

CHAPTER ONE

1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

The development of Nigerian politics is interwoven with that of the press. The early press, notably Townsend's *Iwe Irolin fun awon oti Egba Yoruba*, the Nigerian first newspaper was used as a political propaganda tool to fight the colonial administration in Lagos during the struggle for Independence. Idowu (2001:55) reports that the newspaper was so effective that the Church Missionary Society (CMS) in England found it necessary to caution Townsend over his "excesses" in 1963. He further comments that a year later, Governor Freeman complained to the home government that *Iwe Irohim* was "aggravating problems of foreign policy". This explains why the press is viewed as a very powerful weapon in the hands of both the government and the governed. It is the seeming efficacy of the media that Ngene (2001:1) writes that "As an institution, the press has been described variously". Some people see and perceive it as the "watch dog of the society", some describe it as a "mirror" through which society sees itself as it is.

In similar vein, others describe the press as "the unrecognized fourth arm of government". This later description of the press gave rise to the tag on the press all over the world as the "fourth estate of the realm", thus being accorded the fourth position on the hierarchy of leadership in a democratic society. The other arms of government being referred to include the executive, judiciary and legislature.

As the fourth estate of the realm, press enhances not only the smooth operation, performance and interactions between the various arms of government in the service of the people, but also prevents any operation of the people by these arms of government.

Similarly, the press in performing its "watch dog role", Edeani (1993:80) posits that the press is supposed to keep a watchful eye on what the government is doing and has the obligation on behalf of the public to criticize the government whenever it thinks that the government has not performed in the public interest.

This notwithstanding, the pen profession, like any other profession can also affect a society – negatively or positively. On the positive side, the press (mass-media) appear to possess unequalled and unparalleled capacities and capabilities to unveil, portray and reflect the society in which it operates.

On the negative aspect, Kenneth Kaunda, a Former Zambian President explains "given appropriate conditions, the press can cause war or create peace. It can promote development or create difficulties in ways of development".

What the above statement by Kaunda simply means, is that it is counter productive for any society to create conditions that would provide the press the opportunity of exhibiting its negative traits since the consequences are always far-reaching.

Mahatma Gandhi acknowledges this much when he said "the press is a great power but as an unchained torrent submerges the whole country side and devastates crops, even so an uncontrolled pen serves but to destroy".

Okunna (2001:75) supports the press for its roles in politics when she says the history of the press in many societies shows that journalists have always been in the forefront of the struggle for freedom. The best journalists, that is, those who distinguish themselves and stand out among their peers are journalists

who speak for the people/or grant people access to the media.

1.2 STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLME

This work sets out to determine the role of the press in Nigerian politics particularly its patterns of reporting and analysing political issues, crises and struggle since their pre-independence era. For quite a long time now, as could be observed from the preceding studies, the press have proved to be a potent tool used in shaping, altering, perceptions and causing attitude change. The press (radio, television, newspapers, and magazines) are used to lend credence, support, and authenticity to certain political issues, political office holders and parties yet, little or no effort has been made to find out the impact of continuous press participation in the nations politics.

Based on the above, the researcher therefore deem it expedient and purposeful to investigate the role of the press in politics. A historical analysis of issues and patterns of news coverage.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study is to find out whether or not the Nigerian press is selective in its report of similar political issues that affect the progress and functioning of the nation or not.

The study will also find out the circumstances and the reasons for the performances of the press especially in periods of political crisis. This study will further strive to ascertain what was responsible for the dearth of investigative reporting during the period and the in updating of the payes of newspapers and magazines with personalities who hold and support similar views as the newspaper organizations they work for.

Similarly, this study will determine the implications of using the press for pure sectional, ethnic and religions biased coverage's of events.

1.4 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

For the purpose of carrying out this study effectively, the following research questions have been formulated to guide the study.

Do Nigerians thinks that the press was selective in its coverage of similar political issues in the country?

Does ownership and location of a media organisation affect its patterns of news coverage on politics, events, and political issues?

What implication does investigative reporting and a high preponderance of views/opinions in the press holds for the Nigerian press?

Is sectional, ethnic and religious bias glaringly observe in the pattern of news coverage and analysis of issue by the Nigeria press?

1.5 RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

H1: The Nigeria press is selection in its coverage of similar political stories and issues.

H0: The Nigeria press is not selection in its coverage of similar political stories and issues.

H2: Ownership and location of a media organization affect its pattern of news coverage on political issues and events.

H0: Ownership and location of a media organization does not affect its pattern of news coverage on political issues and events.

H3: Absence of well-investigated reports and stories have adverse effect on the image of the Nigerian press.

H0: Absence of well-investigated reports and stories on political message does not affect the image of the Nigerian press.

H4: The patterns of news coverage and analysis of issues by the Nigerian press do manifest incidents of sectional, religions and ethnic bias.

H0: The patterns of news coverage and analysis of issues by the Nigerian press do not manifest cases of sectional, ethnic and religion bias.

1.6 DEFINITION OF TERMS

OPERATIONAL AND CONCEPTIONAL DEFINITIONS

At this point, it is necessary to define concepts under study both operationally and conceptionally. To this effect, the following concepts have to be defined: press, politics, analysis, issues, pattern, coverage.

PRESS

CONCEPTIONAL DEFINITION: Radio, Television, Periodicals – including newspapers, magazines, book, leadlets, that are used in Nigeria for the dissemination and transmission to widely dispersed audience.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION: In this study, press refers to the use of organs of mass-communication like radio, and television.

POLITICS

CONCEPTIONAL DEFINITION: The art of science with guiding or influencing government policy, winning and holding control over a government.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION: The struggle for power and dominance, sharing and allocating of the country's resources.

ANALYSIS:

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION: An examination of issues, events, and topics that are complex so as to elucidate and make its meaning clear.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION: In this study, it is the manner in which the media reports or packages political news to aid the struggle and quest for power and control of the nation.

ISSUES

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION: These are important topics for discussion and argument.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION: These refer to policy, options or programmes put in place by media organization for the over-all purpose of advancing the country and politics.

PATTERNS

CONCEPTUAL DEFINITION: This is a design or reliable and systematical style or packaging news coverage's.

OPERATIONAL DEFINITION: Here, pattern is the way and manner the press/media organisation treats position and slant stories to favour a cause.

NEWS COVERAGE

Conceptually, this means gathering and presentation of happenings, events peoples and places on newspapers, magazines, radio and television. Operationally, the actual style, language, positioning and slant given to a story in any of the various organs of mass-communication in Nigeria.

1.7 ASSUMPTIONS

The following assumptions are made:-

The critical, pungent and vocal posture of the Nigerian press on political happenings, events, and politics in Nigeria as well as its patterns of news coverage are responsible for the advancement of the nation.

That print and electronic channels as well as political messages and advertising have helped Nigeria to

become a democratic nation.

Professional and credible discharge of functions by the press could lead to sustenance of democracy.

That the respondents are aware that the media of communication affect and reflect social, economic and political forces and processes.

1.8 SIGNIFICANS OF THE STUDY

Circumstances have assigned the press (mass-media) in many countries the unique function of presenting and clarifying the goals and values of society.

The mass media are also expected to give the citizens of any country full access to the day's intelligence. As a result of this role of the press, the greatest significance of this study lies in the provision of an insight into what the Nigerian news media's sojourn and participation in politics holds for the country.

In this regards, this study will ascertain whether or not the press fulfilled their social responsibility role of providing access to the days intelligence. This study will also show the extent political news, a vital information and educational needing the society, receives coverage in Nigerian print and electronic media.

The study when completed, would have succeeded in providing a validly rich data on which further studies on this and related areas will be based.

1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The need to meet up with the costs that would be involved in carrying out a study that will cover a wider area was a major problem. Hence the researcher limited the research only to Enugu Metropolis.

1.10 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The background theories upon which the researcher hinge the study so as to give it clarity and meaning are the agenda setting and social relationships theories.

In his celebrated book "the processes and effects of mass – communication". Wilbur Schramm (1980) noted that a major factor which is extremely important in understanding and ascertaining the effects of mass-communication of the audience members is the interaction between people in a society, which according to him is explained in the social relationships theory. This theory, he further painted out is closely related to the social categories theory but that the crux of the social relations theory stems from the emphasis it places on the interaction of members of social categories, that is, the relationship between them. Interpersonal communication and interactional symbolism becomes evident and of significant importance during face-to-face communication.

Members of group (press) are able to influence one another and that helps to also determine the effect of mass-media messages on individuals. "No man is an island" and that we cannot live for ourselves alone are catchy phrase which perhaps, captures succinctly the power and essence of social relationships.

Attitudes and behaviours of people whether in private or public life are known to be powerfully shaped by social influence.

Herman Melville (1964) acknowledges the above position when he notes that "our lives are connected by a thousand invisible threads". According to him, these threads may strain with tension, vibrate with joy or he peacefully calm. Surely, relationships of various kinds whether of the media and government of the family and one of its members or even relationships existing between members of staff of an organization and its management is often a complex issue and a suspect idea. Hence, the media, social fact whose primary task is to serve society needs.

Accordingly, the major premise of the agenda setting theory is that it acknowledges the undisputed ability of

the mass-media in exercising a powerful influence in determining the degree of attention or prominence they give to subjects in which they are interested.

Succinctly put, "Agenda setting" is label often given to the ability of the mass media to direct attention to certain subjects.

Cohen (1963:120) appears to agree with the above statement when he affirms that: "the press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.

The important and implication of Cohen's assertion is indeed predicated on the fact that the mass-media do indeed have a strong influence on what people think is important. Thus, any issue or subject matter that escapes the attention of the press is considered unimportant.

Thus, the press, through its discharge of its legitimate function of informing the people on politics, party manifestoes, party mission statements and other related issues influencing the political landscape of the country. This confirms Peterson (1980:98) finding in America 1976 election campaign that the respondent defined as "most important" those issues and subjects matters the media emphasized in its coverage. Thus there exists a co-relation between journalistic emphasis and public preoccupation on politics and political stories.

PRESS IN NIGERIAN POLITICS ANALYSIS OF ISSUES AND PATTERNS OF NEWS

The complete project material is available and ready for download. All what you need to do is to order for the complete material. The price for the material is NGN 3,000.00.

Make payment via bank transfer to Bank: Guaranteed Trust Bank, Account name: Emi-Aware technology, Account Number: 0424875728

Bank: Zenith Bank, Account name: Emi-Aware technology, Account Number: 1222004869

or visit the website and pay online. For more info: Visit <https://researchcub.info/payment-instruct.html>

After payment send your depositor's name, amount paid, project topic, email address or your phone number (in which instructions will sent to you to download the material) to +234 70 6329 8784 via text message/ whatsapp or Email address: info@allprojectmaterials.com.

Once payment is confirmed, the material will be sent to you immediately.

It takes 5min to 30min to confirm and send the material to you.

For more project topics and materials visit: <https://researchcub.info/> or For enquiries: info@allprojectmaterials.com or call/whatsapp: +234 70 6329 8784

Regards!!!