

THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN CONSOLIDATING DEMOCRACY IN NIGERIA: A CASE OF GOMBE MEDIA CORPORATION

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Abstract

In any country, the media plays the role of entrenching democracy and cooperation between the leaders and the citizenry. However, the efficacy of the mass media in Nigeria in promoting democracy has been limited from the onset by several factors, for this reason, it is germane to note that, Nigeria's democracy has remained grossly unstable since the return to this popular form of governance in 1999. It is against this background, that this research seeks to examine the role of the mass media in democratic consolidation in Nigeria using Gombe Media Corporation as case study. The research design was basically a survey research and data were generated from both primary and secondary sources with questionnaires as the instruments for generating the primary data. The populations of the study were the 225 staff of Gombe Media Corporation and 69 people were purposely selected and interviewed from members of the public mostly were those in Gombe metropolis. Random sampling was adopted in sampling the respondents from the staff categories while accidental/convenience sampling techniques was used on members of the public. Data gathered were presented in frequency tables. At the end of the analysis, it was discovered that the Gombe Media Corporation has been contributing to educate the people about political activities in the state; however Gombe media corporation is owned by the state government and as such controlled by politicians with political biases and leanings, therefore, to effectively perform their roles, it was recommended that Gombe Media Corporation should be independent and be given a free hand to perform within the ethics of their profession.

Key Words: Media Corporations, Democracy, Democratic Consolidation, Media, Mass Media

Introduction

Since the end of colonial era, most African countries are striving for Democratic Consolidation and Nigeria is not exceptional. Democratic consolidation is the capacity of the polity to nurture and sustain democratic values over a long spell with little or no threat of abortion of the democratic experiment in all ramifications (Ojo, 2003). It also connects the act of reducing the probability of the breakdown of the system to the point where democracy can be said that it will persist. Some scholars view it as regime maintenance and about regarding the key political institutions as the only legitimate framework for political contestation and adherence to the democratic rules of the game. Nigeria's democracy landed on a good platform with the existence of democratic institutions, such as vibrant civil society organizations and critical mass media among others. These ingredients have the structure and capacity to make democracy strive in Nigeria.

Among these institutions, the mass media is the vibrant. Mass media include newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor and the recent wonder of our times, Internet, among others". The Medias are regarded as the major tool for disseminating information to the citizenry. The mass media have helped entrench democracy and cooperation between the leaders and the citizenry through

ideological persuasions that helped to legitimize the government and win the loyalty of the people (Ojo, 2003). However, the efficacy of the mass media in Nigeria in promoting democracy has been limited from the onset by several factors, for this reason, it is germane to note that, Nigeria's democracy has remained grossly unstable since the return to this popular form of governance in 1999. It is against this background, that this paper seeks to examine the role of the mass media in democratic consolidation in Nigeria using Gombe Media Corporation as case study.

Statement of the Problem

Nigeria's democracy is made up of democratic institutions, such as vibrant civil society organizations and critical mass media among others. However with all these institutions, Nigeria is striving for democratic consolidation. In countries that have gone through autocratic and dictatorial rule (military regimes) the mass media have helped entrench democracy and cooperation between the new leaders and the citizenry through ideological persuasions that helped to legitimize the government and win the loyalty of the people (Ojo, 2015).

However, in Nigeria, the idiosyncratic media policies and control of media by the political leaders have led to a divisive disloyal, sycophantic praise singing, conscienceless and downright corrupt mass media in Nigeria. As a result, the politicians are able to use the media to remain in power rather than use it for mobilizing the people for national development. This has led to the destruction of media houses, killing and maltreatment of media personnel in Nigeria by people who lost confident in them. For example in Gombe State, on 2nd March, 2019, there was attack on Progress FM, a private radio station by political thugs.

It is on this background that this research work seeks to examine the constraints bedeviling the media in democratic consolidation in Nigeria, using Gombe Media Corporation as a study.

Research Questions

Hence the research attempt to provide answers to the following questions:

- i. Has the Media Corporations been playing their role of democratic consolidation in Gombe state?
- ii. What are the constraints bedeviling the media corporation in democratic consolidation in Gombe State?
- iii. What are the possible solutions to the constraints bedeviling the media corporation in democratic consolidation in Gombe state?

Research Objectives

The main objective of this research is to examine the role of the media in democratic consolidation in Nigeria. However, the following are the specific objectives of the study.

- i. To determine whether the Media Corporations has been playing their role in democratic consolidation in Gombe state.
- ii. To determine the various constraints bedeviling the media corporations in democratic consolidation in Gombe State
- iii. To provide solution to the constraints bedeviling the media corporations in democratic consolidation in Gombe State

Literature Review and Theoretical Framework

Concept of Mass Media

Mass media refers to all the avenue through which information can be passed from one person to numerous, scattered and heterogeneous audiences. They also mean the vehicles through which messages, information, ideas, knowledge and culture are transmitted to a large audience. According to Afamuefuna (2007), mass media are a technical communication concept which refers to the devices employed by anyone involved in a mass mediated communication situation for moving messages across

distance or time. Thus, the mass media are the major modern means of communicating simultaneously and sometime instantaneously with a large scattered heterogeneous and anonymous audience. These include radio, television, newspaper, magazine, and the internet.

Ike (2005) simply sees mass media as “the institutions of mass communications such as radio, television, newspaper and magazine”. Nwanne (2012) agreed with Ike (2005) and defined mass media as “all the gadgets, tools, instruments of mass communication, professionally deployed to reach heterogeneous audiences spread across disparate geographical areas. They include newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor and the recent wonder of our times, Internet, among others”.

On the other hand, Imhonopi & Urim (2009) define the mass media in the following words: “the mass media play a major role in promotion and sustenance of the norms and values of a society”. In the light of the above, we can deduced that, mass media include all the gadgets, tools, instruments of mass communication, professionally deployed to reach heterogeneous audiences spread across disparate geographical areas. They include newspapers, magazines, television, radio, outdoor and the recent wonder of our times, Internet, among others”. Because 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

The Concept of Democracy

The concept of democracy has become a popular concept in every contemporary discourse. It is now a word that resonates in people's minds and springs from their lips as they struggle for freedom and better conditions of service. In its Greek understanding, the word “democracy” has a remote origin from the word *demokratia* (*demos* – the people, plus *kratia* (from *kartos*) – sway, authority) meaning the rule by the people. The impression this conveys is that it is a form of government where the people directly takes decisions by themselves without representation as we presently have today in most states of the world (Aguda (n.d). Democracy is popularly conceptualized as government of the people, by the people and for the people. As a concept, democracy has problems of homogeneity in that it is often used in an ambiguous and inconsistent way, such that it means different things to different people; in different contexts (Ojo, 2003).

The concept can better be examined from two points of view; that is, as ideology and as politics (Obasanjo & Mabogunje 1992). 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, the rule of law, the right to property, the free flow of information and the right of choice between alternative political positions. On the other hand, democracy as politics is concerned with the institutions and processes of governance that may elicit tend to foster consensus whilst simultaneously promoting and sustaining respect for the ideology of democracy.

Ramaswamy (2007) 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 masses.

Concept of Democratic Consolidation

Diamond (1999) sees democratic consolidation as the process of achieving broad and deep legitimation such that all significant political actors believe that popular rule is better for their society than any other realistic alternative they can imagine. It also connects the act of reducing the probability of the breakdown of the system to the point where democracy can be said that it will persist. Some

scholars view it as regime maintenance and about regarding the key political institutions as the only legitimate framework for political contestation and adherence to the democratic rules of the game. It manifest under enhanced economic development, developed democratic culture, stable party system, suffices to assert that this cannot be attained in Nigeria until stability is attained. This therefore shows that though under democratic regime, Nigeria is striving for consolidation.

The Relationship between Mass Media and Democracy

It is an indisputable fact that mass media is the watchdog of any society. It is this enormous responsibility that the Nigeria Constitution 1999 in Chapter 4, Section 39, Sub-section 2 like all modern constitutions across the globe, provided that people be free to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information, ideas and opinions. Over and above this provision, the 1999 Constitution gives a charge in Chapter 2, Section 22 which categorically states that “The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people”. It is against the backdrop of this provisions that the mass media could monitor governance in a democracy (Santas & Ogoshi, 2016)

Taken together, the mass media and democracy are inextricably linked. The Media for Democracy Monitor (MDM, 2007) clearly understands this link when it avers that modern democracy and the mass media are vital, indispensable link between those who govern and those who are governed. If the mass media do not inform the citizens thoroughly and impartially about government policies and their consequences as well as about the alternatives of government policy proposed by opposition parties and civil society, the people's democratic choice is severely limited (Ugande, 2010). Umaru & Abdullahi (2012) equally confirm that the mass media are very important and centrally located in the lives of the people and the democratic process. They when further to establish that because of this centrality, the media justifiably focus their attention and accord high priority to government programmes.

In addition, Ojo (2015) pointed out that the media and political system “are involved in an intricate nexus of relationship, cooperation and complimentary activities, all geared at promoting individual and collective interest of the society”. He equally notes that in the performance of these roles, both estates exert considerable influence on one another. Not only do they exert considerable influence on each other, both the media and the political system work towards the same end in the society; ensuring good governance, providing a sense of direction and exercising control over the affairs of a state, protecting the rights of citizens and defending the rule of law.

Role of the media in Consolidating Democracy in Nigeria

Ciboh (2010) in explaining the role of the media 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) 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 uncover by the investigative prowess of the Nigerian media.

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, Edegoh, & Ogwo, 2012).

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). 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.

Challenges of Mass Media in Consolidating Democracy in Nigeria

The performance of the Nigerian mass media right from the first Republic to the present one could be described as a combination of both success and failures. The media is constantly been pressured from the public, political parties, interest groups, and the government respectively. This pressure usually results in a situation where the media is force to take side in reporting national events in order to promote the interest of a particular party or interest group. According to Ogbu (2013) these problems render the mass media environment unconducive for professional and effective media practice. He also notes that mass media practitioners are almost reduced to a zero level of independence. In his view Ende (2013) lamented that despite the vibrancy of the Nigerian media, the differentiation of press and its inclinations towards politics have continued to influenced its functionality, perception and disposition by the virtue of the issues surround its ownership and control or its sympathy, the press in Nigeria has remained essentially the stale old wine in new bottle despite all attempts at repackaging. Thus, there is much dependence on external influences such as government control and ownership of the mass media content. This situation is very pronounced in government owned media establishments where news stories are slanted, putting spin on stories, “fiction writing and partisanship has become the norm in contemporary media practice. Closely related to the above is the dearth of critical and objective analysis on issues especially if it involves the government. Commenting on this issue Ojo (2015) articulates that in assessing the media coverage of the 2011 elections, the UNDP- sponsored study found that the coverage of the election was not issue based; the media was not sufficiently critical in analyzing the various campaign promises made by the political parties or their candidates. He further states that the media demonstrated weakness in investigative journalism; most times the media had failed to distinguish between the official and political campaigns activities of incumbents like governors; generally, government owned media severally and commonly violates the provisions of the electoral act, professional code of ethics and the Nigerian political broadcasting codes. For example, several political candidates from the opposition parties had complained that states government broadcast stations hardly

air the jingles and political adverts of the opposition party in their radio and television stations. Even though complains about this situation was directed at the regulatory body that oversee this activities but nothing has been done about it. This clearly negates the principle of democratic values and thus will not promote our democratic culture.

Corruption is yet another monster that has eaten deep into the activities of the mass media in Nigeria, and which is a threat to the sustenance of democracy. It has been observed that corruption has compromised the capacity of the media to effectively champion social engineering in Nigeria. One of the recurrent problems that have continued to plague Media practice in the context of Nigeria democracy is the issue of corruption among media men. Alemoh (2011) reported that Nigeria media practitioners have been accused on several occasions in regards to issues of bribery, corruption, and a host of other unethical behavior in the discharge of their day to day duties of reporting News events. More often journalists demand “brown envelopes” after undertaken an assignment. Some even sacrifice the ethics of the profession on the altar of bribery and corruption by either killing of news stories or writing fictitious stories just to promote the image of a political figure.

Lastly, it is worthy to mention that Most Nigerian media houses are not well equipped with modern communication equipment. Poor infrastructural facilities and antiquated gadgets are still been used to disseminate information. Hence Nigeria is still battling to meet the deadline set for digital transmission. The factor responsible for this development is largely attributed to government lack of political will to embark on the transformation of the media industry and corruption that is prevalent among government officials. Okpeh (2005) painfully notes that “in a globalizing world characterized by competition to hook on to the stupendous breakthroughs in information technology and application, it is common sight in Nigeria to see journalist hopelessly relying on equipments acquired several decades ago”. This unfortunate development has tremendously affected the quality of information the media dish out to the Nigerian public.

Theoretical Framework

To ensure democratic consolidation in Nigeria, the researcher proposes that Nigeria should adopt the Democratic Participant Media Theory. Democratic Participant Media Theory was propounded by McQuail, in 1983. This theory calls for greater attention to the needs, interests and aspirations of the receiver in a political society. In place of top-down, it calls for horizontal communication and a concern for feedback in socio-political communication. It recommends the associational and service modes as opposed to the command mode. Under this system, the role of the media is not to serve the public but to inform it in line with what the government would want the populace to know. If Nigeria will put the media in this position as stated by this theory, there will be sustainability of democracy in the country. More so, the role of the media should be to inform the public in line with what the government would want the populace to know, and not to sing praise to the government.

Research Methodology

Every scientific research must have procedures adopted on how data are to be collected and analyzed. It seeks through data to discover what is absolutely true. The research design that was employed for this work is descriptive Survey. Two methods of data collection were used; these are the primary and the secondary sources. The area of this study is Gombe state media corporation and corporation is located within Gombe metropolis. The target population of this study is mainly the staff of Gombe state media corporation and members of the public within Gombe metropolis. The Corporation is made up of a population of 255 staff while a convenient sample of 100 staff was randomly selected among the staff for study while accidental sampling was used on members of the public. Data collected were presented using tables and simple percentage.

Data Presentation and Analysis

Social survey of a descriptive type was used for this study. Data for the study were generated mainly through random sampling technique, by the use of questionnaire administered to 100 respondents, randomly selected among the staff of Gombe Media Corporation while members of the Public were also interviewed based on the item in the questionnaire. Out of a total number of 100 questionnaires distributed to respondents on their perception on role of media in democratic consideration in Gombe State only 90 were successfully completed and tuned in by the respondents and this is considered statistically significant to proceed with the study while 69 people were interviewed based on items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire was divided into three sections; Section (A) elicited information on the background of the respondents, Section (B) focused on the role of the Gombe Media Corporation in Democratic Consolidation in Gombe State while section (C) focused on constraints bedeviling the Gombe media corporation in democratic consolidation in Gombe State.

Data obtained through the instrument of self-administered questionnaire and interviews were analyzed using simple percentage and frequency distribution and the results are discussed under the various sub-headings as they related to the subject matter. Below are the results of the questionnaire administered.

Table 1: Respondents' Opinion on whether Gombe Media Corporation has been contributing to educate the people about the political activities in the state.

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	56	35.2%
Agree	91	57.2%
Strongly disagree	5	3.2%
Disagree	7	4.4%
Undecided	0	0%
Total	159	100%

Source: Field Work, 2019

From the above table, 56 respondents representing 35.2% strongly agree that Gombe Media Corporation has been contributing to educate the people about the political activities in the state, 91 respondents representing 57.2% agree, where as 5 respondent representing 3.2% strongly disagree while 7 respondents representing 4.4% disagree. This show that Gombe Media Corporation has been contributing to educate the people about the political activities in the state since majority of the respondents agreed.

Table 2: Respondents' Opinion on whether the Corporation has been fair in giving accurate and adequate information about government activities

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	46	28.9%
Agree	90	56.6%
Strongly disagree	9	5.7%
Disagree	12	7.6%
Undecided	2	1.2%
Total	159	100%

Source: Field Work, 2019

From the above table, respondent's opinion whether the corporation been fair in giving accurate and adequate information about government activities indicate that; 46 respondents representing 28.9% strongly agree, 90 respondents representing 56.6% agree, 9 respondents representing 5.7% strongly disagree where as 12 respondents representing 7.6% disagree while 2 respondents representing 1.2% was undecided. This shows that the corporation been fair in giving accurate and adequate information about government activities in the state since majority of the respondents agrees.

Table 3: Respondents' Position on whether the role of Gombe Media Corporation will generally enhance democratic consolidation in the state and Nigeria at large

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	48	30.2%
Agree	95	59.7%
Strongly disagree	3	1.9%
Disagree	5	3.2%
Undecided	8	5.0%
Total	159	100%

Source: Field Work, 2019

From the above table, 48 respondents representing 30.2% strongly agree that the role of Gombe Media Corporation will generally enhance democratic consolidation in the state and Nigeria at large, 95 respondents representing 59.7% agree, 3 respondent representing 1.9% strongly agree where as 5 respondents 3.2% disagree while 8 respondents representing 5.0% were neutral. This shows that role of Gombe Media Corporation will generally enhance democratic consolidation in the state and Nigeria at large since majority of the respondents agrees. This shows that in as much as the media might be taking side in favour of government officials, they are still agent of democratic consolidation in Nigeria.

Table 4: Respondents' view on whether the corporation is an avenue for political campaign

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	41	25.8%
Agree	76	47.7%
Strongly disagree	6	3.8%
Disagree	23	14.5%
Undecided	13	8.2%
Total	159	100%

Source: Field Work, 2019

From the above table, respondent's opinion whether the corporation is an avenue for political campaign indicate that 41 respondents representing 25.8% strongly agree, 76 respondents representing 47.7% agree, 6 respondents representing 3.8% strongly disagree where as 23 respondents representing 14.5% disagree while 13 respondents representing 8.2% were silent. This shows that Gombe Media Corporation is an avenue for political campaign since majority of the respondents agrees. And this may make them to take side in the course of this which might mar democracy in the state.

Table 5: Respondents' Opinion on whether there are constraints impeding Gombe Media Corporation in informing government activities

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	43	27.0%
Agree	89	56.0%
Strongly disagree	9	5.7%
Disagree	11	6.9%
Undecided	7	4.4%
Total	159	100%

Source: Field Work, 2019

From the table above, 43 respondents representing 27.0% strongly agree that there are constraints impeding Gombe Media Corporation in informing government activities, 89 respondents representing 56.0% agree, 9 respondents representing 5.7% strongly disagree and 11 respondents representing 6.9% disagree while 7 respondents representing 4.4% were silent. This indicates that there are constraints impeding Gombe Media Corporation in informing government activities since majority of the respondents agrees.

Table 6: Respondents' view on the most challenging constraint impeding Gombe Media Corporation in informing government activities

Variables	Frequency	Percentage
Finance	33	20.7%
Control by the Government in power	79	49.7%
Lack of good facilities in creating more awareness	47	29.6%
Total	159	100%

Source: Field Work, 2019

From the table above, 33 respondents representing 20.7% says finance is the most challenging constraint impeding Gombe Media Corporation in informing government activities, 79 respondents representing 49.7% says it is control by government in power, while 47 respondents representing 29.6% says it is lack of good facilities in creating more awareness. From the result, majority of the respondents says control by the government in power is the most challenging constraint impeding Gombe Media Corporation in informing government activities. This might be so because government in power is responsible for the provision of their needed resources.

Other Challenges of the corporation according to majority of the respondents includes inadequate man-power, poor infrastructure, lack of proper training and retraining of staff, lack of government support, lukewarm attitude by both state government and management and lack of power supply are other problems affecting the corporation.

However, respondents highlight solution(s) to the above and other challenges impeding the role of Gombe Media Corporation in democratic consolidation in the state and Nigeria at large. Majority of the respondents says funds and facilities should be provided to the corporation by the government, staff should be send for re-training on the use of modern equipment, the corporation should adhere strictly to their duties without being bias in reporting their information, commercialize most of the programmes, improve staff welfare.

Discussion of Major Findings

From the foregoing analysis of the data, the research reveals the followings:

The research revealed that Gombe Media Corporation has been contributing to educate the people about the political activities in the state and the corporation had been fair in giving accurate and adequate information about government activities in the state and that since such information are accurate, they will help to strengthen democracy in the state. This agreed with the view of Umaru & Abdullahi, (2012) 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.

Furthermore, the research revealed that, control by the government in power is the major constraint impeding Gombe Media Corporation in informing government activities. Other challenges revealed by the research include; adequate man-power, infrastructure, lack of proper training and retraining of staff, lack of government support, lukewarm attitude by both state government and management and lack of power supply. This is in line with the view of Ende (2013) lamented that despite the vibrancy of the Nigerian media, the differentiation of press and its inclinations towards politics have continued to influenced its functionality, perception and disposition by the virtue of the issues surround its ownership and control or its sympathy, the press in Nigeria has remained essentially the stale old wine in new bottle despite all attempts at repackaging. Thus, there is much dependence on external influences such as government control and ownership of the mass media content. This situation is very pronounced in government owned media establishments where news stories are slanted, putting spin on stories, “fiction writing and partisanship has become the norm in contemporary media practice. Closely related to the above is the dearth of critical and objective analysis on issues especially if it involves the government. Also Alemoh (2011) reported that Nigeria media practitioners have been accused on several occasions in regards to issues of bribery, corruption, and a host of other unethical behavior in the discharge of their day to day duties of reporting News events. More often journalists demand “brown envelopes” after undertaken an assignment. Some even sacrifice the ethics of the profession on the altar of bribery and corruption by either killing of news stories or writing fictitious stories just to promote the image of a political figure.

Lastly, the research revealed that solution to challenges affecting the corporation include independent should be given to the media, funds and facilities should be provided to the corporation by the government, staff should be send for re-training on the use of modern equipment, the corporation should adhere strictly to their duties without being bias in reporting their information, commercializing most of the programmes of the corporation, improve staff welfare. This correspond with the view of Santos & Ogoshi, (2016) that the 1999 Constitution gives a charge in Chapter 2, Section 22 which categorically states that “The press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this Chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the Government to the people”. It is against the backdrop of this provisions that the mass media could monitor governance in a democracy.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The role of the media in the consolidation of Democracy cannot be overemphasized. To be effective, the media need an enabling environment. Since Gombe Media Corporation is government owned and controlled by politicians with political biases and leanings, the involvement and participation of the private sector and civil society organizations would go a long way in achieving a balance. In carrying out their functions, the media must not be merely a mirror of society, passively reporting events. They must act as the watchdog of society and the instigators of positive change.

To effectively perform its roles, Gombe media Corporation should be independent and be given a free hand to perform within the ethics of their profession even when they are owned by private individuals, the government and nongovernmental. The media must also operate in a responsible manner, by exercising a strong sense of fair play and a deep respect for truth in the handling of news and opinions. Above all, the media must operate an effective system of self-monitoring and self-supervision.

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