

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MASS MEDIA COVERAGE OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS
FOR DEMOCRATIC SUSTENANCE IN NIGERIA**

BY

**AGBADU INNOCENT
ICT/2132060007**

**DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION, AUCHI
POLYTECHNIC, AUCHI**

November, 2022

**AN ASSESSMENT OF THE MASS MEDIA COVERAGE OF POLITICAL CAMPAIGNS
FOR DEMOCRATIC SUSTENANCE IN NIGERIA**

BY

**AGBADU INNOCENT
ICT/2132060007**

**A PROJECT SUBMITTED TO DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION,
SCHOOL OF INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY, AUCHI
POLYTECHNIC,
AUCHI**

**IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR
THE AWARD OF HIGHER NATIONAL DIPLOMA (HND)
IN MASS COMMUNICATION**

November, 2022

Declaration

I hereby declare that this study entitled “**An Assessment of the Mass Media Coverage of Political Campaigns for Democratic Sustenance in Nigeria**” was written by me and that it is the record of my own research. To the best of my knowledge, it has not been presented in any previous application for an academic award. All sources of information have been acknowledged using references.

Agbadu Innocent

Date

Approval

This project is approved based on the student's declaration and its compliance with the requirements of the Department of Mass Communication, Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Higher National Diploma (HND) in Mass Communication.

Mr. Afam Anikwe
(Project Supervisor)

Date

Mr. Joseph O. Ikerodah
(Head of Department)

Date

External Examiner

Date

Dedication

I dedicate this project to God Almighty the giver of life and request granter who has made the impossible to be possible in my life and to those who love to see the growth of young ones, encourage and stood by me during my academic pursuit.

Acknowledgements

Primarily I would thank God Almighty for being able to complete this project with success.

I would like to thank my project supervisor; Mr. Afam Anikwe whose valuable guidance has been the ones that helped me patched this project and make it full proof success his suggestions and his instructions has served as the major contributor towards the completion of the project.

In different respect, many people contributed to the success of this work. It is therefore impossible to thank all of them in this brief acknowledgement. But I will give special thanks to my siblings; especially Agbadu Moses, Agbadu Doris and Agbadu timothy.

Table of Contents

[illegible]

Abstract

This research assesses the mass media coverage of political campaigns for democratic sustenance in Nigeria. Four research questions guided the study. This project's theoretical framework is anchored on social responsibility theory. In carrying out this study, the survey research method was employed with a stratified sampling technique to elicit valid and reliable data from the respondents, thus, a questionnaire was used as an instrument for data collection. The study concludes that the media remains a cardinal institution for consolidating and extending Nigeria's young democracy, in view of their oversight functions with respect to the three arms of government as well as their own ranks and recommended the following; that the Federal government should be proactive in ensuring that the deadline set for broadcast stations in Nigeria to switch over transmission from analogue to digital service is achievable, that the media should pay more attention to the masses as social responsibility tenets suggests etc.

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Background to the Study

The Nigeria mass media since 1960 have played vital roles in not only performing their basic function of informing, educating or/and entertaining the masses but have also help in servicing the political sector. As simply put by Suarez (1978), in a democratic environment, the role of the press (mass media) extends beyond these basic functions. He however buttressed that media in addition to their basic roles have the responsibility of sustaining and nourishing the ideas of democratic ethos, and to constantly assure and guaranteed the protection of freedom of individuals and that of the media themselves, which is the heart of the popular participation in liberal democracies, (Isola, 2008).

More so, Nigeria democracy as birthed in October 1, 1960 has experience ups and downs which paved way for military intrusion in 1966, 1983, 1993. This however is not in line with “democracy”. According to Ranney, cited in Felix (2005), he defined democracy as “A form of government organized in accordance with the principles of popular sovereignty, popular consultation, political and economic equality and majority rule”. This is achieved through institutionalization of electoral processed principles of popular sovereignty, popular consultation, political and economic equality and majority rule.” This is achieved through institutionalization of an electoral process.

Shortly after the successful independence, the military intruded by taking over the government of the First Republic (1963) under the leadership of Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the Prime Minister, and Nnamdi Azikiwe, the President, due to incapability of both the politicians and their underdog media outfits. It could be recalled that the major reasons behind

the military takeover of the democratic government of the first republic were electoral malpractices, funds mismanagement and embezzlement which gave the military the impression that the civilians are incapable of piloting the affairs of Nigeria. Obaze and Ojo (2011) put that:

Even though it seems as if it was one side of the country against the other segment, the coupist leaders pledged to establish a strong and efficient government committed to a progressive programme and eventual credible elections. They vowed to stamp out corruption and to suppress violence. There was a brief hiatus, as the coupists could not consolidate on their initial success, (p.135).

However, the media at this time were tied to the political party which in turn became a tool for personal vendetta. For example, Action Group (AG) political party had The Tribune reporting in favour of the Western region as well as Chief Obafemi Awolowo (opposition leader). In same vein, Northern People's Congress (NPC) had Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo (GTB) newspaper bearing all pains and gains in protecting their interest. West African Pilot (WAP) newspaper was used by the Eastern region and Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe the Governor General to promote the government activities of the Easterners. This however indirectly affected the popular support of media report at this period.

The history of Nigeria's politics is not a smooth one. Ranging from independence, the federal government was a coalition composed of the mainly northern NPC and the mainly Eastern NCNC. The mainly western AG led by Chief Obafemi Awolowo was in opposition. The coalition government was led by Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, the NPC deputy leader and the first Federal Prime Minister. In November 1960 Dr. Nnamdi Azikwe the leader of the NCNC became the first Nigerian Governor-General. However, the first republic was full of electoral crisis and betrayal, this in turn brought about the operation wet-e in the western region after the 1964 election. The second republic led by Alhaji Shehu Shagari was also halted by the military

due to misappropriation of funds and electoral malpractice recorded in the 1983 election which Nigerian Peoples party (NPP) won. Since 1960 till date, it has been recorded that Nigeria elections have witness both pre, during and post election crisis due to the electorate and candidates refute of election procedures and results.

As politics is “the struggle for power” in deciding who gets what, when and how (Morgenthau, 1964), only socially responsible independent media can sanitize and sustain it, thereby keeping to the promises of democratic ideology. But considering the ordeal of Nigerian democracy, politicians have in one way or the other master-minded her credence due to their selfish interest; not keeping to promises, enriching themselves and funding electoral malpractices. As Achebe (1984) argued:

It is simply and squarely a failure of leadership. There is nothing basically wrong with the Nigerian character. There is nothing wrong with the Nigerian land, climate, water, air, or anything else. The Nigerian problem is the unwillingness or inability of its leaders to rise to their responsibility, to the challenge of personal example, which is the hallmark of true leadership (p.1).

They have capitalised on the problem of the economy and unethical practices of the mass media practitioners to deprive Nigerians their constitutional ideology and right to genuine democracy. This however is now a national problem as godfatherism and prebendalism have become the true practice of Nigeria politicians.

Hitherto, Nigerian mass media, politics and democracy cannot be separated as they are tantamount to each other failure or survival. Siebert and Schramm (1963) succinctly put that the mass media across the nations are saddled with the responsibility of monitoring governance, protecting the interests and rights of the weak in the society and advocating for the issues and causes that enhances the growth and development of the society within which they operate.

More so, the argument that the media play a role in democratization has been advanced not only by government officials, but also by many in political science and in communication science. Berman and Witzher (1997) for example, argue that the three accesses and exchange of information are indispensable to the notion of democracy.

The very nature of democracy suggests that free and open communication, through a variety of channels, is necessary to foster critical practices found in democratic societies. According to this argument, the mass media in a stable democracy are the principal institutions from which members of the public can better understand their society. The media provide citizens with information about their world, by fostering debate about various issues and by encourage informed decisions to be made about available courses of action. The media are also a site of contestation in which diverse positions are advanced, significant opinions are heard, interests and inner-working are exposed, and input is received. These all contribute to public debate. The media are also expected to provide a monitoring function on government, industry and society.

Curran (1991) and Garnham (1992), states that it is axiomatic that some version of communicative action lies at the heart of both the theory and practice of democracy. O'Neil (1998) writes that "without the freedom of communication mass media provide, the foundation of democratic rule is undermined". McQuails (1994) in his words established that "The conduct of democratic (or undemocratic) politics, nationally and internationally depends more and more on mass media". And Ungar (1990) claims that "A free press is needed everywhere, no less in developing countries than in advanced industrial society".

As Oseni (2005) established:

Democracy and journalism (mass media) are soul mate. You really cannot have one without the other. It is only a democratic environment that can

foster the best journalism (mass media). Just as democracy itself can never take root nor be nurtured in an atmosphere inimical to the provision of alternative choice within journalism (mass media) promotes (p.16).

For Nigeria democracy to survive, the mass media must live up to their billings in combating tribalism, fraud, serious crimes, avarice, greed, and extravagance through their indisputable power in setting agenda for public discuss, which are disintegrating forces in the society as well as her democracy. Thus, in discharging her duty, responsibility and obligation, it must enhance the survival of the vital ingredient of society demand. Which are unity; structure; inter-dependence; compliance, commitment and conformity; and transmission of social norms, culture and value. The media is by this gear towards enhancing the continuity and survival of the total social 'gadget'.

Holding to these functions, the mass media is as well a major means of political mobilization in Nigeria. They have the ability to inform, educate, entertain, enlighten and mobilize the public. The mass media serve as an intermediary between the government and the people, because it assists the government in getting its plans and policies across to the people, and the people in return gets their response, feeling and plight back to the government through their various mediums like Newspaper (articles and editorials), Television and Radio (commentaries and programmes) etc. The mass media also helped in making the people of Nigeria to get all the political awareness, and it mobilized the people to both contest election and be voted for, or to vote for a candidate of their choice as an electorate. Hence, importance of mass media in ensuring a successful transition in Nigeria cannot be underestimated.

In other words, the role of the mass media can in no way be undermined, this is also 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 (estate)

of the realm. The first three are the executive, legislative and judiciary in no particular order of importance.

The mass media have succeeded in exposing some cutting corners amongst government officials and politicians. Objective mass media outfits over the years have reported cases of theft, embezzlement and looting and other vices which in one way or the other have jeopardize the credence of the political sector and national democracy. Some remarkable examples in respect of the mass media's exposure of corrupt practices by politicians include: Salisu Buhari's gate, Patricia Etteh's gate, Lawan Farouk's gate, the pension scam etc.

The Buhari certificate saga was public by a popular news magazine; The News. In its 10 July, 1999 edition, captioned "Face of a Liar". The magazine reported the certificate and age falsification scandal around the person of the erstwhile Speaker of the House of Representatives, Alhaji Salisu Buhari inevitably resigned. On the part of Etteh, the media directed the public agenda on the N640 million renovation of the Speaker and Deputy Speaker's residence respectively. Popular opinion from the media coverage of the issue mounted pressure on the key members of the national assembly; this led to their resignation as the Speaker and Deputy Speaker.

Also worthy of note was the patriotic role played by the media in exposing Farouk Lawan's affair with Femi Otedola's Zenon oil and gas Limited with respect to oil subsidy probe of which Farouk was the chairman of the House Committee's probe panel and the disclosure of Farouk been offered \$620,000 by Mr. Otedola to have his company removed from the list of indicted companies (Wikipedia, 2014).

Pinpointing the decisive measure the Nigeria mass media has attained, it is for her to maintain her effort to accumulate and accommodate the structural pattern of the social unit into

the mainstream of our society entity, hence creating a platform for an all rounds stability of societal struggle. During this attempt by the media in this fortified struggle; and her nature of place in societal positioning it came to interest that, politic or the political sphere falls as one of the social system. The society today which is acknowledge as a contingent of each social sphere/system(s), need the collaboration and support of each system in order to get herself “alive”.

The mass media remains the opium of the society growth. Since the society creates the mass media, it is expected that the mass media recreate and sustain the society both her economic sector, educational sector, and mostly political sector. As Onyishi (1996) finely avers while highlighting on the role of the mass media in democracy, he notes that the press (mass media) not only sustains the democracy principles but also end with transaction period. The media should help ushering in democracy; they should play a crucial role in nurturing and sustaining the success or failure of our practice of democratic government. To large extent, their success depends on how well the mass media carry out their function as the mid wife of democracy. In noting this, some questions like; what is the role of the mass media in sustaining democracy? How well have the mass media sanitize the political sector through campaign coverage? How credible is the mass media campaigns in curbing democratic and political problems and what has affected the credibility of the media in holding to their social responsibility? It is on this ground that this research seeks to evaluate, the mass media coverage of political campaigns for democratic sustenance.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

In democracies, the media are the watch dog of the people. The citizens are usually mobilized and unformed to create awareness on the political culture and their citizenship

responsibilities. By political culture, we refer to a system of politics in which sovereignty is vested on the people rather than a small clique, or an oligarchy; a political arrangement that places emphasis on the accountability of polity where the rule of law, majority rule and constitutionalism is the basic guiding principle. Perhaps, it could be argued that the political crisis that pervaded our recent past, points to the fact that most of our people are ignorant and or apathetic towards Nigeria electioneering and voting pattern. However, the media which are saddled with this responsibility of rejuvenating the attitude of the mass through their persuasive, information, education and entertainment functions and urging them towards encouraging transparency, equity and equality are sometimes put behind by their unethical practices, government officials and representatives. Government officials and elected representatives of the people deliberately embarking on actions that serves as obstacles to the mass media from being able to play its role effectively. They have made attempts at ensuring that the mass media dance to their tune. The polity has been awash with cases of threats, dubious legislation, intense regulation and censorship as well as unmitigated records of records of violation of press freedom.

1.3 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study are:

1. To examine the role of the media in Nigerian political campaigns,
2. To evaluate the role of the media in sustaining Nigeria democracy,
3. To highlight the hindrances the media face in cause of their responsibility towards democratic sustenance,
4. To examine the credibility of the media in line with their social responsibility tenets.

1.4 Research Questions

1. To what extent have the media played any role in Nigerian political campaigns?
2. Have the media contribute to sustainable democracy in Nigeria?
3. What are the hindrances to media practice in their responsibility towards democratic sustenance?
4. Do the Nigerian/media maintain credibility and social responsibility tenets in the quest for democratic dividends?

1.5 Scope of the Study

Basically, this study seeks to evaluate the media role in Nigeria political campaign coverage and sustenance of her democracy. Hence, the study aims at Nigerian citizens who are legible to vote and be voted for, as their opinion counts in the society.

More so, since this study hoped to examine the media impact in Nigeria democracy, the study then focused on the Fourth and Fifth Republic in Nigeria which spans from May 29, 1999 till date. The main area of focus is the print media (representing newspapers and magazines) and electronic media (radio and television). And since it is nearly impossible to cover the whole of the country because of some limitations, Edo, one of the thirty six (36) states that make up the country is focused upon.

1.6 Significance of the Study

No doubt, the media as the opium of the society have faced some upheavals in trying to sanitize and sustain the transition of power from one government to another in Nigeria. They have suffered assaults, neglect and castigation all to the fact that they (government officials) want to underpin their watch dog function which stand as a threat to their irresponsible modus operandi (modes of operation). But with all this, the media over the years have kept pressing

towards ensuring transparency, equity, equality and objectiveness both from the politicians (leaders) and from the masses.

The study establishes that although the media practitioners contribute immensely to midwife and sustain democracy, they are hardly appreciated by government in terms of policy frameworks and pragmatic actions. The paper recommends the swift passage of the Freedom of Information (FOI) Bill to give journalists unimpeded access to information. In the final analysis, it is advised that in spite of the dog role to deepen democracy and the rule of law in Nigeria.

Furthermore, the study becomes necessary to both the media practitioners and the masses to understand their role in continuing with their social responsibility which is the basis and the drive to a sustenance democratic society.

Above all, the study would significantly serve as a reference material to student's academics and researchers who the findings of this study would be beneficiary to their work.

1.7 Definition of Terms

In order to attain a measure of conceptual and operational clarity, it is necessary to define the terms frequently used in this study.

Media: this is a medium of communication in which a sender sends a message to a receiver. It is either mass media or interpersonal media (one to one) etc. It represents the platform for information like newspaper, social media etc.

Coverage: Coverage is the activity of reporting about an event or subject in newspaper publication. It is the consistency of reporting an event and the manner in which the event is reported to the masses. This is the publication seen on the media platform, the content and method of dissemination.

Political: Relating to the government or public affairs of a country. Done or acting in the interests of status or power within an organization rather than as a matter of principle. Politics refers to a set of activities associated with the governance of a country, or an area. It involves making decisions that apply to members of a group. It refers to achieving and exercising positions of governance—organized control over a human community, particularly a state.

Campaigns: A campaign is a planned set of activities that people carry out over a period of time in order to achieve something such as social or political change. E.g, if someone campaigns for something, they carry out a planned set of activities over a period of time in order to achieve their aim.

Democracy: It is a form of government in which people choose leaders by voting. Also, it guarantees all form of supremacy of majority without favouritism to any section of the society especially in the place of leadership.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

2.1 Literature Review

2.1.1 Overview of the Role of Mass Media in Election Campaign and Reporting

Traditionally, according to Sobowale (2002, p. 271-280.), “the role of the mass media is to inform, educate, and entertain members of the society. “It is also expected to propagate the cultural heritage of the people; the role of the mass media in “creating political awareness cultural heritage of the people. The role of the mass media in “creating political awareness, engendering empathy and mobilizing people for social change” had also been recognized (Sobowale 1993 cited in Sobowale 2002, p 271-280.). “The press” according to Akinfeleye (2003) “is to watch-dog, check-on-to uncover and never to cover up corruption and/or wrong doings by the other three estates. They are also to monitor governance and make the other three estates accountable to people at all times.”

The mass media are the only source of news for most individuals, the presence of democratic or special bias in the media may have profound effect. Public dependence on the media also gives them the power to set political or democratic agenda and determine which issues will be the subject of public debate. Through the mass media, the citizens are educated on their rights and privileges so as to participate meaningfully in the democratic process (Mile, 2009).

However, democracy is adjudged as the most popular system of government in the world. It is popularly seen as the government of the people, by the people and for the people. As a concept, according to Obasanjo (1992) cited in Ogah & Ogeyni (2014:55), democracy as an ideology is the philosophy of governance which sets a high premium on the basic freedom or

fundamental human rights of the citizens, rule of law, the right to property, the free flow of information and the right of choice between alternative political positions. Simply put, democracy is that system of politics in which sovereignty is vested on the people rather than in a small clique or an oligarchy, where the rule of law, majority rule and constitutionalism are basic guiding principles of governance. It is in this context that Ramaswamy (2007: p.377) posited that democracy means the rule by the people as contrasted with the rule by one person or a group. He went further to say that it is the people who are both rulers and rule unlike other systems like monarchy, dictatorship or oligarchy where a distinction between the ruler and the ruled exists. But a cursory examination of the scenario in Nigeria negates this basic ingredient of democracy. In the context of Nigeria, instead of majority having their way in the process of governance, a few cabals have hijacked the state of affairs in the state. And any attempt to challenge the powers that be would amount to the brutal maltreatment of the fundamental rights of the innocent and suffering of the masses.

More so, Nigeria on May 29, 2019, Nigeria commemorated 20 years of uninterrupted democratic government, that is, the period between 1999 and 2019. This is out of a national life span of about 50 years. (Adekola, 2019). It' has been a troubled democratic experience for the nation since the first experiment in democratic governance in 1960. Military interregnum had aborted attempts at democratic governance in 1966, 1983, 1993. The interjections notwithstanding, uninterrupted democratic governance in Nigeria today has run for about 15 years.

The brief above rests on the premise that the meaning and significance of the term democracy are all too obvious. Experience worldwide, especially in developing countries of Africa, Nigeria inclusive, has proven and continues to prove that such assumption is not only

dangerous, but may also hamper the growth of democracy in the nation. This conclusion is vitiated by the carrying one by our political leaders and political public office holders whose utterances and actions are a great assault on the basic tenets of democracy, which is “representativeness”.

In this light therefore, it serves good purpose to remind ourselves even as media professionals of what democracy really means. Though frequently talked about and having being in practice since the 17th century in parts of Europe. The term ‘democracy’ does not have a single universal definition even among scholars.

Ranney, cited in Felix (2005), defines democracy as “A form of government organized in accordance with the principles of popular sovereignty, popular consultation, political and economic equality and majority rule.” This is achieved through institutionalization of electoral processed principles of popular sovereignty, popular consultation, political and economic equality and majority rule.” This is achieved through institutionalization of an electoral process.

Electioneering campaigns are media events that encapsulate all the political parties have to show for the suitability their candidates and geniuses of their party. Agba (2006, p.193) is of the opinion that the mass media are pivot of social interaction. They seek to use the power of mass information to solve the problems of national cohesion and integration which are both critical to the growth of healthy electioneering campaigns. The media require a political ideology that guarantees freedom of speech and access of information especially to those who trade in communication.

From the pre-colonial days up to these present times, the media has acted as the mouth piece of the political divisions in Nigeria and the media right from time is faced with the task of

facilitating a cross-fertilization of ideas which seeks to criticize or analyze campaign issues mainly for those who are little equipped to grasp political jargons.

Consequently, the elections campaign reportage should seek out to reveal relevant truths for the people who cannot witness or comprehend the events that affect them. The media also has the role of forming a solid alliance with the electorate to force other political actors operates within a prescribed campaign bound. This is important to the citizenry because all that they want is an election that reflects their wishes. They (citizenry) want to show that they matter and they decide the fortunes aspirants before and after elections. As a result of this, the media are faced with how to make politicians respect people's right to candid election campaigns and how to ensure that flimsy promises do not fill campaign scripts. Political actors are meant to accept the rules which are made to guide the conduct of elections and the process of contesting electoral seats.

The media must clarify issues during campaigns, bring aspirants close to the electorates, teach the difference between party and candidate to enable the electorate make a wise choice (Agba 2006, p.199). Hence the ordinary expectation is that the mass media will focus on serious matters that portend serious consequence for the people and their political choices.

The electorate should know what to do with campaign messages after the media has aired them out. For example, it is believed, that what the media did to actualize a massive turn out for 2002 voter registration can be done in the case of campaign reporting. It went far as throwing their weight fully behind that exercise to achieve resounding success. The campaign themes of various parties ought to be closely followed by the media, and its focus (media) should be to set the correct political agenda for the audience instead of allowing politicians to do so.

The role of campaign reporter who reports through the media is also very crucial because, the reporter is expected to be familiar with key events; institutions and political processes. Besides, particular attention should be focused on those issues that affect campaigns strategies (e.g the party caucus), conventions, the primaries, the campaigns proper, elections and indeed the electorate on whom the entire process is based. The reporter should therefore understand the positioning strategy to use and duly cover certain key issues. There should also be a sampling of public opinion as regards depth of coverage, style of reporting, objectivity of reports and areas the audience will want to amend if introduced.

As Nnanyelugo and Nwafor (2013) posit, everything about campaign reporting should serve to guide the electorate on what to do with their votes. Getting the electorates informed does not mean telling them what plans the party has for them but it implies good governance. Therefore thorough voter guidance should be the heart of campaign reporting by the media. Hage et al (1976) also articulates the functions of the mass media for collective campaign reporting to be as follows;

- reporting and interpreting events
- defining issues
- portraying personalities
- investigating support
- identifying trends and
- checking and analyzing public opinions

In other to stop the media from making comments on polling, it should place surveillance on any group that takes unauthorized interest in politics and its prying eyes should be focused on socio-cultural organization. The media should therefore judge their actions from time to time

noting that any form of partisanship can stifle media efforts at professional campaign reportage. As suggested by Kur and Orhewere (2003, p.61), broadcast journalist reporting elections should bear in mind their social and political responsibility to the nation. In times of elections, they should use their media to let off steam from politicians whenever there is electoral conflict.

The media, throughout the history of Nigeria have always been in the forefront of the struggle to establish democracy in the country. Lending credence to this assertion, Obilade (1999, p.235), opined that the “press in Africa constitutes an active force in the realization of the goal of the evolution of sustainable democracy in the continent of Africa. He also observed That the press in Africa is playing a prominent role in the democratization process in African states which have non-democratic governments” Going back to the history of the country, during colonial period, it is an establish fact that the media is the main agent with which the Nigerian nationalists used to struggle for independence, and by extension the enthronement of democracy in Nigeria. Nigeria nationalist leaders like Chief Anthony Enahoro and Chief M.C.K Ajuluchuku used their newspapers as veritable weapons to fight against and dethrone colonialism and establish an independent democratic Nigeria. This giant stride by the Nigerian media was carried all through to the first, second, third, and fourth republics respectively. Even during the periods of military rule, Nigerian media fought gallantly for the restoration of democracy. This struggle culminated and usher the nation to a new era of the fourth republic in May 1999 with a former military head of state in the person of president Olusegun Obasanjo as the democratically elected leader of Nigeria.

As part of their constitutional role, the mass media are expected to mobilize the people to participate in the democratic process. This was aptly demonstrated by the Nigerian media during the period under review. For instance, immediately after the Abdulsalami Abubakar led

government instituted the transition programme that usher in a new democratic government, the media swung into action by creating awareness on the electoral process. Massive voter's education was carried out by the media to enlighten Nigerians on the need to participate in the electoral process. Ciboh (2010) in explaining this further noted that for citizens to meaningfully participate in the democratic process, they need to depend on the mass media to help them define, sort out complexities and participate meaningfully in the democratic process as informed participants. He went further to reiterate that even though other means of citizens education exist, the mass media are the most common source of information about elections in democracies and societies in transition around the world. In all the elections held in the country beginning from 1999, 2003, 2007, 2011, 2015 and the just concluded 2019 elections, the mass media gave a substantial coverage of the elections. Political programmes and articles on newspapers and magazines became a prominent feature before, during and after the elections. The mass media also covered electoral cases that were taken to court by several political candidates who were not satisfied with the outcome of the elections.

In holding government accountable to the people, the Nigerian media through investigative journalism held so many politicians to account. According to Lwahas (2004:27) the media acts as a watchdog by uncovering political, economic and corporate corruption, alongside other forms of abuses of power or inept policies. This was exemplified in the series of senate gate scandals that were uncovered by the investigative prowess of the Nigerian media. Jibo and Okoosi-Simbine (2003) reported the speaker gate scandal that involved Alh.Saliu Buhari, the first speaker of House of Representatives in the Obasanjo presidency. *The News* magazine professionally pursued the allegations of certificates forgery until Buhari was forced to resign and was subsequently tried and convicted for perjury.

On the protection of the fundamental human rights of the people, the Nigerian Media fought vehemently well to ensure that those whose rights are violated are brought to face the wrath of the law. It is the duty of investigative journalists to search and uncover the truth regarding human rights abuses perpetrated by the government or its actors. Through investigative reporting the journalist can uncover hidden facts in relation to human rights violations, since the public has the right to know the truth concerning any event that goes on in the society. The mass media through their surveillance responsibility can monitor and report human rights violation. Through constant vigilance on infringement of human rights and by exposing police brutality and repression, the media would cause a significant members of the public to be aware of their fundamental human rights and seek justice when the need arise (Asemah *et al*, 2012). For instance, the Nigerian Tribune of Tuesday, 16 April, 2013 in its editorial captioned “still on police brutality” reported the killing of a pregnant woman in Akure, Ondo state, by a police man who had allegedly demanded a bribe from a commercial driver in whose vehicle the pregnant woman was killed. Reporting human rights abuses of this nature by the media will make the public know their rights and privileges as well as draw public attention to the issue.

One fundamental role of the mass media in a democracy is the formation and molding of public opinion. The mass media do this through setting agenda for public discussion.

Umechukwu (2001) explains:

For the mass media to sustain democracy there must be agenda setting for public debate on topical political issues. This would create participatory democracy and thus go a long way to guide citizens to either accept or reject policies initiated by the government, (p.35).

For instance, this was clearly exemplified during the third term debate of the former president Olusegun Obasanjo. The mass media through feature articles and broadcast media programmes engaged Nigerians by educating them on the need to reject the president ambition to

vie for another third term in office. Through media campaign, the people resisted the move and the inordinate ambition of the president die a natural death.

Furthermore, the mass media are the fulcrum of all forms of democracy. This submission is on the premise that in a democratic society, the media operate as the market place of ideas for political thought. They likewise ensure that the citizens are well informed about political process and developments in the society. In doing this, the media are generally engaged in political reporting. Political reporting is necessary for the sustenance of democracy where the system of check and balances is required for good governance and democratic sustainability. It affords the media the opportunity to provide an open forum for “legitimated interest groups” to participate in public affairs (Umaru & Abdullahi, 2012: p.34). In order to keep the people current on political issues the Nigerian media came up with series of political programmes to sensitize the people and awoken political consciousness in them. For example, the broadcast media design programmes like “the president explains”, Political platform, inside the Senate, Democracy today, and Radio Link, presidential media chart, and a host of other political programmes fashion out to educate the citizens on political issues. These programmes have succeeded in creating awareness about government policies and programmes.

Considering media and ethics, strong moral and sound ethics are important aspects of professional media practice. Ethics or moral, generally, refers to the value system by which an unjust action of a journalist in any situation may be evaluated not only by his conscience but also against certain acceptable standards, which have been established by the society, his profession or employer. But the fundamental problem in determining whether an action is Ethical or not lies in the fact that different practitioners have various perceptions and standards of what is right or wrong. Yet the situation is not often just black or white, there are many cases in-between, in the

grey area, which is the boundary demarcating right from wrong, ethical from immoral acts or correct professional behaviour from misconduct.

Jakande quoted by Nosike (2001, p.5) succinctly summarized media ethics into three basic categories:

1. That the public is entitled to the truth and that only correct information can form the basis for sound journalism and ensure the confidence of the people.
2. That the moral duty of every journalist is to have respect for the truth and to publish or prepare for publication only the truth to the best of his knowledge.
3. That the duty of the journalist to publish only facts, never to suppress such facts as he knows, never to falsify either to suit his own purposes or any other purposes.

Further, three dominant views exist in journalistic practice. They include:

1. Absolutism – a theory which views every decision as either right or wrong, regardless of the consequences;
2. Existentialism: Which holds that choices are made without a predetermined value system, but decided on the basis of immediate rational options; (and)
3. Situationalism: Which views decision-making as based on what would create the greatest good or the least harm based on context.

But media professionals have the additional dilemma of making decisions, which satisfy journalistic standard of factual and truthful reporting. In his famous “Declaration of Principles” issued in 1906 to newspaper reporters and editors after launching his PR consultancy Ivy Lee articulated the minimum standard expected of professional media relations thus:

This is not secret press bureau. All our work is done in the open; this is not an advertising agency. If you think and of our matters ought properly to go to any subject treated will be

supplied promptly and any editor will be assisted most cheerfully in verifying any statement of facts. In brief, our plan is frankly and openly on behalf of and accurate information concerning subjects, which are interest and value to the public to know about (Idubor, 200:59).

Essentially, an inherent conflict of interest pervades the nature and practice of the free press and government. The interest of the government and that of the press often clash because while the government wants news reported in a positive light the media desire information that would excite their readers, listeners and viewers. The hallmark of a free, democratic press must be anchored on the following principles of truth, fact, accuracy, fairness, integrity, service, timeliness, friendship, and balance.

Indeed the press could use these Ethical principles to promote civic responsibility in democratic governance. The press has the right to ensure that only professional journalists make decisions concerning what is published in papers. Also since the public has the right to know, accurate, balanced and fair reporting should be the hallmark of the press. The press owes society the responsibility of promoting unity and decency. Therefore, the press is expected to keep information concerning individual secret in accordance with public trust and morality. The press is expected to maintain confidentiality and refrain from disclosing any information obtained in confidence. In the same vein, the media practitioners should refrain from using offensive or vulgar language. Facts must be presented in a decent a manner. Similarly, media practitioners are expected to avoid statements or references to people's tribe, sex, religion and other mental or physical handicaps. This is necessary to avoid litigation.

A journalist is not expected to solicit pecuniary gratification as a precondition for publishing a story. It is also advised that journalists should strive to employ honest and genuine means gathering information. Although, where public interest is at stake, media practitioners

should go the extra mile to obtain information. And apart from educating the people, the press has another social responsibility that of promoting human rights, democracy and peace. This is what the Nigeria press should address in this era of political turmoil.

In Nigeria, the press could serve as a potent instrument to enhance national unity and integration. This is more so in a democratic dispensation replete with centrifugal forces of pull and tear. Ostensibly, there are issues of public interest, which the public officers would not want the press to publish but the press could perceive non-publication of such issues as short changing the public. Here lies the antagonism between government and the press. This scenario has been aggravated by the proliferation of pro-government media houses that garnish the practice of journalism with unbridled sloganization.

Since Nigeria attained independence in 1960, there had been incidents of government repression of the media. During civilian administrations, power holders have often used the machinery of state to enact laws to protect their political parties and governments from the onslaught of the press. During military regimes, the men in uniform use brute force and promulgated decree to muzzle the press.

2.1.2 Political Functions of the Media

The media today have brought messages of what is new and fashionable in terms of goods, ideas, techniques and values from the social top to the base and that is why, all consequences of the mass media are potentially questions about social change and potential use of the media for development.

The main functions of development according to Lasswell (1992) were surveillance of the environment, correlation of the parts of the society in responding to the environment and the

transmission of the cultural heritage which makes it easier for people to cope with real life problems and for societies to avoid breakdown.

Mboho (2005) specifically identified the political functions of the media as:

- Creating and promoting political awareness
- Identifying and promoting civic responsibilities among the people
- Mobilizing the people towards the achievement at national goals.

The numerous admittance of the indispensable roles of the mass media is precisely, political mobilization do not draw conclusion that the resultant effects to messages are all positive as intended.

2.1.3 Political Education

Political education is far reaching in its scope. It is one of the functions the media carries out to the society. Politics, education and indeed political education are all forms of intentional action. As far as the free education of adults and youths is concerned, a good way of reaching consensus might be to put one's trust in political debate, but those responsible for political education have to make sure that these values are legitimate. According to Dadalos (2008) politics is not all about implementing a historical or moral code; it is about negotiating between a set of interests and objective-fuelled conflicts according to the situation. The details of exactly what the job of political education is, remains subject to debate and change. A short list of political educational aims includes:

1. Developing and strengthening a liberal democratic value awareness
2. Understanding the basic task of politics as begin to solve current problems by introducing building decisions on contentious public issues.

3. Gaining a basic knowledge in all of the most important political issues with regards to the future such as democracy and its threats
4. Understanding the political decision-making process.

Different electoral education bodies emerged with various duties. One of such is the National Electoral Education Plan (NEEP) which forms strategic framework for the conduct and implementation of the Electoral Education Campaign Project (EECP) in partner with Civil Society Organization. The Electoral Education Campaign project (EECP) seeks to raise public awareness and create discussions around all aspects of electoral processes by supporting grassroots initiatives. The National Electoral Education Plan (NEEP) provides guidance to NGO's which implements electoral education activities that are produced by electoral education forum, a body that coordinates campaign to ensure its integration within the overall electoral outreach effort. The context both social and political, of the upcoming electoral cycle will impact the current electoral education campaign.

Lessons learnt from the previous elections have pointed to the necessity of engaging the public through direct outreach activities of participatory nature and the importance of key influencers in the community. The electoral education campaign activities are a mix of voter education, voter information and relevant basics of civic education.

The relationship between people and politics cannot be undermined. Haruna (2008) made it clear also that the mass media cannot function in the same way in all societies even though their roles are the same in all societies. As societies and culture differs, that is how other factors that affect the media differ too. For example, the media in Nigeria cannot function and should not be expected to function like the America. He said "the media in Nigeria cannot undertake the American type of political opinion polls during elections this is because while Americans will

accept result that contract opinion polls, Nigerians will not. Nigerians instead would join in the burning of houses and engage in Figure 1: Women participating in voters' education process in Nigeria.

Other destructive tendencies if the candidate that was shown to be leading through an opinion poll does not emerge as the winner of the election". Nigerians can be victims of herd mentality which in turn can lead to unthinking reactions to events. However, it takes a perception of injustice, whether such a perception is right or wrong for even the most irrational crowd to resort to violence. The reason behind this is because, Nigerians do not have any good cause to believe that their electoral system is free and fair. According to Iredia cited in Haruna (2008) the reason for riots during election result among many is that; because the country's unity is fragile and its socio-economy and politics are underdeveloped, the Nigerian media cannot afford to be "confrontational and anti-government" if Nigerians interest is at heart. Government regards secrecy as essential to their proper functioning.

Also in the clash of functions, the media by definition is on a higher moral ground since government are supposed to be accountable to the people but one cannot be accountable if he cannot be open and transparent. It is therefore wrong condemning the media to be confrontational and anti-government.

2.1.4 Political Mobilization

Ebeze (2003) sees political mobilization as one of the basic political functions of the media. Political mobilization is the role played by the mass media in creating awareness, interpretation of issues, personalities, programmes encouraging and educating them to exercise their political rights and take informed political decisions. It also involves campaigning for

societal objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic, development, work etc (McQuail 2005:98).

The election days 14th & 21st April 2007 witnessed coverage by the broadcast stations worldwide. The mobilization and coverage work by the station however did not start from election days. The media began airings of political activities geared towards elections before the primaries and there were also incisive and live coverage, and reportage of the activities of political parties and campaigns both from the public and private stations.

The intention of the various coverage and mobilization efforts were geared towards arousing and motivating the citizens towards not only casting their votes but equally knowing their political candidates and their programmes so as to know what to align with and who they should vote for and their reasons for voting. Political mobilization is also defined as the actors attempt to influence the existing distribution of power. It is the social relationship between two types of actors, the individuals and the parties. Today, the media are continually faced with the difficulty of mobilizing the electorates because they spend more time talking about mobilization than they do in devising ways to get the citizens mobilized.

In spite of the glory ability of the media to come to grips with what it takes to mobilize the people, mass mobilization has become a fascinating social and political adventure in Nigeria. (Udoakah 1998, p.41) defines mass mobilization as the wakening or activation of the dormant consciousness of a greater number of people with the use of new ideas for the purpose of gaining support for an action or inaction. This implies that the citizens response to appeals is affected by certain factors such as experience, interest, politics, religion etc. if the media is been involved, its impact must be positively felt, the progress it makes must be seen in real terms and the direction it is going known to the public before a sympathetic response can be expected.

The media of mass information are not magicians and therefore will not succeed if the conditions necessary for their success are absent. Since people have the right to think independently of a situation which their co-operations is sought, they have a right to reject media explanations and to form their own impressions. That is why; mobilization should imply that those involved have absolute confidence. There is an extent to which the media can be used, if the media are used to propagate promises that are never fulfilled, a time will surely come when it will lose its credibility.

Therefore mobilization is far less the responsibility of the media as we seem to think but more of the government duty. The citizens must first be made to feel belonged to the system, there after they can be mobilized for the survival of the system. For any media to succeed in any mobilization, the message must be a message of credibility otherwise people would not be willing to listen to the message. Facts alone do not persuade always although they may elicit some kind of behavior or rationalize an action this is because the facts are more persuasive when supported by events or actions. The time of the message, interest and belief of the audience are all considered during mobilization.

The introduction of radio has given access to a national audience by airing some political programmes which mobilizes the citizenry. Through this function, it is the responsibility of the media to provide the citizenry with information about the government, itself and its activities. According to Udejah (2004, p. 245) the people's right to know of events of public importance particularly political matters, constitutes the major task of the media. It is on this axis that, political programming is involved to serve the public and government as well.

Programmes like presidential media chat, know your candidate, people's choice etc on the station were aired to mobilize the people to participate in the elections. Most of the stations as far involve some degrees of audience participation.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

Social Responsibility Theory

The Social Responsibility theory which had its beginnings from the Hutchins Commission of 1947 on the Commission of Freedom of the press has one of its basic postulations that freedom carries a concomitant obligation. In it the press is to be responsible to the society by carrying out certain essential functions of mass communication (Ojobor 2002, 11).

While the theory emphasizes the need for an independent press that scrutinizes other social institutions and provide objective, accurate news reports, the most innovative feature of social responsibility theory was the call for media to be responsible for fostering productive and creative great Communities (Baran and Davis, 109). The media is responsible to the society no doubt in its functions of reporting news. Here it infers again not just news as it is but truthful and objective representation of the society. Therefore the press has the right to hold the government accountable for the people. The press does this through investigating reporting to unearth hidden information about corruption in government activities. The basic assumption of the theory as stipulated by McQuail (2005) is a clarion call on the mass media to be guided by the principles of fairness objectivity and accuracy in working assiduously hard to ensure the stability and sustenance of democracy.

In the words of Baran (2000, p.4),

Social Responsibility Theory challenges media professionals' ingenuity to develop new ways of serving their communities. The theory encouraged them (media operators) to see themselves as front-line participants in the battle to preserve democracy in a

world drifting inexorably towards totalitarianism by helping pluralistic groups, the media were building a wall to protect democracy from external and internal foes, (p.4).

This shows that the bedrock of this modern press is given up of sentimental, yellow journalism and payola and embracing the cannons of the social responsibility which can only but help sanitize the profession and promote credibility and reliability from the masses.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

The technique adopted in this study was survey design. The survey design, allows researchers to measure characteristics, opinions and behaviours of a given population, and this works on the premise that the population is too large for researchers to realistically observe all the elements in the population.

Therefore, this study employed the questionnaire as the potent instrument of the survey design. This again made the use of survey design justifiable for this study

3.2 Population of the Study

A population is made up of all conceivable elements, subjects, or observations relating to a particular phenomenon of interest to the researcher. It involves the general targeted area of study in specification of their opinion, belief, motivation, attitudes, and or behaviour. Asemah, (2012, p.149) opine that a population is the universe from which a sample is drawn.

Thus, the population of this study comprises residents who are exposed to media contents in Auchi,. Hitherto, the entire population of Auchi is over 150,000 comprising students, civil servants and the self-employed.

3.3 Sample Size

The sample size for this study will be three hundred (300) residents which were derived from Taro Yamene formula.

Given that the sample size is already known, Asemah (2012, p.216) asserted that “when the proportion of a population is known, the formula for each stratum will be”

$$\frac{n}{N} = \frac{x}{S} \times \frac{1}{1}$$

Formula:

When;

n = Population of each strata

N = Total population

S = Total sample size

The choice of 25% of the total population the sample is in accordance with Nwanna (1981) cited in Okoro (2001) submission on the appropriate sample required for any study based on the population of study. Nwanna in Okoro (2001) states that if a population is a few hundred, a 40% or more sample will do; if many hundreds (which applies to this study), a 20% sample will do, if a few thousands, a 10% sample will do and if several thousands, a 5% or less sample will do.

Therefore, the 300 respondents as selected in the Department were used to obtain broad response to ascertain role of mass media in political campaign coverage for sustenance of democracy in Nigeria to enable analyze the objectives of this study.

3.4 Sampling Procedure

The purposive sampling technique (non-probability sampling) was adopted for this study. Therefore, 18% of the entire population in the department was selected purposively to represent the total population for accurate and unbiased study.

3.5 Validity of the Instrument

Validity is the extent to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure and performs as it is designed to perform. It is however rare to see 100% accuracy in validity as it is measured in degree. On this, the questions obtained in the questionnaire were deemed valid and reliable as it answers the research question to a greater level.

3.6 Reliability of Instrument

According to Mehren and Lehman as cited in Asika (2002), reliability is the degree of consistency between two measures of the same thing. As Asika avers, it is the stability and dependability and predictability of measuring instrument, (Asika 2002). Based on this, the questionnaire used for this study is finely reliable as vetted by the supervisor.

3.7 Method of Data Collection

The method of data collection for this work was face to face or interpersonal administration of questionnaire by the researcher.

The researcher walked to each of the selected respondents in the metropolis with copies of the questionnaire and administered it until the copies meant for each division is exhausted.

3.8 Method of Data Analysis

The data collected and collated for this study was analyzed using frequency tables and sample percentage.

However, the simple percentage was adopted in analyzing: the data was derived from questionnaire completed by the respondents. The responses from the questionnaire will then be coded in simple percentages by the use of this formula percentage score with the aim of studying further the media coverage of violent protests and its effectiveness.

CHAPTER FOUR

Data Presentation and Analysis

One hundred and fifty (300) copies of questionnaire were administered to respondents.

All questionnaires were retrieved, which indicate a 100 percent return rate.

4.1 Analysis of Respondents Bio Data

Table 1: Age Distribution of Respondents

| Age | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|---------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| 18– 22years | 85 | 28.3% |
| 23 – 27 years | 145 | 48.3% |
| 28-32years | 70 | 23.3% |
| 33 and Above | - | - |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Table 1 show that 85 respondents representing 28.3% are between the age ranges of 18-22years.

145 (48.3%) respondents are of the age range of 23-27years. While 70 respondents representing 23.3% are between 28-32years age bracket.

Table 2: Gender Distribution of Respondents

| Gender | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Male | 270 | 90% |
| Female | 30 | 10% |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Table 2 indicates that 270 respondents representing 90% of the total population were male while 30 (10%) respondents were females.

Table 3: Marital status of Respondents

| Status | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Single | 210 | 70% |
| Married | 190 | 63.3% |
| Divorced | - | |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

This table indicates that 210 respondents are single representing 70% of the total population, 190 respondents representing 63.3% are married while none of the respondents indicated divorced.

Table 4: Religion of Respondents

| Religion | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|----------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Christian | 98 | 33% |
| Muslim | 164 | 55% |
| Traditionalist | 38 | 13 |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Table 4 shows that 164 respondents representing 55% of the total population are Muslim, while 98 (33%) respondents are Christian. Mean while, 38 respondents representing 13% indicated as being traditionalist.

Table 5: Educational Attainment of Respondents

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| OND/HND | 216 | 72% |
| Bsc./B.A | 51 | 17% |
| Msc./MA | 30 | 10% |
| Ph.D | 3 | 1% |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

From the table above, total numbers of 216 respondents representing 72% were OND/HND holder. While 51 (17%) respondents were Bsc/BA holders. 30 respondents representing 10% were Msc/MA holders while only 3 (1%) respondents opted for PHD holder.

4.2 Psychographic Data Analysis of Respondents

Table 6: Do you have access to political campaigns (s) in Nigeria?

| Value | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|--------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Yes | 300 | 100% |
| No | - | - |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

This table shows that out of 300 respondents 100% affirmed to have access to political campaigns (s) in Nigeria.

.RQ 1: Have the media played any role in Nigerian politics since Independence?

This question was formulated to elicit information based on the background that media has a role to play in Nigeria politics. On this, questions were designed under to give a proper expression or deduction from the hypothesis stated.

Table 7: What role have the media played towards Nigeria politics?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Maintaining peaceful transition of Government | 200 | 66.7% |
| Expose ills concerning Nigeria politics | 60 | 20% |
| Promoting bias and favoritism | 20 | 6.6% |
| All of the above | 20 | 6.6% |
| Total | 300 | 100% |

Table 7 shows that the media at 200 respondents representing 66.7% affirm that the media have played a major role in maintaining peaceful transition of Government, while 60 respondents agree that the media have exposed ills concerning Nigeria politics representing 20%. 20 respondents representing 6.6% agree the media have helped in promoting bias and favoritism, while 20 (6.6%) respondents ticked all of the above.

Table 8: Have the media live up to their expectation in terms of political reports?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Yes | 204 | 68% |
| Not really | 16 | 5% |
| No | 80 | 27% |
| Total | 150 | 100 |

Table 8 indicates that majority of the population agree with media duty in political affair in Nigeria. 204 respondents representing 68% believe that the media have lived up to expectation. 80 (22%) respondents disagree to this ticking No while 16 respondents representing 5% believe that the media have played partial role by answering not really.

Table 9: What are the major issues tackled by the media during political affairs?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Projecting campaign, candidates and manifestos | 80 | 27% |
| Exposing ills and presenting candidate for debate | 120 | 40% |
| Doing a follow up on candidates and how credible they are | 40 | 13% |
| All of the above | 60 | 20% |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

Table 9 indicates that 80 respondents representing 27% of the total population agree that the media have played a vital role in projecting campaigns, candidates and manifesto in the political affairs of Nigeria since independence. 120 (40%) respondents believe that the media have helped in exposing ills and presenting candidates for debates in their platform. While 40 respondents representing 13% accept media role in doing follow up on candidate and how credible they are. 60 (20%) respondents answer all of the above.

RQ 2: Can the media contribute to sustainable democracy in Nigeria?

This question was designed with the aim to elicit information from the sample to enable understand the role media play in sustaining democracy since independence of Nigeria. However, it focused on analyzing the media and gates and how well they have encouraged and promote peaceful transition since 1960 till date.

Table 10: Has the media helped in sustaining democracy?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Yes | 272 | 91% |
| No | 28 | 9% |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

Table 10 shows that 272 respondents representing 91% of the total population agree that the media have helped in sustaining democracy. While 28 respondents representing 9% disagree by answering no.

Table 11: In what ways do you think the media have helped in sustaining democracy?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Promoting Equal Right | 10 | 3% |
| Projecting peaceful transition | 40 | 13% |
| Serving a watchdog | 50 | 17% |
| All of the above | 200 | 67% |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

Table 11 shows that 200 respondents representing 67% of the total population accept that the media have helped in sustaining democracy through serving as watchdog, projecting peaceful transition, and promoting equal right. (17%) respondents agree on the watchdog function, 40

(13%) respondents affirm to media projection of peaceful transition while 10 respondents representing 3% believe that the media have helped in promoting equal right.

RQ 3: Can Nigeria attain true democracy?

This question was put up to help provide a clear answer as to why, what, and where the mass media practitioners find it difficult to discharge their duty effectively. It aims at knowing the factors that has mitigated media practices in Nigeria thereby restraining them from objective reporting without fear or favour and ascertain if the Nigeria society can attain true democracy amidst corruption and other illegal acts.

Table 12: What are the factors that have hampered media duty in sustaining democracy?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|-----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Unprofessionalism | 60 | 20% |
| Assault and battering | 40 | 13% |
| Ex- judicial acts | 60 | 20% |
| Corruption | 40 | 13% |
| All of the above | 100 | 33% |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

Table 12 shows that some certain factors have hampered media practice in Nigeria towards sustaining democracy. 100 respondents representing 33% believe unprofessionalism, Assault, ex-judicial process and corruption are some factors that has hampered media practice. 60 (20%) agree on unprofessionalism, 60 respondents representing 20% also accept ex-judicial process while 40 respondents representing 13% believe that assault and battery and corruption are the cause respectively.

Table 13: Do you think the media can survive these factors?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Yes | 180 | 60% |
| No | 120 | 40% |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

This table indicates 180 respondents representing 60% of the total population believe the media can survive the factors that have hindered the practices. 120 (40%) respondents disagree to this affect that the media cannot survive these factors.

RQ 4: Do the Nigerian/media maintain credibility and social responsibility tenets in the quest for democratic dividends?

This question was formulated to know how well the mass media credibility has affected the practices in the society. This is based on the platform that audience perception of the media go a long way to affecting the acceptability of any message emanating from such media or media house. On this, this question aims at knowing how well the mass media practitioners have lived in keeping up to the social responsibility tenets. This is to evaluate if the mass media themselves have freedom before they project freedom and rights.

Table 14: Has the media live up to expectation in sustaining democracy. If yes explain and if No why?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Yes | 105 | 70% |
| No | 45 | 30% |
| Total | 150 | 100 |

Table 14 shows that majority of the respondents believe that the media have lived up to the expectation in sustaining democracy. 105 respondents representing 70% affirm to this while 45 respondents representing 30% disagree to this effect stating that the media have not lived up to expectation. From the answers provided, majority of the respondents accepted that the media have lived up to expectation base on their active involvement in the electioneering process of the country and have been so fair in their coverage. However, the minority established that the media has been compromised to serve the interest of their pay masters thereby promoting only the interest of their owner rather than the truth that will enhance sustainable democracy in Nigeria.

Table 15: What are the factors affecting media credibility

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|----------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|
| Corruption | 40 | 13% |
| Unprofessionalism | 80 | 27% |
| Ownership influence | 120 | 53% |
| No answer | 20 | 7% |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

This table indicates 120 respondents representing 53% of the total population believe that ownership influence affects the credibility of the media. 80 (27%) respondents agree unprofessionalism as the factor while 40 respondents representing 13% believe corruption as the factors affecting media credibility while 20 respondents representing 7% ticked No answer.

Table 16: How can Nigeria media tackle these problems?

| Category of Response | Frequency of Response | Percentage of Response |
|---|-----------------------|------------------------|
| By putting the profession ahead of selfish interest | 80 | 17% |
| Freedom from owners | 40 | 13% |
| All of the above | 180 | 60% |
| Total | 300 | 100 |

Table 16 shows that 180 respondents representing 60% of the total [population agree that by putting the profession ahead of selfish interest and freedom from ownership interest can help tackle the problem. 80 (17%) respondents agree in by putting the profession ahead of selfish interest while 40 respondents representing 13% believe freedom of ownership can help curb this problem.

4.3 Discussion of findings

Basically, the role of the media in Nigeria politics and sustaining democracy cannot be underestimated. This is however based on the level they find themselves in the society. Thus, the findings of this study showed that the media have played a vital role in Nigeria politics since Independence. It showed that they (the media) have maintained peaceful transition of Government from the Shehu Shagari second republic to the now of Muhammadu Buhari Government. This was show by the affirmation of the population as 100% agree to media active role in Nigeria politics.

More so, the findings also showed that Nigeria media have not only played a vital role in the political affairs of the country but also helped in sustaining democracy. Since Nigeria have suffered military intrusion over the years, the media in playing their social responsibility role

have helped sanitize the political terrain of the country in trying to promote a suitable and due process in the exercise of right in the society.

In same vein, the findings established that 100 percent of the population believes one factor or the other have affected the media practice in Nigeria, ranging from assault of journalists, extra-Judicial acts and others. The findings therefore showed that these problems can be solved if proper orientation is created and politicians re-oriented in carrying out their affairs.

Finally, the findings also showed that the media have not lived up their expectation due to the question mark in the credibility. These questions finely attached to corruption, ownership influence, unprofessionalism, and so on. The respondents believe that in line with their social responsibility tenet, the mass media have really put selfish and ownership interest ahead of the public interest thereby promoting little or more of their owners and personal choice than the voice of the people. This was finely shown by the total response of 93% respondents out of 100%.

CHAPTER FIVE

Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Summary

In considering the role of the media in Nigeria politics and sustaining democracy, various factors were looked into in determining if actually the media have played the expected role they ought to have played in Nigeria politics since independence of 1960 and how well they have tried in sustaining democracy.

However, the study aimed at eliciting vital information from a total sample of 300 respondents to ascertain if the media have played the role of sustaining democracy and how well these methods employed are reliable. It thus shows that the media have played the watchdog role in Nigeria since independence exposing ills and corrupt leaders to enable transparency, credibility and objectivity. It also showed that the media have lived up to the expectation of servicing the political sector of Nigeria and Nigerian leaders.

Hitherto, the study found out that the media cannot be separated from the societal political system and their effort in keeping every electoral process in a peace and transparent order before, during and after election is pertinent. More so, they have tried in building mutual understanding in the society towards accepting peace to war based on diversity religion and ethnicity.

Despite some factors that has mitigated the credence of the Nigeria media professionals, the study however addressed the cause, effect and remedy to these factors. From the analysis, majority of the respondents believe in the media to maintain the due process and help sanitize the democratic and political process of Nigeria. On this, the study established the following:

- That the media have helped maintain swift and peaceful political process.

- The media have sanitized and promote goodwill in the political sector despite the high range of corruption among the leaders/politicians.
- That the media since independence have helped promote true democracy practices amidst wars and violence.
- The media cannot be separated from the society as the fourth echelon of the realm, due to the role they play in maintaining right and mobilizing all spheres of the society including checking on other arms of government.

5.2 Conclusion

Today, we can safely boast that democracy is gradually taken root in Nigeria with the successful transition from one democratically elected government to another on May 29, 2015. However, we can't say Nigeria democracy has developed, as the mass media must work assiduously hard to sustain the democratic successes we have achieved thus far. To further consolidate the success recorded by the mass media so far, the government must take some deliberate and concrete steps in overhauling the entire media industry in the country.

As a recent study eloquently puts it:

Without information, there is no accountability. Information is power and the more people who possess it; the more power is distributed. The degree to which a media is independent is the degree to which it can perform an effective public watchdog function over the conduct of Public Affairs (Pope, 2000: pp119-120).

As we have seen, the Nigerian media with a lively tradition of independence and outspokenness take their watchdog role seriously, and have insisted on it under both military and civilian governments. In the cases examined, the transition and the gates affairs; we see the media providing information of a critical nature, and shaping the discourse agenda in ways that deepen the quality and content of Nigeria's burgeoning democracy. This however showed that

there is every reason to believe, given Nigeria's plural and robust media, that this will continue to be the case in the foreseeable future.

The media is not immune to corruption, ethnicity or factionalism, all of which afflict the Nigerian socio-polity. And this has necessarily detracted from their moral profile and consequently weakened their watchdog role. Self-cleansing, internal regulatory mechanisms such as The Press Council as well as keen commercial competition help to restrain, in a measure some of these abuses. In any case, the committed segment of the press is still by and large free from the rot while the possibility of disrepute or business failure serves as a check against grossness.

Our case studies show that the media remains a cardinal institution for consolidating and extending Nigeria's young democracy, in view of their oversight functions with respect to the three arms of government as well as their own ranks.

5.3 Recommendations

1. That the media irrespective of the societal ills should live up to the expectation of the people and focus on projecting truth and ethnics demand and fight against unethical practices. More so, priority must be given to the welfare of media practitioners. Nigerian media practitioners are among the least paid in the world. The government must look intently into this issue if they would be motivated to give their best to sustain democracy. Better training and timely payments of journalist's salaries will moderate the tendency to be driven by the imperative of "stomach infrastructure" as they play their trade (Adibe, 2015).

2. From the study, it was however gathered that the media has played little or no role in bringing the masses opinion in their dealings in political affairs other than that, they put owners interest ahead; it is therefore suggested that the media pay more attention to the masses as social responsibility tenets suggests.

3. Since the media cannot be separated from the society, it is therefore imperative upon the media to maintain credibility in sustaining democracy, sanitize economic, education, social and most especially political sector of Nigeria. On this, the study suggests that media should live up to the information and educational function by providing the masses with vital news that promotes peace and tranquility in helping the society grow.

4. Closely related to the above is the provision of modern communication equipments. In today's technology driven world, Nigeria mass media cannot afford to be lacking behind in this respect. We therefore call on the Federal government to be proactive in ensuring that the deadline set for broadcast stations in Nigeria to switch over transmission from analogue to digital service is achievable. To this end, increase funding of allocations to media stations should be encourage as well as be strictly monitored to ensure that the disbursed funds are appropriately utilized. In doing this, they should establish an agency that will take care of issues on extra-judicial act like Nigeria press council to journalists.

References

- Adibe, J. (2015). *The role of Nigerian media in nation building*. Adapted from a paper presented at a training workshop on “objective and sensitive reportage of conflicts”. Held at the Institute of governance and social research. Jos, Plateau State.
- Afamuefuna, C. A. (2007). Democracy and good governance in Nigeria: The place of the mass media. *International journal of communication*. PP 253- 264.
- Alemoh, T.A. (2011). “Journalism Training, Workplace Influence and the quest for Professionalism”. In Wilson, D. (Ed.). *Communication for Social Change and Development*. Uyo: BSM Resources Nigeria Ltd.
- Asemah, E. (2011) *Perspectives in Advertising and Public Relations*. Jos: Lizorn Press. (Rev ed)
- Asemah, E.S., Gujbawu, M, Ekharefo, D & Okpanachi, R. (2012). *Research methods and procedures in mass communication*. Jos: Great Future Press.
- Asemah E.S, Edegoh, L.O and Ogwo, C. (2012). “Employing the Mass Media for the Promotion of Human Rights in Nigeria”. *African Research Review* Vol.7 No.28. Pg. 49
- Asika, N. (2008): *Research Methodology in the Behavioral Sciences*. Lagos: Longman Nigeria Limited.
- Ayo, O. and Dele, S., (2001). The Media and Democratic Rule in Nigeria In: *Development Policy Management Network Bulletin*. Vol. XIII, pp. 30-34
- Baran, S.J and Davis, D.K. (2003). *Mass Communication Theory; Foundation, Ferment, and Future*, Canada: Wadsworth.
- Berman, L. & Murphy, B. A. (1996). *Approaching Democracy*. New Jersey, NJ: Prentice/Hall.
- Ciboh, R. (2010). News agenda and the subject of politics in newspaper reporting of the fourth republic. In Mangut, J. & Waum, T. (eds). *The press and literature in the fourth republic*. Makurdi: Aboki publishers.
- Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (1999). Lagos: Federal Government Press.
- Daily Trust Newspaper* (2012). Kaduna bomber arrested. 6 killed, 23 injured. Friday, April 27, Pp5.
- Curran, J. (1991). Communication and Citizenship, In: Peter, D. & Colin, S. (eds) *Rethinking media as a public sphere*. London: Routledge. pp. 27-57.
- Ende, T.S. (2013). Media coverage of the 2011 elections in Nigeria. In V. Egwemi (ed.). *Issues in the 2011 general elections in Nigeria*. Ibadan. Sam – Adex Printers.

- Ezonbi, B. & Jonah, C. E. (2013). Democracy, good governance and human rights issues in Nigeria since 1999: Some reflections. In A.S. Modibo & A.Y. Adadu (eds). *Democracy and development in Africa*.
- Felix, J. (2005). *Civil Society and Political Accountability: Proportion for Discussion*. Seminar paper on Institution, Accountability and Democratic Governance at the Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame, U.S.A.
- Folarin, B. (1998). *Theories of Mass Communication: An Introductory Text*. Ibadan: Stirling-Holding Publishers.
- Galadima, D.J & Asemah, E.S. (2012). Predicators of Access to information among residents of Jos, Nigeria. In: *Journal of communication and media research*. Vol. 4. No. 1 pp 77 – 92. AFRREV, 10 (1), S/NO 40, JANUARY, 2016 85
- Galadima, J.D. & Enighe, J.M (2001). The press in Nigerian politics: A historical analysis of issues and pattern of news coverage. *The Nigerian journal of communication*. Vol. 1No.1 pp 62 – 74.
- Giddens, A. (1991). *Modernity and self identity: Self and Society in the late Modern Age*. Cambridge: Polity Press.
- Gwamna, J. D (1992). *The Imperative of Interfaith Understanding and Co-operation for Responsible Politics in Nigeria*. A paper presented at the Interfaith Initiative for Peace Conference, Held in Abuja.
- Kirby, D., Korpi, M., Barth, R. & Cagampang, H. (1997) *The impact of Postponing Sexual Involvement curriculum among youths in California; Family Planning Perspectives*, 6(29), pp. 100–108.
- Lai, Oso. (2013), *Media and Democracy in Nigeria: A Critique Of Liberal Perspective*. Lagos state University. Retrievable @ www.iiste.org
- Lwahas, S. (2004). The Media and Good Governance in Nigeria. in Best, G.C. (ed). *Journal of Theatre and Communication Studies, University of Jos*. Vol.4, No.2 pp.27-28.
- McQuail, D. (1994). *Mass Communication Theory*. 3rd Edition, London: Sage Publications.
- McQuail, D. (2005). *Mass communication theory* (5th edition) London: Sage Publishers

Appendix I

Department of Mass Communication,
Auchi Polytechnic Auchi,
Auchi.
2022

Dear Respondent,

Request to Complete a Questionnaire

I am a HND 2 student of Mass Communication; I am conducting a research on “**An Assessment of the Mass Media Coverage of Political Campaigns for Democratic Sustenance in Nigeria**”.

The research is in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Higher National Diploma (HND) in Mass Communication.

I will be grateful for your assistance and co-operation in spending a few minutes to complete the attached questionnaire in order to facilitate the research.

I assure you that the information you provide will be treated with utmost confidentiality and will be used strictly for academic purposes.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully,

Agbadu Innocent

Appendix II

Instruction

Please tick (✓) or (x) as appropriate

Section A

1. Age:

18 – 22 [] 23 – 27 [] 28 – 32 [] 33 and above []

2. Gender:

Male [] Female []

3. Religion:

Christian [] Muslim [] Traditionalist []

4. Marital Status:

Single [] (b) Married [] (c) Divorced []

Academic Qualification of Respondents:

(a) ND1 [] (b) ND2 [] (c) HND1 [] (d) HND2 []

SECTION B: PSYCHOGRAPHIC DATA

(a) Do you have access to political campaigns (s) in Nigeria?

Yes [] (b) No [] (c) Undecided []

(b) What role have the media played towards Nigeria politics?

Maintaining peaceful transition of Government [] Expose ills concerning Nigeria politics []

Promoting bias and favoritism [] All of the above []

(c) Have the media live up to their expectation in terms of political reports?

Yes [] Not Really [] No []

(d) What are the major issues tackled by the media during political affairs?

Projecting campaign, candidates and manifestos [] Exposing ills and presenting candidate for debate [] Doing a follow up on candidates and how credible they are [] All of the above []

(e) **Has the media helped in sustaining democracy?**

Yes [] Not Really [] No []

(f) **In what way do you think the media have helped in sustaining democracy?**

Promoting Equal Right [] Projecting peaceful transition [] Serving a watchdog [] All of the above []

(g) **What are the factors that have hampered media duty in sustaining democracy?**

Unprofessionalism [] Assault and battering [] Ex-judicial acts [] Corruption [] All of the above []

(h) **Do you think the media can survive these factors?** Yes [] Not Really [] No []

(i) **Has the media live up to expectation in sustaining democracy. If yes explain and if No why?**

Yes [] Not Really [] No []

(j) **What are the factors affecting their credibility?**

Corruption [] Unprofessionalism [] Ownership influence [] No answer []

(k) **How can Nigeria media tackle these problems?**

By putting the profession ahead of selfish interest [] Freedom from owners [] All of the above []