialised subjects such as the military/defence, intelligence and national security, or law enforcement and public security, journalists ideally should receive some specialised training in the subjects. Although journalists increasingly have taken courses at university in other subjects and standards of professionalism are slowly rising, this is not always the case. In many smaller media outlets, journalists are expected to cover a growing range of subjects. With the exception of large media organisations such as the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), the major US networks, and other major national papers and networks, few newspapers or local television stations have a military expert or intelligence expert on permanent staff. In some societies with a well-developed media sector, tensions may arise between some of the media commentators and the government when important policy decisions are made without much public debate. In the absence of government-provided information on policy options and the parameters of the issue, and without hard questions asked by the political opposition and legislature, the media may fill the gap by taking the policy on as a major point of focus (Porch 2001). Another problem that arises is when security institutions focus on

the positive to the extent that they appear to be making available only "sanitised news." One example was provided by the Canadian Department of National Defence following the Somalia crisis and the extended period of public criticism of the department. When a government department maintains a "bunker mentality," tightly controlling any information that is released, being very selective about what information is released, and carefully crafting each public statement to present events in the best possible light, it starts to lose credibility with journalists and with the public (Hobson 2000).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

When media expose wrong-doing or misconduct, they function as watchdogs and mechanisms of promoting accountability in governance. Beyond the watchdog function, by presenting accurate, balanced and timely information on issues of interest to the society, journalists help citizens in making informed decisions concerning who governs them and how they are governed. Journalism provides channels of communication in the society, helping to educate, inform, and exchange information between the public and its leaders. Journalism thus plays a vital role in identifying what is at stake in a particular policy or decision, in framing issues for the public, analysing the issues and identifying possible solutions and alternatives. To the extent that the media constitute an essential element of informed public and responsible governance, it deserves deeper and more sustained study by those in the business of democracy promotion and good governance.

As noted earlier, journalists encounter several challenges in reporting security-related issues and performing their watchdog function. Journalists need some measures of protection so that they are not unjustly accused of libel, sued or imprisoned for "insulting top government officials and high-profiled politicians" when they investigate and bring to limelight, the corrupt practices of these individuals. Watchdog journalism also requires that the media should enjoy economic independence and freedom; heavy reliance by a media outlet on state-funded advertising is a source of leverage that can be used to stifle critical reporting. In many democratic societies, the watchdog role of the media with regard to security and intelligence agencies is even weaker due to the comparatively few journalists who specialised in the field.

Recent events surrounding the war in Iraq and the war on terrorism underscore the vital role of the media as watchdog of democracy, and the essential contribution of the journalists to helping citizens make informed decisions concerning who governs them and how they are governed. While the obstacles and challenges to producing accurate, balanced and timely reports are

greater in the security field than in others, so too are the potential costs of failure.

Factors such as ownership control, commercialisation, ethnicity, religion, legal constraints, lack of press freedom, politicization and monetization of the activities of the media, among others, impede the Nigerian media's expected role in national security.

To enhance media's role in national security, security operatives should work in collaboration with media practitioners as watchdogs. The media should rise to their expectation and use their powers judiciously or else national security will continue to be threatened. Newsmen ought to feed the audience with information that can persuade and influence their attitudes towards promoting peace and development in the society.

Mass media and the general public must rise to the challenge of combating the rising security challenges in Nigeria. Both parties should embark on communication–based approaches that would effectively stigmatize such acts in the society. While the journalists and other media workers are urged to engage in responsible journalism committed towards discouraging the acts of terrorism in the nation, the public should step-up the use of citizens or civic journalism through the mass media as a way of complementing media workers' role in exposing and combating insecurity in the country. In addition, the welfare of journalists should be given serious attention, especially the provision of insurance package which would encourage them to engage in dare-devil conflict reporting in the interest of the public. "A journalist, whose take–home pay is nothing to write home about, coupled with the irregular nature of the pay, would not have the zeal to engage in investigations he feels constitutes a risk to his life." Regular workshops on conflict reporting, journalism ethics, mass media in a multi-cultural society, reporting terrorism, professionalism in journalism, among other topics are essential to continually keep media workers abreast with trends in mass media use in combating insecurity in Nigeria. This would ensure that the mass media are not used to worsen the problem of insecurity due to lack of knowledge on how to handle this specialized journalism area (Nwabueze and Ebeze, 2013).

As Olayiwola (2013) observes, the media should take cognizance of the fact that security is not just about the Army, the Navy, the Air force, the Police, the Customs, the Immigration, and so on, but also take into account the whole country's socio-political and economic systems, researches and all activities that go into normal civilian life. The mass media should also cover the totality of security sector and security community, non-statutory security institutions and civil societies, as well as the internal and international processes that are germane to security and insecurity issues including the major aspects of regionalization and globalization of insecurity.

To ensure the effective contribution of the Nigerian media in conflict resolution and the promotion of national security, the following recommendations will suffice: the mass media especially newspapers, radio and television broadcasting in Nigeria should be used to enhance and sustain the security of the nation. Areas of broadcasting that involve national security matters should be delineated from those that do not; the mass media should never be used as divisive instruments among the people of Nigeria but rather should be used for the promotion and consolidation of national unity and integration; there is also the need to integrate "Oramedia"- town crier system, folk theatre, traditional murals, and media, village squares, and market places, with modern media and employ them systematically for rural and urban security as well as for rural development projects and national development; the present concentration of mass media in the urban areas and the focus on security matters in one part of the country should be de-emphasized. Attention should not be limited to the Presidents, Governors, Ministers, Commissioners, National and State Legislators, Local Government and Party Chairmen in the coverage of news and reportage. Rural activities deserve equally adequate coverage and reportage. This is enjoined in the Constitution. After all, "source for the goose is source for the gander." Rural mass media should also be encouraged. Additionally, radio broadcasting should satisfy the needs of external audiences in accordance with Nigeria's foreign policy and national interest. There is a need for the establishment of television viewership and radio listenership centers in rural areas and the development of community based broadcast media should be encouraged (especially the establishment of radio); since the electronic media remains the most potent means of mass mobilization and socialization/education in any society today. Local language media should be developed and also, the utilization of local indigenous languages should be encouraged in media communication and information dissemination. After all, there is a Nigeria French Language Village in Badagry, Lagos and Arabic Language Village in Northern Nigeria (Olayiwola, 2013).

The media should purvey information with respect for human dignity. Such respect connotes the defence of national values. Information dissemination should be done without malice against a perceived enemy, such that the intention is to embarrass the person. The major aim of information dissemination should be to inform the people better and improve their lot. Gatekeepers must have a sense of national security and seek to improve on it at all times. Thus, whatever does not enhance the perpetration or perpetuation of our established values should be discarded. Gatekeepers must abide by the rule of law as well as the established ethics guiding their profession. All laws that hinder the performance of the duty of gatekeepers should be repudiated. It is however fitting to end this piece by quoting the maxim of Pope

Gringory XVI, as follows: "but if the truth causes a scandal, then let a scandal arise than the truth is abandoned. So go ahead, publish and broadcast it if it is the truth" (Ibagere, 2010, p.127).

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