

IMPACT OF THE CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRACY AND THE MEDIA ON DEVELOPMENT IN NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The study sought to find out the challenges of democracy and the media, and the effects of these challenges on development. The study was anchored on Development Media Theory. The study adopted Library Research Method. Findings revealed that, corruption, greed and selfishness, weak institutions and the fact that power does not reside in the people are challenges to democracy. Findings also showed that, news commercialization, ownership influence and weak institution are challenges that confront the media in Nigeria. It was revealed that one thing that makes corruption to thrive in Nigeria is that, corruption cases involving high profile personalities were never resolved, and that corruption is democracy's biggest challenge. Finding revealed that media ownership influence is a setback to development as it tends to relegate objectivity, fairness and balance to the oblivion. It was concluded that the media cannot hold government accountable when our institutions are weak and when power does not reside in the people. It was therefore recommended that leaders at all levels should endeavour to adhere to the principles of democracy and that our institutions need to be strengthened.

KEYWORDS: Challenges, Democracy Development, Impact, Media

INTRODUCTION

Democracy as a form of government is laden with a lot of laudable principles which when fully implemented will bring about development that is for the

good of all. One of the principles of democracies is that, power should reside in the electorates. This simply means that, the will and the opinion of the majority should supersede that of the few in government. This principle is to ensure that, those in positions of authority do not become too powerful or selfish. Day (2022) identifies the following principles of democracy: Participation of citizens- this principle of democracy gives the people the opportunity to choose who represents them and also gives the people a free voice to express their opinions and desire. Besides voting, participation also entails public debate, town hall meetings and peaceful protest. This principle has put in place mechanisms to ensure that, the government listens to the people. The people can do this through town hall meetings, public debate, peaceful protest and even recall of non performing representative.. Another principle of democracy according to Day (2022) is Free and Fair Elections— this connotes that it is natural that elections will produce different results at different times. So it is important that elections are free and fair. This means that people are given good and accurate information before voting, and that, they are free to discuss and debate it. It also implies that on Election Day, people have equal access to the polls, that everybody's vote has the same value, and that all votes are counted. Free and fair election is a principle that ensures that, power resides in the electorates. With free and fair elections the masses can vote out a non performing government and also vote in a leader of their choice. However, free and fair elections can only become a reality when the institutions charged with these responsibilities are able to or allowed to perform their duties without fear or favour. Development can only thrive where these principles are strictly adhered to..

A democratic principle also stipulates that, there should be a free press. Having a free press is one of the pillars of democracy. The function of the press is critical to democracy and development. This is true in that, the press serves as an interface between the leaders and the led. As an interface between the government and the governed the press carries information from government to the people and vice versa. The press with her unofficial title as, the fourth estate of the realm of government performs a watchdog role on behalf of the society. As a watchdog the press is expected to expose corruption in government, so as to curtail the actions of corrupt individuals in government. The press can also set agenda on issues of national importance, such agenda can become public opinion, this is true in that, “apart from her traditional function of informing, educating and entertaining the media can also give prominence to certain issues or events with a view to bringing such issues or events to public notice,” (Ijwo&Omula, 2014).

Development as a concept is not pinned to a particular definition. However, there are key elements that are always visible in the definitions of

development. Such elements include but not limited to, growth, improved well being and positive changes. Development is “a continuous process of harnessing all the available human and material resources of a society in a way that is compatible with the cultural expression of its people, with the final goal of achieving a quality of living standard that is based on satisfaction, justice, equality, liberty, happiness, freedom and progress (Uche, 1999, p. 14 cited in Asadu, 2012). Development according to BYJUS (n.d) is the process that creates growth, brings in progress and positive change. Development also has to do with economic growth and social progress. While economic growth refers to increase in the people’s income, social progress on the other hand entails provision of public services, literacy and health care.. Little wonder Amartya Sen according to BYJUS (n.d) sees development as a tool that enables people to attain their highest potential or ability by granting freedom of action, such as : freedom of economic, social and family action. For people to reach their highest ability the government needs to create enabling environment for such individuals to achieve their potential. This means that, development transcends improvement in the income of the people. This position holds true in that Barder (2012) posits that, traditional economics focused on incomes as the main measure of well-being. However, Amartya Sen in the 1980s according to Barder (2012) was able to show that, deprivations in the areas of health, education, living standards which are not reflected in income alone also account for poverty. This shows that, the government is a major player in the development process. This is true in that, increase in income does not necessarily translate into development. For development to be felt by majority of the people, government needs to tackle the problem of poverty from the areas of : improve standard of living , access to medical care, access to education and also ensure the security of lives and properties. This, the government can do by adhering strictly to the principles of democracy. Where the government is not living up to expectation, the media can then come in by bringing to the attention of the leaders and the led what has gone wrong or what needs to be done.

Statement of the Problem

Democracy as a system of government is laden with a lot of good principles which when strictly adhered to will bring about ‘quality’ leadership, followership and development. Accountability, periodic elections, free press, rule of law and citizens’ participation are some of the laudable principles or tenets of democracy. The hall mark of democracy is that power should reside in the people, meaning the people (masses) are supposed to have the final say. Simply put the will of the majority is supposed to prevail, over that of a few. Little wonder many countries in the world today have

adopted Democracy as a form of government. A free press (the media) is supposedly expected to set agenda on issues of national interest, from such agenda people can form public opinion and such opinion is supposed to prevail over that of the few in position of authority. A free press (the media) is one of the principal principles of democracy. This study seeks to find out the challenges of democracy and the media, and the effects of these challenges on development. .

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- (1) To find out the challenges of democracy in Nigeria.
- (2) To determine the challenges of the media in Nigeria
- (3) To investigate the effects of the challenges of democracy and the media on development in Nigeria.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study is anchored on Development Media Theory. Development Media Theory was propounded by Dennis McQuail in the 1980s. Ojobor (2002) cited by Okunna said:

The theory emerged in the 1980s to fill the void which became increasingly noticeable as the gap between the developed and developing countries widened. As the gap widened it became apparent that none of the classical theories of the press were strictly applicable to developing countries even though the mass media in these countries were operating according to some of the principles of the classical theories (p.14).

McQuail (1997) observes that Development Media Theory was intended to recognise the fact that societies undergoing a transition from underdevelopment and colonialism to independence and better material conditions, often lack the infrastructure, the money, the traditions, the professional skills and even the audience needed to sustain media institutions comparable to those of the first world or second world in which the four theories could take root.

The foregoing connotes that, development communication is applicable in countries with lower level of economic development and without the required resources; as such the media is required to foster development in such countries. Little wonder Ojobor (2002) posits that, Development Media Theory puts economic development and nation building in the front burner of communication. This position found expression in Asemah, Nwammuo & Nkwa-Uwaoma (2017) who state that, “the underlying fact

behind the genesis of this theory was that there can be no development without communication”

This means that communication is central to development; the centrality of communication to development is hinged on the fact that, about 75% of human activity revolves around communication. It is therefore clear that “development media theory stands for the positive use of the media in national development and for the autonomy and cultural identity of a particular national society and participative communication(Ojobor,2002,P.15).” The Assumption of Development Media Theory according to McQuail cited in Ojobor (2002,) are:

- ❖ The media should accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy.
- ❖ Freedom of the media should be open to restriction according to (1) economic priority (2) development needs of society.
- ❖ The media should give priority in news and information to links with other developing countries, which are close geographically, culturally or politically.
- ❖ Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination task.
- ❖ In the interest of development ends, the state has the right to intervene in or restrict media operations, and devices of censorship, subsidy and direct control can be justified.

The relevance of the theory to this work lies in the fact that Nigeria as a country is in dire need of human and infrastructural development in various areas; there is therefore the need for those in position of leadership to allow the media propel the wheel of development. This the media can do by setting agenda for public discourse. Such agenda may become public opinion and such opinion can compel government to take necessary action, for the good of all. This is important because, the media serve as interface between the leaders and the led in the development process.

CHALLENGES OF DEMOCRACY AND THE MEDIA IN NIGERIA

Widespread corruption and indiscipline are challenges to democracy in Nigeria, there is corruption and indiscipline in the civil services, the police, other institutions both public and private and even among the masses. Corruption and indiscipline is a huge problem to Nigeria democracy. Giving credence to this position Punch Editorial Board (2023) posits that:

A newly released global report on the interplay between democracy and corruption points to perhaps Nigeria’s biggest

challenge. In the September 2023 report, an NGO, the Open Society Foundation, traced the failings of democracy in Nigeria to pervasive corruption. This aligns with a global consensus that corruption in Nigeria is epidemic and hinders its development.

The foregoing connotes that corruption is not just a challenge to democracy alone but it is also a problem to development. This is so because corruption is an impediment to development. A widespread corruption can prevent development because instead of focusing on development oriented tasks or activities attention would be on how to make money through dishonest means. Wide spread corruption and indiscipline are said to be huge problems to development because: corruption manifests in every sphere of national life, most notably in judiciary, government agencies, procurement/contracts, payroll and in extortion by security agents. For many, corruption is the single greatest obstacle preventing Nigeria from achieving its enormous potential (Punch Editorial Board, 2023).

Talking about corruption in the judiciary one can say that, the 2023 Supreme Court judgment on the 2023 Presidential election in Nigeria was a travesty of justice. This is so because the judgment appeared to be tilted towards favouring a particular party or candidate. This is in line with the submission of Fasan (2024) who posits that the Supreme Court in Nigeria will never remove a sitting President, however deeply flawed his election may be. He maintained that in the future any losing presidential candidate, who launches an election petition will simply be wasting his time. It will be a welcome change if presidential candidates are sworn in after the court has resolved all legal issues concerning such candidate. Extortion by security agents is another aspect of corruption that is gradually becoming a norm. Security agents are becoming more interested in extortion than ensuring the security of lives and properties of Nigerians and the maintenance of peace. The police are obviously not on the roads to strictly ensure protection of citizens but mainly to make money from motorists both private and commercial by extortion (Olusadum, 2020).

Widespread corruption is sapping Nigeria, because funds meant for development are usually diverted. William, Adeniran and Ordu (2023) state that, the Anti-Corruption Agencies of Nigeria estimated that, Nigeria loses \$ 18 billion dollars every year to corruption and financial crimes. Just recently Tinubu had to suspend from office the Minister of Humanitarian Affairs, Dr Betta Edu on ground of corruption, someone who was appointed Minister on 23, August 2023 and was suspended 8, January 2024 on allegation of corruption. This shows that she came prepared to loot and not to work. Before her suspension there was a report in Vanguard accusing her of appointing

people into a non existing agency. Some of the things that led to her down fall according to Balarabe (2024) are the alleged transfer of N585.189 million meant for vulnerable groups in Akwa Ibom and Cross River to a private account. There was also the case of Betta Edu's controversial appointment of people into non-existing entities and defunct World Bank support projects as well as independent agency, and failure to settle stipend of N-Power beneficiaries. Betta Edu was alleged to have approved funds for flight tickets and airport taxis for her advanced team for an event in Kogi State, a state that has no airport. All these were allegations that led to her eventual suspension. One thing that makes corruption to thrive in Nigeria is that cases of corruption in Nigeria involving high profile personalities are never resolved. Some corruption cases that were never resolved in Nigeria according to CJID(n.d) were:(1) Police Pension Fund Fraud, in this case, which was never resolved, five directors of Police Pension were accused of misusing thirty two point eight billion naira from the Police Pension, (2) Another unresolved case of corruption according to CJID is: Missing \$20 billion naira oil money, this was a case where by the Central Bank of Nigeria in 2013 reported that NNPC failed to remit billions in oil proceeds to the state, this caused a huge problem between the then CBN Governor (Lamido Sanusi) and the then President Good luck, Jonathan to the extent that, the President, had to suspend Sanusi from office (3) Abba Morro Immigration Scandal , according to CJID, is a case that has not been resolved, in this case Abba Morro then Minister of Interior was accused of making applicants to pay one thousand naira for application forms. National Assembly started investigating the issue but later abandoned it. Again you cannot expect justice from a justice system with corrupt judges..This is true because Akanmidu (2018) opines that,, is common knowledge that Nigeria has a number of corrupt judges..The National Judicial Council in 2013 suspended and recommended for retirement two High Court judges for misconduct concerning corruption (Aknmidu 2022). It is pretty obvious that corruption retards development, because funds meant for development are usually siphoned into personal accounts of corrupt individuals and institutions,

Another challenge of Democracy in Nigeria is the sad reality that, power does not reside in the people(masses). This position is consented to by former President Olusegun Obasanjo who according to Ogunnaike (2023) states that, western liberal "democracy will never work in Africa as a system of government because it does not take into account the view of the majority of the people (para. 2)." This is a clear indication that in Nigeria's democracy power does not reside in the electorate, Little wonder a presidential candidate could say it was his turn to become President even before the conduct of elections and it came to pass. The preceding point is

buttressed by Vanguard News (2022) that quoted Then APC Presidential Candidate Bola Tinubu saying “All I am saying is that it is the turn of the Yoruba people to become president and within the Yoruba people, it is my turn.” For a candidate to say it is his turn and it came to pass, shows the high level of “powerlessness” and voiceless nature of the Nigerian electorates. This to some extent is a manifestation of the fact that in Nigeria sometimes our votes don’t count, votes only count when the powers that be are not interested in the outcome of that election. This is in line with the submission of Obasanjo who according to Ogunnaike (2023) states that western liberal democracy is “government of a few people over all the people or the population and these few people are representatives of only some of the people and not full representatives of all the people. Invariably, the majority of the people are wittingly or unwittingly kept out,” (para. 3).

Democracy as a system of government can thrive when power resides in the people, this is so because, there is a Chinese saying that “power corrupts and that absolute power corrupts absolutely” when an individual wields so much power it makes the person to begin to assume the position of a god. This is the sad reality of democracy in Nigeria where the President wields so much power. There is the need to ensure that power resides in the people (majority) This is so because the will of the majority in most cases is tilted towards the good of all, whereas the will of the few is in most cases unfavourable to the good of all.

Weak and or corrupt institutions are yet another problem of democracy in Nigeria. Institutions of government are expected to perform their respective functions in accordance with laid down rules and regulations so as to ensure peace, security of lives and properties, conflict resolution, quick dispensation of justice, equity etc., these if properly done would translate into lasting peace growth and development. In Nigeria the institutions that are charged with the various responsibilities mentioned above are either weak because they have been compromised or they are corrupt. Whichever way this is a problem to democracy. These institutions are expected to implement programmes and policies or hold government accountable; however the reverse is the case. One of the reasons for this is that most heads of government institutions are cronies and appointees of the President, and they tend to be loyal to the President. This is true in that Ojoye (2017) opines that, an INEC Chairman is likely to have sympathy for the President that appointed him and when this happens we are not practicing genuine democracy. One of the consequences of weak institutions is that it discourages investors from coming to invest in Nigeria. Oji (2022) notes that, slow and costly court proceedings, absence of rule of law that would provide reassurance of the safety of investment, delays in the resolutions of disputes

and lack of independence of the judiciary are factors that discourage investment particularly from foreign investors. This means that the judiciary as an institution in Nigeria is weak because it is not independent, and is also corrupt. Another impact of weak institutions is that it encourages corruption because, corrupt individuals and institutions can always pay their way through.

Greed and selfishness on the part of the political class is another challenge that confronts democracy in Nigeria. In August 2023 the Senate President Senator Godswill Akpabio was cut on camera telling his colleagues that money has been sent to them to go and enjoy their break. This position is consented to by Akpan (2023) who states that, the Senate President found himself in an embarrassing situation after telling his fellow senators that money has been sent to them to enjoy their recess. This the Senate President said while addressing his colleagues before adjournment. This is coming at a time when many Nigerians can hardly feed because of the astronomical increase in the prices of goods and services caused by fuel subsidy removal and high exchange rate.. This shows that, the senators are selfish and greedy. This is so because, they cannot approve money for Nigerians who are hungry to go and eat but they can approve money for themselves to go and enjoy. If they truly represent the majority, what law or laws have they made to alleviate the sufferings and hunger brought about by fuel subsidy removal and high exchange rate..The fact that the Senate President, felt embarrassed after saying money has been approved for his colleagues to go and enjoy their recess, shows that it was not proper..Corruption, weak institutions and the fact that power does not reside in the people, and the fact that leaders are greedy and selfish are gradually entrenching kakistocracy in to governance in Nigeria.

News commercialization is one of the challenges of the media in Nigeria. Before 1986 the concept news commercialisation was alien to the media industry in Nigeria. The Structural Adjustment Programme(SAP) of the then Head of State General Ibrahim Babangida was what introduced news commercialisation into the media industry in Nigeria. With the introduction of SAP the subvention from government to government owned media stopped, to survive the media organizations had to fashion out ways of generating revenue for themselves. The operators of media organizations then felt that, one way to generate revenue was to commodify news. News commercialisation according to Ismail, Pali & Shem(2021) is a situation whereby media organizations generate revenue by charging fees for news report that ought to have been aired or published free. The implication of news commercialization is that, it reduces the credibility of media organizations. Ismail *et al.* (2021) state that, news commercialization erodes

the credibility of the medium. With the advent of news commercialisation, the criteria for news judgment are relegated to the oblivion. Little wonder Nwodu(2006) laments that, the traditional criteria used to determine news worthy events are fast giving way to “cash and carry journalism”. The implication is that money is gradually becoming the criteria for news judgment.

In the era of news commercialisation, the Editor has little or no power to edit the content of news that is paid for let alone reject it. The implication is that “anything” that is paid for can be featured as news. This position is consented to by Ismail *et al.* (2021) who assert that, news commercialisation has led to a lot of compromise, news sensationalisation and half truth. Another implication of news commercialisation is that, it makes it difficult for the voice and opinions of the poor to feature in the media. This is true because news commercialisation encourages the constant voicing of the opinion of the rich while relegating to the oblivion the opinions of the poor who have news worthy events but cannot pay for them to be aired or published (Ismail *et al.* 2021).

Ownership influence and interest is another challenge that confronts journalists and media organizations in Nigeria. When a media owner is interested in an issue he wants that interest to reflect in news stories about that thing. For instance if the owner is interested in a political party or candidate he wouldn't want his media organization to carry “negative” news about such party or candidate, there by suppressing the objective views of journalists in his media organization. This position is echoed in Project Reserve (nd) which states that, public media (government) are mostly used as instruments of propaganda for the government while private media owners are driven by different motives ranging from profit making, agenda setting to winning influence and political and business gain. Simply put, private media owners are mainly interested in propaganda or profit making. We are all living witnesses to the campaign of calumny by African Independent Television against Muhammad Buhari then Presidential aspirant or candidate of All Progressive Congress (APC). The documentary clearly depicted ownership influence and interest. The said documentary was aired January 2015, in African Independent Television (AIT)

This is a challenge to journalists in both public and private media organizations in Nigeria . In public media journalists are expected to be loyal to the government in power by supporting whatever the government feels or thinks is right. In Nigeria we see elements of Authoritarian Media Theory in play in most public media. The media is reduced to a stooge of government. Ownership influence and interest both in public and private media must be jettisoned in its entirety because it negates the freedom of expression and the

power of the press to hold government accountable. It is also a setback to development, as it tends to relegate objectivity, fairness and balance to the oblivion.

The way democracy is practiced in Nigeria is a big problem to the press. This is so because in, “Nigeria’s democracy” power does not reside in the people. Equally important is also the fact that, in Nigeria’s democracy, our institutions are weak, corrupt or compromised. All these have negative effects on the effectiveness of the press as a watchdog of the society. This is so because the media is like a mirror that reflects happenings in the society. The media can only expose corruption in government but do not have the power to sanction such corrupt individuals or institutions. The power to sanction is to a large extent is vested in our institutions and to some extent the people. The problem is that no matter how much corruption the media expose it will achieve little or no result so long as our institutions are weak and power does not reside in the people.

METHODOLOGY

The method adopted for this study is the qualitative research method making use of library documentary materials. This means that the study is based on secondary data. Library research according to IGI Global (n.d) refers to the act of using a library either in print or online, to find information which satisfies or answers a question. Giving credence to the preceding point Wikipedia (n.d) states that a research library is a library that contains in-depth collection of materials on one or several subjects. Research libraries are mainly established to cater for the research needs of researchers. Such libraries are usually stocked with authentic materials with quality contents (Wikipedia) In research library one is able to find scholarly and non-fiction materials such as: journals, newspapers, periodicals, research projects among others. The method is centred on the use of secondary data (information).

The implication is that, the study is based on consultations of theoretically related studies carried out by other scholars. Conclusion and recommendations were based on consultation of textbooks, journal articles and online materials.

DISCUSSION

The first objective of this study was to find out the challenges of the democracy in Nigeria. Findings showed that, corruption is one of the biggest problems of democracy in Nigeria. This position is buttressed by William, Adeniran and Ordu(2023)who state that, Nigeria loses eighteen billion dollars every year to corruption and financial crimes. Little wonder BettaEdu in her first four months in office was accused of corruption. This is true in

that Balarabe(2024) opines that Betta Edu (former Minister of Humanitarian Affairs) was alleged to have transferred N585.189 million meant for vulnerable groups in Akwa Ibom and Cross River to a private account. Finding also revealed that most corruption cases in Nigeria were never resolved. This is in line with the submission of CJID (n.d) which states that cases of corruption involving high profile personalities in Nigeria were never resolved some of such cases according to CJID (n.d) are:

(1) Police Pension Fund Fraud, is a case which was never resolved. Another unresolved case of corruption according to CJID is : Missing \$20 billion naira oil money, this was a case where by the Central Bank of Nigeria in 2013 reported that NNPC failed to remit billion in oil proceeds to the state., Abba Morro Immigration Scandal , according to CJID is another case that has not been resolved, in this case Abba Morro then Minister of Interior was accused of making applicants to pay one thousand naira for application forms. Greed and selfishness was also identified as a major problem of democracy in Nigeria, This is in line with the submission of Akpan (2023) who states that, the Senate President found himself in an embarrassing situation when caught on camera telling his fellow senators that money has been sent to them to enjoy their recess.

Weak institution is also a problem of democracy. Our institutions appear to be weak because most heads of such institutions are appointees of the President and they tend to be loyal to the President. Weak institutions especially the justice system of Nigeria discourages foreign investors from coming to invest in Nigeria This assertion is echoed in Oji (2022) who notes that slow and costly court proceedings, absence of rule of law that would provide reassurance of the safety of investment, delays in the resolutions of disputes and lack of independence of the judiciary are factors that discourage investment particularly from foreign investors.

The second objective of this study was to determine the challenges of the media in Nigeria. It was revealed that the way democracy is practiced in Nigeria is a problem to the media. This is true because, institutions that are supposed to sanction those exposed by the media are either weak compromised or loyal to the government. Heads of such institutions are loyal to the government because they are appointees of the President, this position is echoed in Ojoye (2017) who asserts that, the Chairman of INEC is likely to have sympathy for the President that appointed him and when this happens we are not practicing genuine democracy. News commercialisation is another problem of the media, with news commercialisation money is gradually becoming the news editor and what qualifies as news is now determined by money. This is in line with the earlier submission of Nwodu(2006) who

lamentations that, the traditional criteria used to determine news worthy events are fast giving way to “cash and carry journalism”. Ownership influence is yet another problem of the press. Owners sometimes suppress news that is not in their own interest. Public media in some places have been reduced to puppets of the government in power.

The third objective of this study was to investigate the impact of the challenges of democracy and the media on development in Nigeria. First and foremost the fact that our institutions are weak, compromised or corrupt is a huge challenge to development. These institutions exist to ensure that those in position of authority do not become too powerful or work for their selfish interest rather than work for the interest of the state. The implication of weak institutions is that the (institutions) cannot call to order government officials who are not working for the growth and development of the state; as such corruption has become the order of the day. Now that corruption has become the order of the day development will continue suffer setbacks. This is so because funds meant for development will continue to be siphoned into personal accounts of corrupt individuals.. This position is echoed in William, Adeniran and Ordu (2023) who opine that Nigeria loses about eighteen billion dollars annually to corruption and financial crimes.

Equally important is the fact that corruption is gradually becoming a norm in Nigeria, the impact of corruption is that, it retards development. Another implication of weak institution on development is that it renders the media ineffectual. This is so because the media can only expose corrupt deeds but cannot punish perpetrators of such act, the problem is that the institutions that are expected to sanction such offenders are handicap. The media, holding government accountable will be of little or no effect when our institutions are weak. Weak institution discourages foreign investors from coming to invest in Nigeria,

Ownership influence and news commercialization all have negative influence on development. For instance the voice of the poor may never be heard because of news commercialisation. Again news commercialisation is gradually doing away with the public service function of the press. News commercialisation is giving room for “anything” that is paid for to qualify as news. Ismail et al (2021) assert that, news commercialisation has led to a lot of compromise, news sensationalisation and half truth. Ownership influence on the other hand is relegating objectivity, fairness and balance to the oblivion

CONCLUSION

From foregoing it is inferred that our democracy in Nigeria is plagued with challenges and role of the media as the watchdog is hamstrung. The media cannot hold government accountable in a situation whereby our institutions are weak and power does not reside in the people. It is not about embracing democracy as a form of government, it is about adhering strictly to the principles of democracy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- (i) Government at all levels should endeavour to adhere strictly to the principles of democracy as one sure way of making democracy work in Nigeria.
- (ii) News commercializations should be jettisoned in its entirety because it has reduced greatly the gatekeeping role of the editor and making money, the news determinant.
- (iii) There is also need to strengthen our institutions by stripping the President of the power to appoint INEC chairpersons and Chief justices of the Federation.
- (iv) Presidential candidates should only be sworn in when the Judiciary has resolved all legal issues concerning such candidates.

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