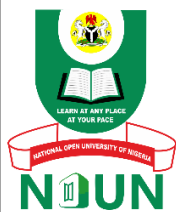


## **COURSE GUIDE**

### **MAC 416 SOCIOLOGY OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

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Published by  
National Open University of Nigeria

Printed 2021

ISBN: 978-058-762-4

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Printed by: NOUN Press

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## INTRODUCTION

One of the most promising recent developments in Mass Communication research is the study of the social processes by which Mass Communication contents, most importantly, news and entertainment, are produced. Riley and Riley (1959) cited in *AR Journal* (1979) while reviewing research on Mass Communication and social system, called for a sociological view of the Mass Communication process that placed the mass communicator within the social context of group memberships, reference groups, and the larger social structure. At that time, there were few sociological studies of mass communicators, mass media organisation and processes of production.

This course is designed to provide students with a broader framework for understanding the complex interconnectivity between the media and the society. It is further designed to provide students a broad survey of the key issues relating to the study of the media as an important institution of a modern society.

It considers the social organisation, social impact and social meaning of the media of mass communication. It is also designed to simplify the relationship between media and society as well as to equip students with the intellectual tools to be critically aware of the roles and influences of the mass media in the society.

The course will examine the concept of sociology and its relationship to mass media. It will point out the role of the media and its influence on the society as an agent of social change. It will equally look at the economic and political influence on the mass media.

The course has a guide that serves as an indicator towards effective use of this course material. There is also tutor-marked assignment which should be treated with all seriousness. The provision of self-assessment exercises will ensure that the student is well and adequately prepared. This should not be neglected or discarded.

## WHAT YOU WILL LEARN IN THIS COURSE

The aim of MAC 416 Sociology of Mass Communication is to examine the relationship between the Mass Media institution and social structure. It pays detailed and specific attention to concept of sociology; society and culture; impact of the mass media on the society; knowledge of the mass media and its relationship with the major social institution.

The meaning of sociology and society will be examined in this course. The student will also learn about the mass media, functions of the Mass

Media, theories of the press and its relationship with the constituent element of the society. Attention will be paid to mass communication, contents of the mass media, media and the social world, media ownership, control and press freedom and press censorship and the role of media in economic and political processes, cultural imperialism, globalisation and new technology.

This course will assist students in having an informed thought on topics such as social change, social structure, globalisation and the media.

## **COURSE AIMS**

The main aim of this course is to look at the relationship between the media and the social institutions within the society. It also aims at exploring the social organisation, social impact and social meaning of the mass media.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this course, you should be able to:

- Evaluate theories and debate about media practice.
- Have a better understanding of media institutions, messages, technology, audience and outcome to improve professional capacity for those working with or in the media.
- Have a thorough knowledge and critical understanding of the media as a key social institution.
- Develop an awareness of the political and economic forces that shape the production of the media.
- Enhance student's media literacy through critically assessing the media and becoming seriously aware of their experience as media consumers.

## **WORKING THROUGH THIS COURSE**

In order to benefit effectively from this course, the student is expected to read the recommended text and other materials provided by National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN).

The Self-Assessment Exercises in each unit must be handled with all seriousness. Students are expected to submit assignment for on-ward and periodic assessment. There will be an examination at the completion of this course. Below are the components of this course and what is expected from you.

## COURSE MATERIALS

The major components of this course are:

1. Course Guide
2. Study units in Modules
3. Recommended Textbooks
4. Assignment Files
5. Presentation

You must obtain a copy of the materials provided by NOUN. Your copy may be obtained through the bookshop if however you have problem getting the materials, you may contact your tutor.

## STUDY UNITS

### **Module 1     An Overview on Sociology and Mass Communication**

- |        |                                  |
|--------|----------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Meaning of Sociology             |
| Unit 2 | Sociological Perspectives        |
| Unit 3 | Concept of Sociology and Culture |
| Unit 4 | Socialisation and the Family     |
| Unit 5 | Sociology and Mass Communication |

### **Module 2     Media and Social Influences – Mass Media and Society**

- |        |                                                |
|--------|------------------------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | The Mass Media                                 |
| Unit 2 | Relationship between the Media and the Society |
| Unit 3 | Theories of the Press                          |
| Unit 4 | Functions of the Mass Media                    |
| Unit 5 | Media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm        |

### **Module 3     Media Industry and Social Structures – Ownership and Control**

- |        |                                             |
|--------|---------------------------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Political Economy of Media Ownership        |
| Unit 2 | Media and the State – Control of the Media  |
| Unit 3 | Concept of Press Freedom                    |
| Unit 4 | Press Censorship                            |
| Unit 5 | Cultural Imperialism and Media Independence |

### **Module 4     Media as a Social Agent**

- |        |                             |
|--------|-----------------------------|
| Unit 1 | Media as a Social Agent     |
| Unit 2 | Media and Political Subject |

Unit 3	Media and Social Inequality: Race, Gender and Class
Unit 4	Media and Audience
Unit 5	Media and New Technology
Unit 6	Globalisation

Every unit has at least a Self- Assessment Exercise drawn from the materials the students have already studied. The exercises are designed to assist the students assess themselves on the basis of what they have studied. If taken and handled seriously, its combination with the Tutor-Marked Assignments will go a long way in ensuring the achievement of the overall objectives of this course.

## TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES

Akinfeleye, R. A. (Ed.) (2005). *Mass Media and Society: A Multi-Perspective Approach*. Lagos: Integrity Press.

Annual Review Sociology Journal. (1975). Vol. 5:193 – 217.

Bamisaye, R. (1990). *Sociological Foundation of Nigerian Education*. Ibadan: AMD Publisher.

Livesey, C. (2005). AS Sociology for AQA: A Paper Presentation.

Cristobd, A., Landregan, J. Navia, P. & Vial, J. (2006). *Political Institutions, Policymaking Processes and Policy Outcomes in Chile*. Washington: New Inter-American Development Bank.

Dan, Amor (2010). *Nigeria: Western media and Cultural Imperialism*. A paper Presentation.

George, Rodman (2006). *Mass Media in a Changing World*. New York: McGraw Hill.

Goke, Rafiu (2003). *Mass Media and Society: Issues and Perspective*. Abeokuta: Meek Associate.

Holz, J. R. (1979). *Sociology of Mass Communication: Annual Review Sociology Journal*. Vol. 5:193 – 217.

Ifedayo, Daramola (2005). *Mass Media and Society*. Lagos: Rothan Press.

James, Watson (2003). *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Lai, Oso & Umaru, Pate (Eds). (2007). *Mass Media and Society in Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Presss.

Livingston, S. (1998). In Liebes, T. & Curran, J. (Eds). *Media, Rural and Identity: Essay in Honour of Elihu Katz*. London: Routledge.

Long, R. *Social Problems: Gender inequality*.

Mediterranean Institute of Gender Studies (2005). *The Gender and Media: Promoting Equality, Diversity and Empowerment*.

Owens-Ibie (1992). "Media/Cultural Imperialism and Nigerian Women: Whose Culture; Which Imperialism?" *A Journal of Social Development in Africa*.

Scott, London. (1993). *How the Media Frame Political Issues: An Essay Review*.

Tylor, E. D. (1902). *Primitive Culture*. John Murray.

Van, Dijk *Power and the News Media: A University of Amsterdam Publication*.

## **THE ASSIGNMENT FILE**

The assignment file contains the details of the work you are expected to submit to your tutor for marking. The marks obtained here will count towards the final marks you will obtain in this course.

Further information will be found in this assignment file itself and also in the sections on assessment.

## **ASSESSMENT**

There are two aspects to the assessment of this course. First is the tutor-marked assignments and the second is a written examination. In handling the assignment, the information and knowledge garnered during the course should be applied.

Assignments must be submitted to your tutor for formal assessment in line with the deadline stated in the Assignment File. The work submitted to your tutor is 30% of your total course marks. Afterward, you will sit for a final two-hour examination which makes up the remaining 70%.



## TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT (TMA)

There are 15 TMAs in this course. You are expected to submit all the assignments. The best four (that is the ones with the highest scores) will be counted. The total marks for the best four assignments will be 30% of your total course mark.

The assignments for the unit in this course are contained in the Assignment File. You should complete the assignment appropriately with textbooks and study units as guide. You are equally advised to use other reference materials to broaden your scope and assist in providing deeper understanding of the subject.

Your assignments are expected to be completed on time and sent to your tutor before the deadline. In case you are unable to complete any assignment on schedule, contact your tutor to possibly get an extension.

## FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING

The final examination of MAC 416 will be two hours for a total mark of 70% of the course grade. The content of the examination will reflect the type of Self-testing, practice exercise and tutor-marked assignment. All areas of the course will be addressed.

You are therefore, advised to revise the entire course after studying the last unit before you sit for the examination. It will be very useful if you equally review your tutor-marked assignment and the comment of your tutor on them before the final examination.

## PRESENTATION SCHEDULE

The presentation schedule included in your course material gives you the important dates for the completion of the tutor-marked assignments and attending tutorials. Remember, that it is important to submit all your assignment by the due dates. You should guard against lagging behind in your work.

## COURSE MARKING SCHEME

This is shown in the table below:

Assessment	Marks
Assignment 1 – 15	15 Assignments. Best four (4) marks of 15 at 7.5% each = 30% of course marks
Final Examination	70% of total course marks
Total	100% of course marks

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This brings together the units, the number of weeks expected for the completion and the assignments that follows.

Unit	Title of Work	Week's Activities	Assessment (End of Unit)
	Course Guide		
	<b>Module1 An Overview on Sociology and Mass Communication</b>		
1	Meaning of Sociology	1	Assessment 1
2	Concept of Culture and Society	2	Assessment 2
3	Socialisation and the Family	3	Assessment 3
4	Sociology and Mass Communication	4	Assessment 4
	<b>Module 2 Media and Social Influences – Mass Media and Society</b>		
1	The Mass Media	5	Assessment 5
2	Relationship between the Media and Society	6	Assessment 6
3	Theories of the Press	7	Assessment 7
4	Functions of the Mass Media	8	Assessment 8
5	Media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm	9	Assessment 9
	<b>Module 3 Media Industry and Social Structures – Ownership and Control</b>		
1	Political Economy of Media Ownership	10	Assessment 10
2	Media and the state – Control of the Media	11	Assessment 11
3	Press Freedom	12	Assessment 12
4	Cultural Imperialism and Media Independence	13	Assessment 13
5	Press Censorship	14	Assessment 14
	<b>Module 4 Media as a Social Agent</b>		
1	Media as a Social Agent	15	Assessment 15
2	Media and Political Subject	16	Assessment 16
3	Media and Social Inequality	17	Assessment 17
4	Media and Audience	18	Assessment 18
5	Media and New Technology	19	Assessment 19
6	Globalisation	20	Assessment 20

## **HOW TO GET THE MOST OF THIS COURSE**

Study units replace university lecturer in distance learning. This is an advantage in distance learning because you can read and work through the materials provided at your own convenience and pace. The study unit lectures you telling you when to read, when to attend your lecture. It also gives you study exercises in the same manner your lecturer in the university will do.

Each unit have the same pattern. The introduction of the subject matter and how a unit connects with other units and the course generally is the first. This is followed by the learning objectives which allow you to know what you should be able to do at the end of the unit. The objectives are guide to your study. You need to confirm at the end of each unit if you have achieved the set objectives.

The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will be from your set books or other materials.

## **FACILITATOR/TUTOR AND TUTORIALS**

There are 12 hours of tutorials provided for this course. This will be communicated including the date, time and location as well as name and phone number of your tutor once you are allocated tutorial group.

Your tutor will mark and comment on your assignments, keep close watch on your progress and any difficulties you may encounter and will provide assistance during the course. Ensure your tutor-marked assignment is mailed well before the due date (at least two working days). They will be marked by your tutor and returned to you. Do not hesitate to contact your tutor by telephone, e-mail or discussion board if you need help of any sort on your work.

## **SUMMARY**

MAC 416 is packaged to provide students with a broader framework for understanding the complex interconnection between the media and the society. In this course, you will learn among other things the following:

1. Concept of Sociology and Culture
2. Sociological Perspectives
3. Media Ownership and Control
4. Society and Relationship with the Media
5. Functions of the Media in the Society
6. Press freedom and Censorship.

## MAIN COURSE

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## **MODULE 1      AN OVERVIEW ON SOCIOLOGY AND MASS COMMUNICATION**

Unit 1	Meaning of Sociology
Unit 2	Sociological Perspectives
Unit 3	Concept of Sociology and Culture
Unit 4	Socialisation and the Family
Unit 5	Sociology and Mass Communication

### **UNIT 1      MEANING OF SOCIOLOGY**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Definition of sociology
3.2	Nature of Sociology
3.3	Scope of Sociology
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

In this unit, we shall introduce you to Sociology of Mass Communication by examining the definitions of sociology, nature of sociology and its scope. This will afford you the opportunity to come up with good background knowledge on the relevance of sociology to Mass Communication.

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define sociology
- explain the nature of sociology
- discuss the scope of sociology.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Definition of Sociology**

Sociology concerns itself with social relationship. A network of these relationships is called the Society which is the main concern of sociology. Although there are other aspects of the social science that focus on some other aspects of the society, the main concern of sociology is the relationships of human race.

Sociologists have generally vied into the nature of Sociology instead of defining it. Some have used colourless definitions such as “Sociology is the science of society.” Or “Sociology is the science of social phenomena.” There are others too, who define “Sociology” as “the name applied to a somewhat inchoate mass materials which embodies our knowledge about society.” There are other definitions that are definite but are inadequate and unsatisfactory in many ways. An example of such is “Sociology” being defined as “the science of social process” and “Sociology is the science of social relations.” A better definition than the above two is “Sociology” being defined as “the study of men considered as affecting and as being affected by association” or “the study of human association, including whatever conduces to it or modifies it.” Sociology treats of the phenomena of society arose from the association of mankind. It includes a body of classified knowledge relating to society and number of principles and laws. It investigates causes and effects, discovers social forces, and formulates laws of control or rules of actions.

In view of this, a number of definitions of Sociology will be considered in this unit.

Bamisaye (1990) defines “Sociology” as “a scientific study of human behaviour in the society.” The behaviour that sociologists are interested in is one that influences the lives of other members of the society in an important way. A sociologist that studies the village life will be interested in how villagers behave at festivals, place of worship, their method of buying and selling in the village market. Another sociologist that studies urban society will be interested in factory workers, spending pattern, social life, executive or business life of those living in the city. The concern of a sociologist determines his area of interest in his study. American Sociological Association defines “Sociology” as “the study of social life, social change, and the social causes and consequences of human behaviour.” Sociologist attempts to investigate the structure of groups, organisation and society and how people interact within these contexts. For the fact that all human behaviour is social, the central idea of sociology ranges from the intimate family to the hostile mobs; from

organised crime to religious cult and from the division according to race, gender and social class to the shared beliefs of a common culture. It provides many distinctive perspectives on the world generating new ideas and evaluating old ones.

Tony Fitzgerald sees “Sociology” as “the study of social order.” From this definition, sociology is made up of competing theories on society and all of them are described as mainly involved in the project of describing and explaining ‘social order’ - human behaviour. He is not of the opinion that sociology is not concerned with social conflict and social change rather he holds that both arose from the objective of understanding ‘social order.’

David Kessel, an American academician, gives this stand point about sociology. “Sociology is the study of us... people... living together.” This definition might not be lengthy, it is much better than saying sociology is the ‘scientific study of society.’ Sociology indeed studies issues, concepts, investigations and results of living together as a people. Sociology though focuses on group, the focus should not be without emphasis on individuals since individuals make up a group and it is the group that produces the individuals. In order to fully understand the two, they must be studied together.

Wikipedia, an online encyclopaedia defines “Sociology” as “the study of the social lives of humans, groups and societies.” The concern of sociology in this respect is the social rules and processes that bind and separate people not only as individuals, but as members of the associations, groups, and institutions.

Max Weber, one of the foremost sociologists defines “Sociology” as “a science which attempts the interpretive understanding of social action in order thereby to arrive at casual explanation of its course and effect.” The action here refers to all human behaviour once the individual involves attached a subjective meaning to it. The action in this sense may be either overt or purely inward or subjective. It may have positive intervention in a situation or if intentionally refraining something from happening even though you do not agree with it. Action is social inasmuch as, based on subjective meaning attached to it by the individual or individuals; it takes account of the behaviour of others and is thereby oriented in its course.

Two American College Lecturers, Loren Demerath and Michelle Wolkomir lend their voices to the meaning of sociology howbeit in a technical way. They define “Sociology” as “the systematic study of human beings, human groups and humanly constructed institutions and organisations.” Sociologists attempt to understand how humans interact

with one another to create the lasting institution and organisations that link generations in civilisation. They pay serious attention to the manner in which those institutions and organisations affect human interaction. More importantly, they are interested in promoting social change to resolve problems of society that they come across in their research.

There are several other definitions of sociology as there are individuals who undertake research in sociology. The main issues that however run ring round all these definitions and explanation is the fact that sociology is concerned with social aspect of human behaviour. It is concerned about us, the people, how we interact, behave and above all, how we are influenced by our interactions.

Based on the above background, “Sociology” therefore “is a scientific study of human behaviour in groups, having for its aim the discovery of regularities and order in such behaviour and expressing these discoveries as theoretical proposition or generalisation that describe a whole a wide variety of patterns of behaviour.” This definition takes into account the point of focus in the different definitions that have been examined. Members of a group interact at individual level with one another. The patterns of behaviour are also the sum of the activities of one member on another in the group. Therefore, sociology is seen as the formation and the transformation of groups and the relationship between groups and group members with one another with the notion that where there is group there is the tendency for participation, cohesion and of course conflict. Therefore, we could define “Sociology” as “a scientific study of the total aspect of our life as human beings and how these interact with the social entities of individuals within a group between groups in a society.”

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

In the light of the definitions above, attempt a comprehensive definition of Sociology.

### **3.2 Nature of Sociology**

Professor Giddings quoted by Livesey (2005) defines “Sociology” as “an attempt to account for the origin, growth, structure and activities of the society by the operation of physical, vital and psychical causes working together in a process of evolution”. Though it is difficult to give a brief definition of sociology that proves entirely satisfactory due to changes of a developing science, Professor Giddings is of immense assistance to those who wish to have a clear understanding and a precise view of the nature of science. This is because sociology is by nature a science. It is a social science because it focuses on the study of human



behaviour in a social environment. In addition to this, sociologists use scientific methods in carrying out their research.

A comprehensive knowledge of the true nature of sociology and import of sociology may be obtained by a careful consideration of the underlining principles of the science rather than by attempting to follow any careful formulation of definitions. It is possible to have a science of society without going back to the origin of society, but there are some advantages of studying, as much as we could, the society in its primitive state. This is the rule in all scientific investigations – complex forms are traced to simpler ones in order to discover laws and principles. Society today is so complex to the extent that the laws applying to it are high generalisations not easily discovered while the simple movements of society in its earlier forms reveal the causes and effect of social action. As botanist add to the description of plants the nature of its development from seed and trace the law of growth from the beginning, so also the sociologists follow the growth of society from its primitive conditions. Sociology therefore begins with the study of social origin.

Also, in demonstrating the scientific nature of sociology, early writers on this concept used many terms borrowed from Physics and Biology. Society represents many interrelated parts that are more or less dependent upon one another. The activities of social groups have been discovered to resemble to a great extent the activities of individuals within the society.

Furthermore, sociology can be described as both static and dynamic. These two expressions belong to the mechanic but they have been modified to fit into the requirements of a science which deal with human beings with all power as against a science that deals with the inanimate issues. Dynamic sociology refers to development or progress whereas static refers to relationship. We must have the basis of static. If we were to take an instantaneous view of the society with its various co-relationships with regards to structure or activity and considering the society moving forward with its various relationships changing at each successive stage, we would have a dynamic conception. If on the other hand, the comparison of relationship might be referring to some ideal standard which would lead us to an ethical basis of the society; it is regarded to as static conception. Since social static is a subdivision of social dynamic, therefore, it is better to speak of social dynamic and subdivide it into social static and social kinetics with social static dealing with social movement which do not change in rate or direction and social kinetic which deals with those that change in rate and in direction or both.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain briefly the nature of sociology.

### **3.3 Scope of Sociology**

The scope of sociology is in three main areas. These are:-

1. A study of socially relevant concepts.
2. A study of social system and institutions.
3. A comparative study of social system and institution in different parts of the world.

#### **1. Study of Socially Relevant Concepts**

Sociologists are interested in socially relevant concepts which describe human societies as a group or the way of life of a group. They also have interest in concepts that can influence social life in significant ways. These social concepts include the society, communities, age groups, social class, status, tribes or clan etc. They are referred to as social concepts because they mean a collection of people or describe a person in relation to members of a group. The study of these social statuses helps them to understand human society better and more so when studying a particular human society.

#### **2. A Study of Social System and Institutions**

Sociology also studies social institutions which evolved with the human race itself and play significant roles in directing human destiny along a particular pattern. Such institutions include marriage, family, religion, government, the economy, education system, legal system etc. Social institutions are important and they form the basis for social wellbeing all over the world. A society with a stable government is able to make useful and meaningful plans for its members. A society that holds marriage and family institution in high esteem tends to be more stable than one where these institutions are not considered important. In addition, the institutions of religion, government, education and legal system have more direct effect on the welfare of the people to a very great extent. It is for this reason that sociologists study them because he has a better understanding of the society for doing so.

#### **3. A Comparative Study of Social Systems and Institutions**

Sociology is also a comparative study. It studies the various social systems in the different parts of the world and does a comparison between them. With this, sociologists have a good understanding of his

society and as well as other societies outside his own. As an individual, it helps sociologist to cope better wherever he finds himself outside his own social environment.

Any sociologist who wants his work to be meaningful must understand people's view about the world. The knowledge of behavioural patterns in various societies helps in sociology. The different views about life affect people's social behaviour and it is important that one understands these about the societies which he is studying in order to understand the outward behaviour of the people.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Briefly highlight the scope of sociology.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit, the meaning of sociology has been examined with different opinions about what sociology mean to different sociologists. One thing that is paramount is the knowledge that sociology is a social science. It studies and analyses behaviour which is a social element and how it influences the society and the way the society also influences our behaviours

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has explained the meaning, nature and scope of sociology. In doing so, a number a definitions which represent the view of different sociologists were considered.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

By nature, sociology is a science. Discuss.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Holz, J. R. (1979). *Sociology of Mass Communication: Annual Review Sociology Journal*. Vol. 5:193 – 217.

Bamisaye, R. (1990). *Sociological Foundation of Nigerian Education*. Ibadan: AMD Publisher.

Livesey, C. (2005). *AS Sociology for AQA: A Paper Presentation*.

## UNIT 2      SOCIOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVES

### CONTENTS

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Definition of Sociological Perspectives
  - 3.2 Types of Sociological Perspectives
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      - 3.2.1.2 The Concept of Function
      - 3.2.1.3 Presuppositions and Assumptions
      - 3.2.1.4 Value Consensus
    - 3.2.2 Symbolic Interactionism
      - 3.2.2.1 Basic Principles of Symbolic Interactionism
      - 3.2.2.2 The Method and its Impact on the Study of Mass Communication
      - 3.2.2.3 Symbolic Interactionism Assumptions
      - 3.2.3.4 Marxism
        - 3.2.3.4.1 Marx's Historical Perspective
        - 3.2.3.4.2 Marx's Dialectical Materialism
      - 3.2.3.5 Neo-Marxism
      - 3.2.3.6 Feminism
    - 3.3 Conflict Theory and Mass Communication
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### 1.0 INTRODUCTION

In the last unit, we learnt about sociology by examining an overview of the concept. The overview examined the definition, nature and scope of the concept. Having taking time to do this, we move on to the study of the various view points from which sociologists looked at sociology.

### 2.0 OBJECTIVES

At the end of this study, you should be able to:

- define perspective
- highlight the various sociological perspectives
- explain the various perspectives
- analyse the differences between these perspectives.

### 3.0 MAIN CONTENT

#### 3.1 Definition of Sociological Perspectives

Sociologists analyse social phenomena at different levels from diverse perspectives. This ranges from concrete interpretation to overall generalisation of society and social behaviour. Sociologists study everything from specific events (micro level of analysis of small social problems) to the broader picture (the macro level of analysis of large social pattern). Today, sociologists employ three primary theoretical perspectives; namely: - the Symbolic Interactionism Perspective (Symbolic Interactionism), the functionalist Perspectives (Functionalism) and the Conflict Perspectives. These perspectives offer Sociologist theoretical paradigms for explaining how society influences people and how people influence society. Each perspective basically conceptualises society, social forces and human behaviours. This is shown in the table below.

<b>Sociological Perspective</b>	<b>Level of Analysis</b>	<b>Focus</b>
1. Symbolic Interactionism	Micro	Use of symbols, face to face interaction.
2. Functionalism	Macro	Relationship between the parts of society. How aspects of society are functional (adaptive).
3. Conflict Theory	Macro	Competition for scarce resources; How the elite control the poor and weak.

#### What is Sociological Perspective?

Thinkers generally have varying opinions on a particular issue. This variation in their opinion about issues makes them to give different interpretations to a particular concept. This is applicable to the sociologist in the view they held about man, about Society and about the interaction between the two. The position adopted by each group of thinkers to view the society determines how they interpret it and what they regarded as being the most important aspects of social life. This position from which the study is approached is what is called perspective.

Therefore, perspective is defined as “a frame of reference, a series of working rules by which a person is able to make sense of complex and puzzling phenomena”. This phenomenon refers to the social life. To take a particular position towards its study, one must make a set of assumptions on which analysis can be based. This basically includes ideas about the nature of human beings, of society and of the interaction between the individuals and society.

“Sociological Perspective” therefore “is the frame of reference, a set of working rules by which sociologists make sense of complex and puzzling social issues.”

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Attempt your own definition of Sociological Perspective.

## **3.2 Types of Sociological Perspective**

Sociological perspective is of three types

1. Functionalism
2. Symbolic interactionism
3. Action and conflict

### **3.2.1 Functionalism**

Functionalism is a sociological perspective that falls under the consensus model which sees society as a system. This means that society is made up of a set of interconnected parts which together form a whole. According to functionalists, the basic unit of analysis is society and the various parts that make up the society are understood purely with regards to their relationship to the whole. The society in the view of early sociologists is like an organism like human body with several important parts that work together harmoniously towards the survival and maintenance of the organism (human) being. Therefore, to understand any part of the society is to analyse its relationship with other parts and essentially its contribution to the maintenance of the society.

Functionalists argue further that just as human body has some basic needs that must be satisfied for it to survive, so also does society have its own basic needs that must be met if it must continue to exist. Based on this knowledge, social institutions such as the family, religion, polity, education and economy are seen as indispensable parts of the social system rather than an isolated unit.

### 3.2.1.1 Functional Prerequisites of Society

The basic needs or those necessary conditions of existence of society are referred to as the functional prerequisite of society. Several approaches have been used to identify what these functional prerequisites of society are that cut across all societies. Some argue that all societies have some form or other of social stratification; others are of the opinion that the family is found in every society. The assumption here is that the existing institutional arrangements such as family and social stratification meet the needs that are common to all the societies. The functional prerequisites here are

- a. The need to devise a mechanism, to ensure that social positions are adequately and appropriately filled by motivated persons.
- b. There is the need to devise a mechanism for the reproduction and socialisation of new members of society for its renewal and continuity. (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000).

Another approach to identify the functional prerequisites is woven round an analysis of factors that threaten the continued existence of society such as apathy, assimilation, extinction of members or what Horbbes (1651) described as “war of all against all”. In this regard, Levy (1952) is of the opinion that for a society to survive, it must create means of preventing these events from occurring such as a system of social reproduction, role differentiation and assignment, as well as, a system of goals and reward to motivate members of society to want to perform their assigned tasks and responsibilities. These means of securing the continued existence of society themselves form some of the basic needs that should be met.

A third approach is also used for identifying these prerequisites. In this case, the issue of deducing from an abstract model of the social system becomes more relevant and the functional prerequisites are more largely inferred than identified. Since it is assumed that society is a system for example, the basic requirement for its survival would include a minimum level of integration between its constituent parts as well as, some level of mutual compatibility of the parts. (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000). In such approach, religion is seen to be the vital part of society, which meets the functional part of society, which meets the functional needs of social integration and cohesion through the inculcation of the social norms and values of society among its members.

### **3.2.1.2 The Concept of Function**

“Function” in functionalist analysis refers to “the contribution of the part to the whole”. This means the significant role played by a given part of the society. Therefore, the function of the family can be said to be the continued existence of society through reproduction and socialisation of new members. The religion on the other hand does the integration of the society through the imparting of common values. As long as these social institutions perform their role adequately, they remain functional. However, any deviation from the expected roles of maintaining the society in a cohesive and harmonious state would make them dysfunctional.

### **3.2.1.3 Presuppositions and Assumptions**

Parson (1955) gave seven assumptions that guides structural functionalism. These are:

1. “Systems have property of order and interdependence of parts;
2. Systems tend towards self-maintaining order, or equilibrium.
3. The system may be static or involved in an ordered process of change.
4. The nature of one part of the system has an impact on the form that the other parts can take.
5. System maintains boundaries with the environment.
6. Allocation and integration are two fundamental processes necessary for a given state of equilibrium of a system; and
7. System tends towards self-maintenance of boundaries and of the relationships of parts to the whole, control of environmental variation and control of tendencies to change the system from within.” (Parsons cited in Ritzer, 1996:240)

### **3.2.1.4 Value Consensus**

The analysis of Functionalists concerned itself majorly with the main question of how social system is maintained. This focus has streamlined the functionalist’s search for answers to value consensus (a collective conscience comprising common values, norms, beliefs and sentiment which if not present would make social solidarity and cohesion impossible).

Value consensus therefore, is from the fundamental integrating principle that joins the various parts of society together. Social order will be maintained if members shared and remain committed to the same norms and values. Compared to those that all groups share in common, differences of interests are considered as of minor and secondary importance.



### 3.2.2 Symbolic Interactionism

Symbolic interactionism has its beginning in the development of sociological theory which follows the publication of G. H. Mead's in 1934/1962. Mead and others with his view argue that human beings are unique in their ability to use symbolic communicating (use of ideas and concepts as distinct from mere gesture) in their social interactions. In this respect, language, which represents the symbol system in use, reflects certain generally accepted symbols or structures, which equally shows universal orders within the human mind. Communication is an expression or exchange of these symbols and the tasks of the interactionist are to discover or uncover the nature of these patterns of exchange (Ritzer, 1996).

Mead is of the opinion that through language, humans are able to:

1. Organise and store up schemata of impressions and understandings of the social and physical world.
2. Transmit same to others who share the same language form and
3. Apply same to new situations, perceptions or symbolic communications received from others, and in the process create new forms of understanding of such signals. (Meighan, 1986).

Being able to choose from a range of available response option that has developed over time in the mind of the individuals help to free them from the determining and constraining forces of nature. Due to the increasing consciousness, the individual becomes an active subject to the direct impact of external stimuli for he can delay his response to such stimuli, anticipate and weigh their significance and the consequences against certain actions towards them before he makes a final approach (Hargreaves 1972). The individual is now an active participant in his social world acting and being acted upon within and toward situations.

Caution about the individuals' all time awareness of the processes that make up their social interaction is however needed. The extent of such awareness can be argued and the social observer is mandated to be alert not only to the overt intentions and understanding of his subjects but also to the outcomes of unexpected and unintended actions that are within the observed interaction.

#### 3.2.2.1 Basic Principles of Symbolic Interactionism

The basic principles of symbolic interactionism were listed by a host of its adherents. These have been summarised by Ritzer (1996) into seven distinct but interrelated principles of the theory. They are:

1. Human beings, unlike lower animals, are endowed with the capacity for thought.
2. The capacity for thought is shaped by social interaction.
3. In social interaction people learn the meanings and the symbols that allow them to exercise their distinctively human capacity for thought.
4. Meanings and symbols allow people to carry on distinctively human action and interaction.
5. People are able to modify or alter the meanings and symbols that they use in action and interaction on the basis of their interpretation of the situation.
6. People are able to make the modification and alterations because in part, of their ability to interact with themselves which allows them to examine possible course of action, assess their relative advantages and disadvantages, and then choose one.
7. The intertwined patterns of action and interactions make up groups and societies. (Ritzer, 1996: 347).

### **3.2.2.2 The Method and its Impact on the Study of Mass Communication**

Most of symbolic interactionists' methods involve the struggle to understand the meaning of events for people in particular situations, with emphasis being placed on the participants' interpretation of reality (Ritzer 1996). From the perspective of social action, meaning is placed where the symbolic interactionists seek meaning. This approach is conceived along the line familiar enough to social anthropologists who are equally concerned with the ways in which the social world is organised by the members (Burgess, 1984b). The connection between symbolic interactionism and ethnographers is that the symbolic interactionists are primarily interested in the cultural patterns and behaviour of the group and, in particular, the members' perception of the world in which they operate. This is the focus of mass communication. It is interested in the cultural pattern of the society and tailors its programmes to suit this culture while at the same time transmitting other cultural values of certain similarities.

### **3.2.2.3 Symbolic Interactionism Assumptions**

In spite of its obvious subjective nature, symbolic interactionism is guided by a set of assumptions which gave a hint about its objectivity as well. It may be useful to look again here at the claim made for the method in this area. Wilcox (1982) has pointed out some of the fundamental precepts, which guide this type of inquiry.

1. Set aside one's own preconception or stereotypes about what is going on and they explore the setting as it is perceived and constructed by its members.
2. Try and make the familiar strange "to assume that which seems common place is nonetheless extraordinary and to question why it exists or take place as it does or why something else does not".
3. In order to understand why things take place as they do, one must view the relationship between the setting and its context.
4. Establish, maintain and develop relationship with the subjects of study in order to ensure the constant flow of data.
5. Remain in the field long enough to note regularities and irregularities and interpret them with confidence.

### **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the basic principles of symbolic interactionism.

### **3.2.3 Conflict Perspective**

In the previous discussion of sociological theories be it at functionalism (macro-level) or micro-level (symbolic interactionism), a common assumption is that the social arrangement and interactional situations which govern social reality are a product of the people involved. The existence of social arrangement and some interactional, social situation that seem to favour some groups more than other is never questioned. Social inequalities in terms of access to and ability to use and control resources in society are accepted as given and unproblematic (Meighan, 1986). Even at that, conservative functionalists accept that social groups can have differences of interest resulting in conflict as a valid and necessary part of social discourse though they undermine the significance of such conflict in disputing the social order.

The failure of both consensus and action perspective to provide satisfactory answers to the question of inequitable distribution of resources or exploitative relationships preventing the society, makes it necessary to come up with an alternative theory of how societies hold together and develop as way of showing how order and coherence in society are founded on conflict and the domination of some over others. This new theory comes up from Karl Marx writings. The theory breaks with the Durkheimian view of the primary society over the individual by focusing on the notion of power as the mediating factor in its concept of binary opposition and further opened the door to a number of other theories especially in those areas where the concept of binary opposition and the notion of power gave support. In the view of the Marx, the basic aspect of social order is to be found in the concept of binary opposition. Social order is achieved through a continual process of disputed

interaction between men, of sectional struggles and of the imposition of order by those who win power (Meighan, 1986). Going by the Marxian Binary model, the conflict theorists demonstrate that though the 'haves' and 'have nots' or those who own the means of production and the forces of production are binary opposites, the notion of power mediates between each pair of opposites. This mediation occurs at two levels:

- (i) It empowers certain individuals within a group to shape, direct and define the rules governing the conduct of the group members as a way of managing intra-group conflict and maintaining order.
- (ii) It enables one group of people to successfully overcome opposition from other groups or even other individuals.

This way, all social arrangements governing the interrelationship between individual's action and the structure of the society and all interaction situations are therefore subjected to a pervasive Hegelian dialectical analysis.

There are many varieties of the conflict perspective within sociology as pointed out by Haralambos and Holborn (2000). They are united in the following ways:

- (i) View society as a whole
- (ii) Adopt a structural approach.
- (iii) Use the notion of the existence of different groups that have different interests in the society resulting in conflict.
- (iv) They submit that social arrangements will tend to favour some groups at the expense of others.

Just as it is with functionalists, the conflict theorists also inclined themselves towards the study of social structures and institutions.

As pointed out by Ritzer (1996) however, conflict theory represents majority a series of contentions that often contradict the views of the functionalists about social reality.

Several varieties of conflict theories thus exist, but the focus here will be only on three of such names; Marxism, Neo-Marxism and Feminism.

### **3.2.3.4 Marxism**

Marxism is named after its founder, Karl Marx, a German born philosopher, economist and sociologist. As a theory, Marxism started from the simple observation that human survival depends on the production of food and material objects. People enter into social relationships with each other in this production process. Production is

therefore a social enterprise involving individuals forming certain association and affiliations from which they derive the benefits of collective effort (Meigham, 1986). This production however, involves a technical aspect known in the Marxian parlance as the forces of production, which refers to the scientific knowledge, raw materials, implements and the entire technology used in the process of production (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000). In this sense, every major stage in the development of the forces of production is characterised by a particular form of social relationship of production.

The forces of production and social relationships that characterised them together form the economic basis of society which the Marxist regards as infrastructure. The other institutional aspects of society such as the legal, political, educational and the belief and value system that are determined by economic factors form what Marxist called super structure. These two parts (infrastructure and superstructure) are interdependent to the extent that a major change in infrastructure will result in a corresponding changes in the superstructure (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000).

In the opinion of Marx, all historical societies are characterised by basic contradictions that make it difficult for them to survive forever in their existing forms. These contradictions as noted by Haralambos and Holborn (2000):

involve the exploitation of one social group by another: in feudal society, lords exploit their serfs, in capitalist society, employers exploit their employees. This creates a fundamental conflict of interest between social groups, since one gains at the expense of another. This conflict of interest must ultimately be resolved since a social system containing such contradictions cannot survive unchanged.

Two views of Marx need discussion at this stage. The first is his perception of people as being both the producers and product of history. The second has to do with his view subjecting human history to a pervasive Hegelian dialectical analysis. These views are discussed briefly below:

#### **3.2.3.4.1 Marx's Historical Perspective**

Here, people are both a product and producer of society. They are the architect of society and themselves by their own very action. History, by this, becomes a process of self-creation. In the same vein, people are shaped and moulded by the same social relationships and systems of

thought that they helped to bring about through their actions and reactions. This calls for historical perspectives that help to unearth the process through which humanity both produces and is produced by social reality. (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000)

The Marxian theory sees society as a whole and the various part as interdependent and influencing one another. These parts can therefore, be understood from the perspective of their mutual effect.

#### **3.2.3.4.2 Marx's Dialectical Materialism**

The Marxian view of history is based on dialectic which represents a struggle of opposites and a conflict of contradictions. Conflict therefore becomes the source of change and the prime mover of the dialectical process is to be found in the concept of binary opposition. In effect, the prime mover is the struggle or conflict between two binary oppositions. The struggle or conflict between two binary opposites escalates in intensity leading to a collision which also paves the way for the emergence of a new set of forces at a level of development (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000).

The idea of dialectical change came from Hegelian dialectical analysis. In Hegel's view, social change finds its basis in conflict between incompatible ideas. Contrarily, Marks placed emphasis on the economic system as a way of rejecting the priority Hegel accorded to ideas. Haralambos and Holborn (2000), further explain that it is in contradiction and conflict in the economic system that the major dynamic for social change lies". This is what earned Marx's view the name dialectical materialism.

#### **3.2.3.5 Neo-Marxism**

This is the second variety of the conflict perspectives. Neo-Marxism is a term applied to a variety of sociological theories whose critical approach reflects the idea of Marx. Marx has given a profound influence on a number of other theorists who profess to be operating within the guideline laid down by Marx's original work. However, it is not always the case that these theorists who applied Marx method shared Marx assumption. This was rightly noted by Ritzer (1996). In drawing this distinction, Ritzer (1996) has attempted to weigh the various types of Neo-Marxist theories with the respective concerns in sociological analysis. We will be looking at these three – economic determinism, Hegelian Marxist and critical theorist briefly.

## 1. Economic Determinism

The economic determinists based their argument on Marx's insistence on the paramount importance of the economic system in exerting the primary influence on other aspects of society. Such that economic factors determine all other sectors of the society such as religion, politics, value system and education, Marxism is interpreted in terms of economic determination. Economic determinism became prominent in the period 1889 – 1914, at a time when market capitalism had its booms and busts, which led to predictions about its imminent collapse (Ritzer, 1996). Followers of this interpretation argued that the collapse of capitalism was inevitable because of the contradictions that interplay within its economic structures. The class struggle between workers and capitalist class is expected to lead to an inevitable overthrow of capitalism and the emergence of socialism.

It was this last point that Ritzer took up as it looks to circumvent the Marxian dialectic by undermining the significance of human thought and action. The whole imagery of the class struggle is about actors who are constrained by the economic structures of capitalism into a series of action.

## 2. Hegelian Marxism

The apparent contradictions between economic determinism and Marx's thought referred to above gave rise to a number of other varieties of Marxian theory. One of such is the Hegelian Marxism which calls for a return to the Hegelian roots of Marx theory as a way of complementing the strength of early Marxists' objectivity with a subjective orientation. The concern here is to restore the dialectic between the subjective and the objective aspect of social life (Ritzer, 1996).

Notable thinkers in this group are George Lukacs and Antonio Gramsci. Both are typical of a group which would:

- (i) Openly reject the economic determinism of the Marxian theory but still use something of its analytical method.
- (ii) Attempt to re-establish the dialectic between the objective and subjective aspects of social life by focusing on collective ideas rather than on social structure.

Gramsci's central concept of Hegemony which he defined as cultural leadership exercised by the ruling class is negotiated rather than attained through coercion. Therefore, it is not enough to gain control of the economic structure and the state apparatus, equally it is important to gain cultural leadership over the rest of the society. (Ritzer, 1996; Haralambos and Holborn, 2000).

### 3. Critical Theory

The critical theory consists mainly of criticism of various aspects of social and intellectual life ranging from the economic determinism of Marxism theory from which it draws its inspiration, scientism of the discipline of sociology, the cultural repression of the individual in modern society, to the absolutism of the positivist methodology (Ritzer, 1996).

This theory was developed by a group of German Neo-Marxist notably, Horkheimer, Adorno and Marcuse of the Institute of Social Research in Frankfurt. The main contribution of this theory is in its efforts to steer Marxian theory in a subjective direction at both individual and cultural levels. At the cultural level, they argue that the economic determinants have over emphasised the prominence of economic structures at the expense of other aspect of social reality such as culture. While at the individual level, they are concerned with actors and their consciousness as well as what happens to them in the modern world (Ritzer, 1996).

A second aspect of the critical theorists' main contribution lies in their dialectical approach, which emphasises the importance of social totality. The notion of social totality is that "no partial aspect of social life and no isolated phenomenon may be comprehended unless it is related to the historical whole, to the social structure conceived as a global entity". This approach rejects a focus on a simple aspect of social life outside of its broader context such that promoted by the economic determinists.

#### SELF- ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Briefly discuss the view point of Marxism.

#### 3.2.3.3 Feminism

This is another brand of the conflict perspective. It is described as "that system of general ideas designed to describe and explain human social experiences from a women-centred vantage point. (Ritzer, 1996) Different versions of feminism exist but both shared common elements Ritzer (1996), mentioned three questions that govern and unite all the varieties of contemporary feminist theory:

- (i) "The descriptive question and what about women?"
- (ii) "The explanatory question, why then is all this as it is?"
- (iii) "The qualifying questions, what about the differences among women?"



Adopting a response pattern to the first of the three question (and what about the women?) Ritzer further categorises feminist theory into four as follows:

1. **Gender difference:** - This category emphasises the difference between men and women in terms of their location, in and experience of, most situations.
2. **Gender Inequality:** - This category stresses that women's Location in most situations is not only different from that of men, but it is also less privileged and unequal.
4. **Gender Oppression:-** This category promotes the view that women are, in addition to being different from and unequal to, oppressed and actively restrained, subjugated, moulded as well as, used and abused by men.
5. **Third Wave Feminism:** - The fourth category argues that women's experience of difference, inequality and oppression varies by their social location.

Feminists are concerned with the divisions within society, but they differ from Marxist in the way they explain these divisions. Marxist focuses on class differences, Feminist focus on the major division as being existed between men and women (Haralambos and Holborn, 2000). They like the Marxist are of the view that society is characterised by exploitation, they differ in terms of the exploitation they are concerned with. Marxists emphasise exploitation of working class by ruling class, feminists emphasis exploitation of women by men as the most important source of exploitation. They therefore describe contemporary society as patriarchal, a man's world in which women are dominated and relegated to lower status position, poor-paid jobs and restriction to political power.

The main objective of these varieties of feminism therefore, is to put an end to men's dominance and rid the society of male chauvinism and its resultant and unjust exploitation of women.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain briefly the main concern of Feminism.

### 3.3 Conflict Theory and Mass Communication

The application of the conflict theory to mass communication can be seen from two main viewpoints – Economic and Political and Cultural

perspectives. The control of media is both economic and political. This sometimes or most of the time conflict with the professionalism in the operation of the media. There are times when the media stand is dictated by who holds the ace as far as the economic control or political control is concerned. The action of the media must follow the dictates from these angles.

The other part is on cultural perspective. There are some cultures which prevent media activities on certain aspects of their society. For the media to exist and continue to exist in this respect, it has to go with the cultural dictates of such society. For example, certain aspects of the *Eyo* festival are shielded from the media coverage because of cultural value, belief and norms. These aspects of the society are in conflict with the social function which the media aim to perform.

The location of the media as one of super-structures of society which is affected by the more important infrastructure, as seen in Marxian analysis, provides a useful basis in understanding the degree to which changes or reforms can be made in it. The Marxian believes that without a corresponding change in economic infrastructure, there cannot be change in media activities.

#### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We have seen in this unit that the various sociological perspectives are of relevance to the study of sociology of mass communication. The understanding of these perspectives guides the activities of the media within the society they exist as the practitioners attempt to carry out their assignments. The knowledge of this relationship between the various elements of the society to themselves and to the whole is of great importance. The various views by different sociologists have equally been examined.

#### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has examined the various perspectives of sociology under three different perspectives. It has explained what each stands for and their argument. Areas of differences were also mentioned.

#### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

State the argument of Feminists. Compare and contrast the views of the Marxists and the feminists.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 3      CONCEPT OF SOCIOLOGY AND CULTURE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Meaning of Society
  - 3.2    Concept of Culture
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

In the previous units, we have discussed the introduction to sociology of mass communication and sociological perspectives. In this unit, we shall be looking at the society, its meaning and its relationship with the mass media. We shall also look at culture as well as its relationship with the mass media.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define society and culture
- state the features of a society
- analyse the relationships that exist between society and mass media
- describe the content of culture
- explain the role of culture in media practice.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Meaning of Society**

Society is a key concept in sociology. As a matter of fact, society is the focus. People are always in groups and members of the groups do interact together. As such, a social relationship thus exists when these individuals or groups possess reciprocal expectations concerning the behaviours so that they tend to act in relatively patterned ways. The groups, the individuals and their activities take place in a larger set up often called community or society. Community is different from a society. It is more embracing as it refers to a definite population living

in a particular place. It includes everybody, adult and children, social and non-social person living in a given place, sharing a common mode of life, but all members are not necessarily conscious of its organisation or purpose.

A society is however, a sub-community whose members are socially conscious of their mode of life and are united by a common set of aims and values. In this sense, a society can be seen as “a group of human beings sharing a self-sufficient system of action and is capable of existing longer than the life span of an individual, the group members being recruited at least in part by the sexual reproduction of its members”. From the above, one would realise that children are members of a community, but are functionally not members of a society, because they do not know their rights, their duties and obligation as full members of their society. They are also ignorant of the way their society functions though; they are potential members of the society.

There are various definitions of society. George Simmel cited in Daramola (2005) defined society as “a number of individuals connected by interaction”. Also Anthropologist Ralph Linton in Daramola (2005) described society as “any group of people who have lived and worked together long enough to think of themselves as a social unit with well-defined limits”.

Both definitions emphasise interaction as being important in classifying a group to be a society. In living and working together, there would be interactions between the people.

Society therefore, is “an organised group of persons associated together for religious, benevolent, cultural, scientific, political, patriotic or other purposes.”

Members of a society do not just come together but with specific purposes which are usually outlined and internalised. They all work together to ensure that these set goals are achieved and are abided with for the continuous existence of the society. Each member works relentlessly towards ensuring the sustainability of the society.

Before a group could be regarded as a society, there are certain criteria that should be fulfilled. Four of them are highlighted by Levy (1950). These are that:

1. The group must be capable of existing longer than the life-span of the individual.
2. The group must recruit its new members, at least in part by means of sexual reproduction.
3. The group must be united in giving allegiance to a common complex, general system of action.
4. The system of action should be self-sufficient.

Aside these criteria, there are certain conditions and morals that regulate their behaviour towards one another. These are regarded as codes of conduct. They include:-

1. **Cohesion:** - Cohesion refers to resistance to division. It could be of a social unit or the entire society. Cohesion may be as a result of:
  - (i) Allegiance to the larger unit
  - (ii) Good overall co-ordination
  - (iii) Mutual interest or Inter-dependence
  - (iv) Intersection of ties; and
  - (v) The quality and strength of ties(Cohen, 1969)
2. **Conformity:** - This has to do with conforming to the morals and regulations that are necessary for harmony in the society. The conformity could be internally or externally motivated. These are usually as a result of individual's attachment to the society.
3. **Cooperation:** - This is a deliberate and voluntary effort to facilitate the performance tasks by others in return for similar services. An individual may be required to make personal service because of the common good of the society. Every member has a role to play depending on his or her status in order to ensure the oneness of the society. What individuals do is cooperation with others playing their own roles towards the attainment of the societal expectations.
4. **Participation and Interaction:** - Every individual of a society has a role to play. Certain things are being expected from members in order to fulfil the aspirations of the society. Individually and collectively, participation of members is necessary for the society to survive.
  - (i) Purposefulness: - It should be directed towards achieving or clearly recognising and generally accepting goals of the society.
  - (ii) It is interpersonal as members are conscious of the existence of each other.
  - (iii) It is reflective and individuals usually develop the consequences of their belonging to a group that can affect, influence or alter their attitude to themselves and to other members.
  - (iv) Interaction is also historical in that the consequences of past or recent happenings often interfere with the interaction in the present.
  - (v) Interaction occurs in different ways. These include communication, competition, conflict and tolerance.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Discuss the criteria a group must meet before it can be called a society.

### 3.2 Element and Characteristics of Human Society

A society is mainly defined as a collection of individuals. It consists of individuals of male and female sex and of different age groups. The sex ratio in the society strikes a balance. The vital activities such as the birth, growth and death go on in the society as long as the society is there. The immigration and emigration and the birth and death of the population also strike balance of the population in the society. But the improvement in the medical facilities increases the average life span of the individual thereby leading to population explosion.

**A common geographical area:** A particular society has been demarcated by the other with natural or artificial boundaries. The natural boundaries such as the rivers, mountain ranges or forests, canals etc. and the artificial boundaries are there demarcated by political settlements. The people of the area share the resources in common and participate to reach the common goals of population. The people develop unity, integrity, oneness and collective consciousness.

**Variety of interactions:** The society is full of interactions and the different social processes and going on in the society. The people come face to face and interact among themselves. People share certain interests, attitudes, aptitudes, traditions, customs, values, objectives and morals. The people of the society depend upon each other for their survival. The division of labour among the individuals exists and the functions assigned to them are performed. This develops functional inter relationship among the members of the society.

**Feeling of Solidarity:** Since individuals of the society occupy a common territory, common customs and traditions, common values, common history, common cultures, self-contained interdependence on each other obviously causes oneness and they develop a feeling of solidarity among them. Though occasionally they interact with other societies, they never forget their identity and remain united as long as their society survives.

**Total culture:** Each society has its own culture and the individual relationships are organised and structured by the culture. Because of commonness in the culture content and tradition of the society, the members unite together. The society will be differentiated by the other society because of its unique culture. Culture is present in human society and the same is absent in animal society.

**Social Organisation:** Members of a society are socially organised. Society itself has a structure and the important components and elements of social structure are norms, rules, statuses, power, authority, groups, associations and institutions. The norms are important. They give stability, order and structure to human society that without them social interaction would be difficult and chaotic. Organisation of human society is maintained with the help of norms and institutions that pervade the society. Social organisation helps maintain society in social equilibrium.

**Functional differentiation:** All the individuals in human society never perform similar activities and functions. They perform different functions depending upon their sex, age, interest, abilities, skills and other qualifications. There is more and more specialisation in each work and they are expected to do the work allotted to them. Thus several persons can work on a single activity. There is division of labour depending upon sex and age.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the characteristics of a society.

#### 3.2.1 Types of Society

A society can be described as any of the following ways:-

1. **Pre Industrial Societies:-**These type of societies exist in the Western world before they became industrialised as well as in many parts of un-industrialised parts of our contemporary world. This was described by Aina (1988) in Bamisaiye (1990) as “societies that primarily rely on human and animal sources (animate source) for their productive system, that of the absence of industrial production”.
2. **Industrializing Societies:-**These are societies that were traditionally pre industrial but, because of the contact with the outside world, civilisation and technology, especially in the urban part, have been transformed. Nigeria is an example of such societies.
3. **Industrialised Societies:-**These refer to societies with great advancement in technology. There are no borrowed or transferred technologies. Taiwo (1988) cited in Bamisaiye (1990) described them as “characterised by improvements and achievements in technological developments which have not been seen before in the human history”. These have transformed and increased the productivity in them. These societies are highly urbanised. There is a huge difference in both the family and social structure compared to pre-industrialised and industrialising societies.



4. **Classed Societies:** These are highly stratified societies where movement from one class to another is impossible. One thing worthy of note is the fact that despite the seeming impossibility in movements between the classes, it is still the aspiration of those in the lower class to move up. Class movement is only impossible and a taboo in the caste system.
5. **Classless Societies:** These are societies where everybody is equal and has equal right. This is usually the case in social clubs, associations or even a given class in school. However, for the sake of administration, some people have to be at the helms to facilitate organisation.
6. **Informal Societies:** This can be an informal group of people brought together for the purpose of communal living. This was the pattern of civilisation that emerged worldwide. Migrants settle at different location or place as a result of war, trade among others things.
7. **Formal Societies:** A society can be established for certain reasons or by law. This is usually the case in business, social or religious groups. These associations are established for reasons of economy, political, psychological, social or spiritual needs of the people. Formal societies are different from informal societies in some ways. These are:
  - (a) Members of a formal society apply voluntarily. In informal Societies, membership is not voluntary. It is not decided by the members.
  - (b) There are guiding rules in formal societies for members and for participation. There are no rules other than the set society/rules.
  - (c) The societies outlive their members as people come in and go out but a whole community could be extinct by war or epidemic.
  - (d) There are formally set goals which they aim to achieve. The societies thrive mainly on communal living and each member is free to choose life goals and aspiration he wants for people.
8. **Mixed societies:** These are societies that combine the attributes of both formal groups. Societies of the world are becoming mixed societies. People are being born into the society while some apply to be members of such society. Example: - The US Green Card DV Lottery affords many of the opportunity to be members of that society.

## SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain six types of societies.

### 3.2.2 Concept of Culture

“Culture” is defined by Taylor (1902) as “That complex whole which includes knowledge, beliefs, anti-morals, laws, customs and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society”. Meaning that culture here is taken as an entity which is peculiar or applicable to all societies. Aligning with Taylor, Reuter (1950) defined “culture” as “the sum total of human creation, the organised results of group experience up to the present time, adding that culture includes all that man had made in the form of tools, weapons, shelter and other material goods, all that he had elaborated in the way of attitudes and beliefs, ideas and science, philosophy and social organisation”. All the aspects of human life including his inventions are all regarded as culture by this definition.

Going further, Olsen (1968) cited in Akinfeleye (2008) made some assertions that explains the concept of culture.

- a. “As (people) communicate about common activities, exchange attitudes, values and beliefs, develop common standards of action, and adopt similar ways of doing things, they create a culture”.  
This means that it is people that create their culture through their interaction and relationship. Activities of the people create their culture.
- b. “A culture is a relatively unified set of shared ideas that is associated with one or more patterns of social order within the process of social organisation”.

To have a clearer understanding of culture, one must make a distinction among ideas, objects, and actions. Culture is in the realm of ideas whereas social phenomena describe objects and actions. This means that cultural ideas give meaning to social objects and actions; while social objects and action lead to cultural ideas.

- c.
  - (1) “Social values are shared agreements among the members of a social organisation as to what is desirable or undesirable in social life”.
  - (2) “Social beliefs are shared ideas concerning the nature of man and his social life”.
  - (3) “Social standards (norms and rules) are shared agreements among the members of a social organisation regarding acceptable and unacceptable actions”.

- (4) “Social technology refers to knowledge about the technical aspects of social organisation how to establish, maintain and operate this process”.

Some social relevant components of culture include value consensus, belief consensus, standard consensus and technical or methods consensus. It is about what is desirable and undesirable; acceptable and unacceptable and how to establish to maintain and to operate this process.

### 3.2.3 Characteristics of Culture

Ezewu (1983) identified six characteristics of culture.

1. **Culture is Organic and Supra-Organic:**-It is said to be organic because it comprises of human beings and supra-organic because it goes beyond the life-span of any given individual of that society.
2. **Culture is Overt and Covert:**-It is covert when the ideas, worldview and attitude towards nature of the culture are considered. However, it is overt when its artefacts, speech etc, are considered.
3. **Culture is both Explicit and Implicit:**-There are some things we believe in that we cannot really explain. These are regarded as implicit. On the other hand, some things exist, some actions we take or some roles we play which we can easily explain. These are regarded as being explicit.
4. **Culture is Ideal and Manifest:**-The way people ought to behave or what they believe they ought to do is regarded as ideal culture. The action people take or things they do that other people recognise or see them do are what make culture to be manifest.
5. **Culture is Stable and yet Changing:**-Cultures are passed on from one generation to another to maintain the norms and value of the society. Most time, some aspects of the culture are considered no longer to be relevant or have to be changed when in contact with other culture. If the culture is stronger than the new one or incoming one, it absorbs it and makes it a part of it; if it is however not as strong as the incoming one, it will be relegated to the background and the new one takes its place. But if they are of equal strength, they may fuse into one another.
6. **Culture is shared and learned:**-Individuals imbibe the culture into which they are born. The level at which individual imbibes a culture is different even though it is a common right. We can therefore say that individuals learn at different rates.

### 3.2.4 The Components of Culture

Wisler (1923) classified the component or content of culture into the following:

- (i) Speech which includes languages and writing system.
- (ii) Material traits and food habits, shelter, transportation, dress, utensils, tools, weapons, occupation and industries.
- (iii) Art – carving, painting, drawing, music, dance
- (iv) Mythology and scientific knowledge
- (v) Religious practices – ritualistic form, care of the dead, etc.
- (vi) Family and social practices – marriage, inheritance, social control, sports and games, method of reckoning relationship.
- (vii) Property – real and personal; standards of value and exchange and trade;
- (viii) Government, political and judicial form;
- (ix) Warfare

The above mentioned are all what constitute the different aspects of the culture of a given society and no single one is equal with culture. They all make up the entirety of what is referred to as culture.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISES

- i. Define culture in your own words.
- ii. Explain briefly the components of culture.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

In this unit, we have been able to define both culture and society, seen the characteristics of both society and culture. We have also discussed those criteria a group must meet before it could be regarded as a society. While at the same time, the components of culture have been highlighted.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has explained the meaning of society and culture; explained the characteristics as well as criteria for a society and components of culture.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

A group cannot be regarded as a society until certain criteria are met. Discuss these criteria that must be fulfilled.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 4      SOCIALISATION AND THE FAMILY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Socialisation: Meaning
  - 3.2    The Family
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

The meaning of society and what role each member of a society is expected to play have been discussed in the previous unit. In this unit, we shall be discussing the role of socialisation and its agents in making the young ones full members of the society.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define the concept of socialisation and family
- state the importance of socialisation
- explain the various agents of socialisation.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Socialisation: Meaning**

Socialisation is the process by which a person acquires the knowledge, skills and disposition that make them more or less integrated members of their society.

This concept is a popular concept to sociology, anthropology and psychology. It is a life time process through which members of a society learn certain habits, traditions, knowledge, skills, norms and values of society that are considered important.

Douglas (1973) cited in Daramola (2005) defines “Socialisation” in general terms as “the process through which individuals acquire the social knowledge and skills necessary to enable them interact with others”. He went further to say that it is a process through which

individuals locate themselves in the society. In his view, socialisation is a life time process.

Belton (1981) cited in Daramola (2005) sees “socialisation” as “a process by which we acquire the culture of the society into which we are born and learn the ways of thought and behaviour considered appropriate in our society”. He explained further that as soon as an individual, through socialisation, accepts the rules and expectations of their society that constitute its culture and used them to determine how they should act, it is regarded that such a person have internalised society’s culture rules.

The above views was buttressed by McKee (1981) in Daramola (2008) when he says “Socialisation is the basic process by which the human organism becomes a person and a functioning member of a society and by which such a person is continually integrated into groups by acquiring as their own the norms, values and perspectives of such groups”. It therefore becomes a process essential for individuals; they could not become essential for society because it could not persist without continually socialising new members.

### **3.1.1 Aims or Importance of Socialisation**

Socialisation is important for the survival of the individuals in the society. The importance is highlighted by Peretomode (1995) as follows.

1. It provides the foundation for individual’s effective participation in society.
2. It inculcates basic discipline in the individual such as respect for elders, toilet habit, eating habit, etc.
3. It instills aspiration in societal members.
4. It provides individuals with identities largely through the aspiration it encourages or discouraged.
5. It provides for the stability, persistence and continuity of society by communicating the contents of the culture from one generation to the other.
6. It makes minimum, initial communication and interaction possible by providing for members to possess specific skills, values, internal behavioural disposition etc.

### **3.1.2 Agents of Socialisation**

The process of socialising the young ones in the society is in different stages. Each stage has a role to play though all are targeted at ensuring that the young ones are fully integrated into the full membership of the society. These agents are:

## **1. Peer Group**

The peer group is an important age of socialisation. The age grade or the peer group comprises of persons of about the same age. Though it is not an established institution like the schools or the family, it has its own customs and organisation.

Peer group can then be defined as “one composed of members of roughly equal age, sharing equal status as well as pursuing some interests in common. The roles of members are not clearly defined as the roles change often as well as membership.

The peer group provides children an avenue to become less dependent of family authority. They are able to form their own identity. The peer group provides a useful transaction between the adolescent world and adulthood. The group exposes members to knowledge which they do not have access to in their individual families. They do certain things that are not allowed by the adult once they are sure there are no prying eyes. It helps to forge a child into a complex individual. They are exposed to values and experiences of several other families which most likely varied. These contacts help to broaden their horizon and perceptions.

The level of interaction is always very high. Socialisation here is very effective because members are few, very close and the contacts are continuing. There are norms and values which members strive to adhere to. Degree of participation determines success within the group as well as status within the group.

The influence, power and functions of the peer is highlighted in this statement, “A peer group shelters, and protects its members. It gives him psychological sustenance by meeting emotional needs of affection, understanding and acceptance”. Data (1984) Going further he said “Its members can interact directly with one another. It thus provides an effective learning situation, it transmits the culture of society (undiluted form) teaches certain roles and social expectations and conditions the attitude and sentiment of its members”.

In view of this, the media needs to use the strong influence of the peer group to assist a child in inculcating a positive attitude in the society through its programmes. Media practitioners must be oblivious of this influence.

## **2. The School**

The school is a formal and planned social institution with rules and regulations guiding it. It is specifically charged with the responsibility of



preserving, improving and extending the culture by showing appreciation to it and adherence to its norms. The basic function of the school in socialising a child is the development of the cognitive ability.

The curriculum is a major instrument used to transmit on to the children as well as reinforce the skills, practical knowledge, important cultural values and norms, patriotism and loyalty, lesson of obedience, ambition, concern for others and so on.

This is where a child has a large contact to be made and learn to deal with a world that is more complex than his own family.

### **3. The Religious Organisation**

The religious organisation includes the church, the mosque as well as the traditional religious setting. These are socio-religious institutions in the society which help to satisfy individual's spiritual needs. The major area of interest is the moral aspect of personality development of both children and adults. This institution affects the economic, political orientation, beliefs, values, intellectual and social growth of their members through their practices, preaching and teachings. The modern system has a different mode of teaching. Any form of indoctrination is discouraged as children are expected to learn and believe on the basis of empirical evidence and environment of freedom. If there are conflicts, teachers are expected to help children resolve such without enforcing their own beliefs on the pupils.

### **4. The Mass Media**

These include books, magazines, newspapers, posters, advertising billboard, films, television, the radio, the internet. This is not a formal socialising institution but could be used in most cases by educators as a powerful instrument of socialisation.

The mass media transmit all messages – information, entertainment, persuasions, appeals, propaganda etc. These messages have effect on people's orientation, beliefs, values and experience in no small measure. It then does not only socialise the child but also continues to socialise adult.

Television, radio and internet could ensure that both children and adults jettison the culture of reading. It equally could promote pornography because they use their leisure time for entertainment.

Despite this, the mass media is helpful as an educational tool and strong agent of socialisation. Influence of ICT is growing by the day at an alarming rate. But children can be guided to pick positively from it.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss socialisation and its agent briefly.

### **3.2 The Family**

The definition of family is not a complex one. It can simply be viewed as “the father, the mother and the children” to define it in the nuclear sense. The definition can be broadly few to be “the social unit that is a person’s biological or adopted origin”. This means people who are born into a family or who have been adopted into a social unit and share affections and feelings. Some people as a result of their inability to live with their natural parents are fostered to surrogate parents who take over the parental responsibility of bringing them up

The family in another view is seen as “the fundamental, biological and social institution into which a child is born and where the child’s primary socialisation takes place”.

Family is seen in another respect as “a group of related kin, linked by blood and marriage, which occupy a common household and are usually characterised by economic co-operation and solidarity”. This definition is equally well articulated, family members are closely knitted and work together for the common good of the family.

#### **3.2.1 Characteristics of Family**

The family has a hold on the life of its members for life, particularly in Africa. This may be because of the strength of the ties formed among members of the same family which is usually very strong.

The characteristics of family include:

1. Marriage – Family has its origin in marriage. Marriage is simply the union of both man and woman. Every family be it nuclear or the extended originates from marriage. Thus, there must be marriage before a family can exist.
2. Composition: - A family comprises of husband, wife and children (Nuclear). Other blood relatives may find their way into this group making the composition to expand (extended). But majorly, a family is made up of father, mother and children.
3. The family members are united together. This could be by means of legal bonds; economic, religious and other kinds of rights and obligations. Also, by different amount of feelings such as love, affection, respect, cares, etc.

### 3.2.2 Types of Family

Families are formed majorly by a union of spouses of different gender. Classification is based on how the unions are formed, the number of spouses of either gender or the way they co-habit. On this premise, the following kinds of family can be identified.

1. **Natal Family:** - This is a family into which one is born. A person with a biological parent belongs to a family. Though a person's parent may not have been married but as soon as a child identifies his father, he automatically calls his father's family his family.
2. **The Conjugal Family:** - This exists when a person gets married and starts a conjugal family. This refers to that family he or she is a spouse (husband or wife) and not a child.
3. **Nuclear Family:** - This family consists of one husband and one wife at a time with their children. It is also called a monogamous family.
4. **Joint Family:** - This is a family that consists of all people who are related by blood living together on the patri-lineal estate. This is common in Nigeria and especially among the Yorubas. It is called *Agbo-ile* and it is headed by the eldest male child. Each male child marries into that estate and resides there with his family.
5. **Polygamous Family:** - This is made up of a man and several wives and their children, all living together at the same time in the same place.
6. **Extended Family:** - This is similar to joint family. The only difference is that members need not live together in a compound. However, they do things together and relate together as one.
7. **Monoandrous Family:** - This is a family in which a woman marries a man and brings him to her house to live. She exercises control over the household and the children belong to her.
8. **Polyandrous Family:-** This is a family in which a woman marries more than one man at a time and brings them to live in her house. She exercises control over the household and the children belong to her. This is also called matrilineal household.
9. **One-Parent Family:** - This is a new development in the sociology of the family. It is perhaps a fall out of the constant struggle for equity of the sexes which has reached a crescendo with the women's liberation struggle. This is not a family by design. This could occur when a woman loses her husband through death and refuses to re-marry.

Babatunde (1987) cited in Bamisaiye (1990) mentioned three other families. These are:

- (a) Leviratic Family: - This is a family where a brother marries the widow of his late brother to raise children in his memory.
- (b) Sorronate family: This is a family where a man marries two sisters either both living or after one had died.
- (c) Ghost family: In this type of family, a woman referred to as 'pater' marries another woman for a man (a genitor) who bears children for the pater.

All said and done, family is basically a product of conjugal relationship either formal or informal between a man and a woman.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Define family. Briefly explain the types of family.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We have discussed in this unit that the socialisation and the family. We have pointed out the meaning of socialisation, the aim of socialisation and its agents. The place of the family has equally been highlighted.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit we have explained the meaning of socialisation and family, discussed the types of family, agents of socialisation as well as the aims of socialisation.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Explain the role of the peer group, the school, religious organisation and the mass media in the socialisation of a child.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **UNIT 5      SOCIOLOGY AND MASS COMMUNICATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Sociology and Mass Communication
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    Reference/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

In the previous units, we have taken a decisive and comprehensive look at sociology, society and other related elements. This unit takes a look at the relationship between society and mass communication.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define Mass Communication
- state the role of mass communication in the society
- discuss its relationship with the society.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Sociology and Mass Communication**

Society is the nucleus of sociological study. Therefore, the society is the main concern of sociologists. Sociologists want to know the relationship between the society and its constituent elements. How these elements influence the society and how the society influence these elements. The mass media is one of those elements in the society that makes the society to thrive and is at the same time influenced by the society. The influence the society has on the media dictates the type of media that exist within such society. It is for this reason that some media are classified as: socialist media, communist media, capitalist media, etc. The relationship between the media and the society is a symbolic one. This is because of the link between them - communication. While it is difficult for the mass media to thrive without the society, it will be more difficult for the society itself to thrive without the mass media. The advancement in technology is as a result of the improvement in the mass communication.

The mass media uses the people in the society for the day to day running of its activities - the people make the news, the society (government) provides the facilities; the society needs the mass media to progress in respect of the media providing them information, entertainment and education.

It is also a multiplier of resources of knowledge and information etc. (Raufu, 2003).

The media is an important element in building the society. During the nationalist struggle and the struggle for independence in Nigeria, the role of the media cannot be quantified. This is why there are nationalist media outfits all over. The media helps to project the view of the members of a society and build a strong society in the process. It was the tenacity of the nationalist media that helped the colonial masters realise the intention and the resolve of the people. During the struggle to achieve civil rule in Nigeria, the role of the media was so enormous that the government of the day had to prescribe media houses for the seeming “anti-government” publications. The resilience and consistency of the media during the military era paved the way for civil rule.

As said earlier, the relationship is symbiotic. There are some things that the media do to benefit the society while at the same time; the society benefits the media in some ways.

What exists between mass media and society is not only a give –and–take exchange but also a permanent as well as enduring or a lasting association. It can then be said that one cannot do without the other. This is because it obviously will be difficult for the media to grow and prosper in isolation from society. It will equally be unthinkable to imagine the level of backwardness and ignorance in the society without mass media.

Mass media is needed to provide people with news information, education and entertainment. In the same vein, mass media uses the people for running their daily operations. For example, people regarded as public figures, celebrities and important personalities or dignitaries make news; journalists gather, write as well as publish the news; government provide funds and facilities to assist the news media.

More importantly is the fact that mass media and society must be seen as partners in the process of national, economic and social development. The people, the government, mass media and other institutions in the society e.g. religion, are all stakeholders in the process of nation-building. These institutions must therefore complement each other and work together before the nation can hope to foster and generate socio-economic progress for all members of the society.

## **SELF ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain briefly ways in which mass media and society interact.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We have discussed in this unit that the society and the mass media are a symbiotic duo that are inseparable. It has been established that the two are together and depend on themselves exceedingly.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has discussed the relationship between the media and society and further broke it down to how it relates to government and the rural community.

## **6.0 TUTOR- MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

The relationship between the mass media and society is symbiotic. Discuss.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

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## **MODULE 2      MEDIA   AND   SOCIAL   INFLUENCE– MASS MEDIA AND SOCIETY**

Unit 1	The Mass Media
Unit 2	Relationship between the Media and Society
Unit 3	Theories of the Press
Unit 4	Functions of the Mass Media
Unit 5	Media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm

### **UNIT 1      THE MASS MEDIA**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Definition of the Mass Media
3.2	Characteristics of the Mass Media
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

The mass media is an integral part of our society. Its role in the society cannot be quantified. This unit will take a general look at the mass media as a concept.

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define mass media
- mention those media classified as mass media
- state the role of the mass media.

#### **3.0      MAIN CONTENT**

##### **3.1      Definition of the Mass Media**

The nucleus of the mass media is communication. It deals with the interaction among the elements within the society. What then is communication? Since the concern of this unit is not communication per

se, we will look briefly at the meaning of communication. Communication is defined by as many scholars as believed to really understand the concept. To some scholars, it is the link between communities in the formation of a larger whole – a metropolis, a province or a nation. It is not only man that communicates. Animals also communicate through gesture, attention-grapping, colours, flashing lights and complex scent. We communicate through the exchange of symbols. We create symbols as human beings, ascribe meanings to them and interpret them. On this basis, we could say that communication is “the exchange and interpretation of meaningful symbols between the sender and receiver through a medium”.

Other definitions of communication exist. “Communication is the transfer of thought from one person to another.” “Communication is the process by which one person (or a group) shares or imparts information to another person (or group) so that both people (and group) clearly understand one another.” (Daramola, 2005) The main concern of communication is to transfer messages from one place to another using a medium that best suits the message and with the hope of getting a feedback or a reaction. Therefore, communication can be defined as “the exchange of meaningful symbols and signals between the sender (source) and the receiver (destination) through a medium with the hope of a feedback which could be immediate or delayed.”

In the light of this brief explanation and for the purpose of this unit, our concern is the medium through which messages are sent. This is what brings about the discussion on the mass media.

As people communicate between themselves they employ the means that best convey their messages. These could be spoken language, smites, smoke signal, numbers, alphabets, gun shots, flute or other things that they believe will best convey their messages. The mass media is a large-audience medium of communication. It deals with a large group over who one may not be able to exercise control.

McQuail (2000) describes “Mass Media” as “means of communication that operates on a large scale, reaching and involving virtually everyone in a society to a greater or lesser degree”. It is a large scale medium media is the plural form of medium which means a channel or instrument through which something (information, message, and signals) is transmitted or carried. Mass media are the channels of communication in modern society. There are broadly two- the print and electronic media.

Media are different in the kind of information they convey. They are also different with respect to perception and thought as well as the personal experience and social interaction they make possible to the people.

McQuail (2000) define Mass media as “an organised means of communicating openly and at a distance to many receivers within a short space of time”. It is the quest to reach a large population in this modern time that makes the development of mass media to thrive. Their capacity is so great that the structure of society is fundamentally altered by their existence.

The mass media comprises of television, radio, newspapers, magazine, books, journals, movies and now the internet. They are not personal communication and they have the ability to reach large audiences. They affect the perception and behaviour of members of a society in distinct way. As much as they affect the society, the society also affects them. The mass media because of their size and reach have tremendous impact on society. It is for this reason that Murphy (1977) cited in Daramola (2005) summarised the societal impacts as oil, glue and dynamite.

As oil, the media can keep the running of the society while assisting individuals to adjust and settle to the reality of their lives. The media assists in the maintenance of order through reporting of the misadventure of those who transgress the law or social norms.

As glue, it fosters social cohesion and helps maintain it. The media provides everybody with something to talk about by setting agenda of discussion. During the petrol subsidy removal crisis, the media gave enough attention to the issue. This way, it gave the society something to discuss on. The scam that also came from the investigation on subsidy was well exposed and attention shifted from the subsidy removal palaver to bribery scandal of the committee investigating the subsidy issue.

As dynamite, mass media is capable of ripping the society apart. It could be used as a tool to incite the society into action, and could cause untold damage if not utter destruction to the continued existence of such society. The sensitisation that attended the cancelation of the June 12, 1993 presidential election led to several crises within the country particularly in the western states of Nigeria. The country was on the verge of disintegration at the time as many people were running to their places of origin so that they will not be caught unaware should there be outright secession in the country. That is the power of the media. Egbon (1995) cited in Daramola (2005) attested to this when he said “It is significant to recognise the fact that mass media can be a very useful ‘servant’ but could also be a dangerous ‘master’.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain briefly the concept of mass media.

### **3.2 Characteristics of Mass Media**

The characteristics of mass media are:-

1. Mass media is designed for a large audience. The audience are large in terms of number or population, they are heterogeneous and they cannot be controlled.
2. It is a big business with a large number of employees. It is a business that gulps a huge amount of money to establish.
3. The main information they disseminate is news (factual, current and verifiable information).
4. The speed of information gathering and dissemination is very fast. They are gathering information continuously and are sending them out at the same time. This is what makes it different from other media.
5. They develop and attain maturity at the same time as a response to the situation at hand and to achieve a purpose.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List the characteristics of the mass media.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit has been able to establish that the media is a significant element of the society. It is the means through which messages, ideas and information are sent to the end users (receivers). It is mentioned that the media can be a positive as well as a negative weapon on the society.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

In this unit, we defined communication and mass media. It was established that the mass media is the medium that is used in passing across messages. We also treated mass media as being the oil, the glue and the dynamite in the society. The characteristics of mass media were also mentioned.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Define mass media. Explain this saying: “mass media is the oil, the glue and the dynamite in a society.”

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Bittner, J.R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books.
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## **UNIT 2      RELATIONSHIP   BETWEEN   MASS   MEDIA AND SOCIETY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Media Duties to the Society
  - 3.2    Society's Duties to the Media
  - 3.3    Media Duties to the Rural-Communities
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

This unit will be taking a look at the relationship between the media and the society. In this regard, we will be looking at the duties media perform to the society, what the society does for the media and also what the media does for the rural communities.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- discuss the duties of the media to the society
- highlight the duties of the society to the media
- mention those duties expected of the media to the rural communities.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Media Duties to the Society**

The media provides the society with the following:

- (a)    Information
- (b)    Education
- (c)    Entertainment

These three are important for any society to make an appreciable progress. One cannot live in isolation and as such, information received through the media about other society help to bring about the education

of the mind in such society for the development of the society. Events going on in other societies are made known to the people for them to learn from and adopt to avert such occurrence or to use for the progress of their own society.

The media provide entertainment to relax the people from stress and their labour. It creates a forum for people to loosen up those things that could cause health problems for them. This is done through various programmes – dramas, soap operas, sports, talk shows among others.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain briefly the duties of the media to the society.

## **2.2 Society's Duties to the Media**

The society, on the other hand, provides the media with

- (1) News event
- (2) Consumption of the news
- (3) Sustenance of the media business.

The society provides the media with news events through its activities. All the things that are happening within the society are used by the media for the benefit of the society by relaying the information to the members of the society. However, if this were not made available by the society, it will be difficult to have it in the media. The society makes laws, creates conflicts, punishes offenders and rewards obedience. All these and many more come from the society and are reported by the media.

There will be no media if there are no consumers of the news and other activities in the media. It is through this consumption that the media business is sustained. It also creates employment for members of the society – reporters, editors, vendors, etc.

With the Government the media is a partner in the development process with the government. Government uses the media to promote its developmental programmes and tries to sell it to the society through the media. For example, Lagos State Government is promoting the payment of tax by advertising in the media those things that have been done using tax payers money. This is to spur members of the society into payment of their taxes.

It plays the role of the watchdog as it watches the society, relays government activities to the people and at the same time voices out some

of the people's request to the government. Example is the recent bribery scandal in the House of Representation. The media publicised it and brought it to the door step of the society. When those involved were cleared, it also made it known to the public and the reactions of the society were also declared.

The media is the link bridge between the government and the governed. It is the intermediary of both the government and the people. Government tells the people its activities through the media; the people also tell the government their reactions through the media.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the duties of the society to the media.

## **2.3 Media Duties to the Rural Community**

The media perform some duties to the rural community in specific ways because they are usually left unattended by those in government. These are the ways the media could build and sustain with the rural communities:-

- (a) By being an active participant in the development of the community.
- (b) It should be the voice of the voiceless.
- (c) It should be an agent of socialisation.
- (d) It should be a projector of self-help development.
- (e) It should be partner in culture or tradition preservation, maintenance and sustenance.
- (f) It should be an educator of a unique kind who gives attention to economic, social and political matters.
- (g) It should bridge the government-community, socio-political-economic distance.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the role expected of the media to rule community.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

We have seen clearly that mass media and the society are closely related. One cannot be divorced from the other. The society feeds the media the information that it processed and disseminates and at the same time, the media feeds the society with information that helps it generate new information. One would be correct to say this relationship is in a circle.



## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has taken a look at the relationship between the society and the mass media. This was viewed from three different angles – media to society, society to the media and media to the rural communities.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

A society determines the type of information it gets from the mass media. Discuss.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Bittner, J. R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Plc.
- Daramola, I. (2005). *Mass Media and Society*. Lagos: Rothan Press Limited.
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- Watson, J. (2003). *Media Communication: An introduction to Theory and Process*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

## **UNIT 3 THEORIES OF THE PRESS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Authoritarian Theory
  - 3.2 Libertarian Theory
  - 3.3 Social Responsibility Theory
  - 3.4 Soviet-Communist Theory
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The previous unit took a look at the relationship between the media and society. This unit will look at the various theories within the society that affect the activities of the press. A number of theories will be discussed as follows: Authoritarian Theory, Libertarian Theory, Social Responsibility Theory, Soviet Communist Theory, Democratic Participant Theory and Development Theory,

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- mention the theories that we have in the media
- explain the concern of each of the theories
- describe the activities of the media under each theory.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Normative Theories**

The four theories, regarded as the normative theories of the press, were propounded by three renowned communication scholars Siebert, Peterson and Schramm. These theories explain the operational characteristics of the media in the society. One thing that we must point out here is the fact that aside the four theories – Authoritarian, Libertarian, Soviet Communist and Social responsibility Theories – that are regarded as basic theories, two other theories - Democratic participant and Development theories – were derived from the four.

### 3.1 Authoritarian Theory

The authoritarian theory evolved in the sixteenth and seventeenth century. It was found among the ruling families in England, France and Spain. It later extends in modern society into government in Japan, Imperial Russia, Germany and Spain as well as some Asian and in the American countries at various times. It is the oldest theory of the press. Some things are of importance to this theory. One is that a human being is subservient to the state; second as an instrument of the state, it (state) has the right to use man to maintain order and strengthen the existence of the state. The press is seen as an instrument for disseminating the state's position to their populace telling them what is right or wrong based on the state's interpretation of issues and providing the policy statement of the ruling elite. After determining what the objectives are, the state uses the press as a means of obtaining those objectives. Therefore, the press becomes a means to an end rather than an instrument of criticism of neither means nor ends. At the early stage, as subvert and others pointed out, the press was used negatively by making sure the press does not interfere with attaining national ends. However, the press and generally the mass media became a positive tool for helping the state achieve its ends.

Under this theory, the ownership of the press is as important as to how the press was used. The ownership of the media could be private as well as public, but they are controlled by the government. The contents of the media are not allowed to criticise the government or any of its activities. They echo the government line in their official journal. There was still as huge problem as to how to control these private media.

The first thing government did initially was to grant permit to few people who could be described as privileged few. But as this system began to fail, it came up with a second measure. This measure was to reduce the number of journeymen trained as apprentice. This method did not last long before it failed. The third method of control – outright censorship was adopted. This equally did not stand the test of time. The fourth method, was trying a person under the law for treason or sedition for publishing what does not favour the state. This too did not succeed.

This theory operates on a complex system which hinges on degree of control. These degrees range on:

1. Countries where control of some or all the media is complete or total.
2. Countries where political criticism by some of the media is possible but where there is censorship.
3. Countries that operate special laws or other discriminatory legislation which expose media workers and executives to arrest and persecution.

4. Countries where unofficial methods discourages criticisms or opposition from the media.

Despite private ownership being allowed, there is rigid control from the government through repressive laws.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Mention the main concern of Authoritarian Theory.

### **3.2 Libertarian Theory**

The libertarian press occurred in the United States more abruptly than in some other countries. It began to develop in the 16th century howbeit slowly. By 18th century, it has been well defined as the principle found its way into the constitutional frame work of nations. The libertarian press is the exact opposite of an authoritarian press. This theory believes in the superiority of individual to the state. It also views human beings as rational beings, who though are imperfect as individuals but will collectively arrive at the best decision for the general welfare of society.

Buttressing this point Rivers et al (1980) cited in Raufu (2003) says “The conviction that human understanding is capable of its power and, without recourse to super natural assistance of comprehending the system of the world, and that this new way of understanding the world will lead to a new way of mastering it”.

The theory holds that men have reason and wisdom to distinguish between what is right and what is wrong and what is good from what is bad. To make a decision therefore, it is important that people should have “unlimited access to the ideas and thoughts of other men. Mills cited in Bittner (1991) believes that [the collective aggregate of people, if intelligent and informed, could arrive at sound decision. This is what the libertarian theory holds and believes in.

The following elements are contained in this theory.

1. The reliance on ability to distinguish between truth and error.
2. The need for a free market place of idea so that reason may work.
3. The function of the press as a check on government
4. Ideas must have equal chance and everyone must have an access to the channel of communication.

In conclusion, the press is not an instrument of government in a libertarian society. Rather, it is a tool of presenting evidence and arguments on the basis of which people can check on the government and make up their minds about any policy.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Differentiate between the authoritarian theory and the libertarian theory.

### **3.3 Social Responsibility Theory**

The social responsibility theory came up as a result of the criticism of the libertarian theory of the press. One of the shortcomings of the libertarian theory is its inability to prescribe viable standards for the day to day operations of the mass media and failure to provide a stable formula “to distinguish between liberty and abuse of liberty”. Egbon (1995) cited in Daramola (2005). The idea is that as much as you enjoy freedom, certain responsibilities are expected of you to the society. It is believed that freedom carries commitment and obligation, and the press, which enjoys a privileged position under the government, is obliged to be responsible to society for carrying out certain essential functions of mass media in contemporary society. (Peterson cited in Daramola, 2005).

The press at a time was becoming too powerful and out of control. This is because ownership and management was involving huge amounts of money and the availability of small media units representing different political viewpoints was fast becoming extinct thereby leading to a drastic reduction in competition involving media ownership. Press started to find its way into the hand of only a powerful few. The limited control which brought about by the libertarian theory allows so much power by media owners and managers to the extent that the press was moving away from being a market place of ideas.

This new trend received several attacks and criticism, both verbal and written. As such there was the need to express the essentials of the new theory by responsible editors. One key thing to note here is the fact that though it is held that a press has the right to criticise the government and institution in the society. It has certain basic responsibilities to maintain the stability of the society. Even though the press is expected to be commercially independent of government control, profits achieved at the expense of public service are taboo. Within the framework of open and free press, criticism, codes of ethics or government regulation, and guidelines for responsible action by members of the press lays the social responsibility theory.

These were highlighted by Robert Hutchins commission in Raufu (2003). Robert Hutchins Commission was set up in 1947 in U.S.A as a way of calming the wave of criticism directed towards the press. The report submitted suggested the following.

1. The press should be accountable to the public.
2. It is the duty of the press (print and electronic) to provide a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's events in a context that gives them meanings.
3. The press should serve as "a forum for the exchange of comment and criticism."
4. The press should serve as "presentation and clarifications of the goals and values of the society."
5. It should give a representative picture of the constituent groups in the society.
6. It should provide full access to the day's intelligence and finally should engage in the gigantic project of raising social conflict from "the plane of violence to the plane of discussion."

The theory is more interested in obligation and the right of the public to know. The press here is supposed to be seen and to see itself as performing public services of a professional type and being socially responsible to a mass audience instead of few people.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the factors responsible for the development of social responsibility theory.

### **3.4 Soviet – Communist Theory**

In order to understand the Soviet-Communist theory of the press, one must look at not only the basic soviet political implications as derived from Marxist doctrine but also at how the soviet interprets the word "freedom". The constitution guarantees freedom of speech and free press. The political life of the soviet is one of unity. Everything about soviet is unity. This has led to the development of a classless society which is entrenched into the soviet state. Therefore, freedom to the soviet society is freedom from oppression from a class – upper, middle or lower – society (Bittner 1991).

The mass media in the soviet communist theory is an instrument of the state. According to Schramm in Bittner (1991), "The mass communication does not have integrity of their own; their integrity, such as it is, is that of the state". "They are 'kept' instruments and they follow humbly and numbly the gyration of the party line and the state directives". The media is a part of other instruments of the state. It is used to provide enlightenment and to prepare the masses for unity and revolution.

The activities of the press in a Soviet-Communist theory are similar to what obtains in an authoritarian theory. The press is strictly controlled and functions as an arm of the state. Its existence is merely to serve the Communist-Socialist System and to help maintain the sovereignty of the communist party. There is no opportunity to freely express one's views or for the press to criticise the government. To own the press, one must be a loyalist of the communism or party chieftain who would use the press only to promote the interest of the party and government in power.

Apart from the government, only loyal or orthodox party members can use the press. This is because the socialist society is a classless one and so the press should not be structured along the line of political conflict.

There are other theories of the press, sic: Development Theory and Democratic Participant Theory.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the similarities between the authoritarian theory and the soviet-communist theory.

### **3.5 Development Theory**

The development theory is a relatively new communication orientation which is an offshoot of the debate on new world order that indicates the need for a profound restructuring of communication pattern. The emphasis here is on the involvement of grass root in communication flow and implies that the press must be placed as a tool on the path of a country's economic development. The theory came as a means of addressing the imbalance in development and flow of information in the third world countries and a solution to the technological challenges facing them. There are problems that make the development of mass communication system difficult. The first problem is the absence of infrastructure, professional skills, the production and cultural resource and the available audience. The second problem is the dependence on the developed world for what is missing in the way of technology, skill and cultural products. Third problem is the devotion of these societies to economic, political and social development as a primary national task, to which other institutions should submit. The fourth problem is that developing countries are aware of the similar identity and interest which gave rise to certain expectations and normative principles which go against that that seem to apply in either capitalist or communist world. Mass media as a matter of fact operates in countries classified as 'developing' according to principles that are derived from other theories as authoritarian or libertarian system.

Dennis McQuail (1978) cited in Raufu (2003) enumerated what he describes as the basic tenets of development theory. These are

- (i) Media must accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policies.
- (ii) Freedom of the media should be open to economic priorities and development needed in the society.
- (iii) Media should stress link with geographically, culturally and politically close countries.
- (iv) Media should give priority to their contact of national culture and languages.
- (v) In the interest of development, the state has a right to intervene in or restrict media operation especially through the devices of censorship, subsidy and direct control.

In addition to this, Peter Golding in Raufu (2003) highlighted four ways by which African journalists can practice development journalism to a successful end.

- (a) By stressing the general educative function of the news.
- (b) By producing stories which display particular social needs hoping that this would provoke government to take action.
- (c) By giving prominence to self-help project hoping that others would emulate the step.
- (d) By emphasising news that could tackle specific and proffer solution to societal problems e.g. corruption in Nigeria.

The theory has an emphasis on the right to communicate and the need to use communication to achieve social change and better life.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Briefly highlight the problems that make the development of mass communication in the Third World countries difficult.

### **3.6 Democratic Participant Theory**

This theory believes that the democratic, commercial, and professional hegemony in the media system should be discarded to ensure easy access to the media. The theory emerged as a result of the discontentment with the libertarian theory of free press and social responsibility theory. The discontentment came about because of the failure to achieve social benefits expected of them. The two theories also failed to control the increasing rate of commercialisation and monopolisation of the privately owned media. They were equally unable to prevent the centralisation and democratisation of public broadcasting



institutions even when they have been founded according to social responsibility norms.

The theory holds that greater attention should be paid to the needs, interests of the receiver in a given democratic society. It calls for pluralisation and decentralisation of the media as against monopolisation and centralisation. It also suggests horizontal as against a top-down communication system. It however emphasises its commitment to feedback in socio-political communication in order to attain complete communication circuit.

The theory advocates equality between sender and receiver or what has been described as “association” mode as against the “command” mode or superiority of the “sender” to the “receiver” in a one-way communication system. It further stresses that because the mass media has become important socially, it should not be left in the hand of professionals.

This theory has generally been described as the press equivalent of “grassroots’ democracy”.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss briefly the concern of the Democratic Participant Theory.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

In this unit the various provisions of the various theories of the press has been examined. The authoritarian theory puts the press under the control of the State but the libertarian theory believes the press should be an open market place of ideas. The social responsibility theory believes that even though the press should be free, the freedom should be with a responsibility to the society which it (press) should serve. The Soviet-Communist theory says that the press is an instrument of the State and should serve only the State and those loyal to the State should be given the opportunity to own and use the press. Development Theory accepted the economic development and that it should add to its main objective nation building. The democratic participant theory holds that attention should be given to the needs and interest of the receiver in a democratic society.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has treated the normative theories – Authoritarian, Libertarian, Social responsibility and Soviet-Communist as well as the derived theories – Development and Democratic participants’ theory.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the similarities and dissimilarities between the following

- (a) Authoritarian theory and Soviet-Communist Theory
- (b) Libertarian Theory and Social Responsibility Theory

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Bittner, J. R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Plc.

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## **UNIT 4      FUNCTIONS OF THE MASS MEDIA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Traditional Functions of the Press
  - 3.2 The Libertarian Functions of the Press
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Having considered the various theories of the press as it affect different societal system, this unit takes a look at the functions of the press in the society.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the various functions of the press
- list these functions
- explain how the press carryout these functions.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Traditional Functions of the Press**

The function of the mass media (the press) varies from one society to another. The society in this respect includes both the government and the governed (the people). The governed is not limited to only those in the urban area but also the rural dwellers.

The traditional functions of the media in any society are:

1. Information
2. Education
3. Entertainment

Besides these traditional functions, other functions have equally been identified as:

- (a) Surveillance of the environment
- (b) Correlation and co-ordination of facts
- (c) Persuasion
- (d) Transmission of social heritage (values)
- (e) Opinion moulding

These functions underlines why the mass media and the society are closely knitted together. The function is to both the government and the people. The 1999 Constitution of Nigeria, Section 22 says:

The press, radio and television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to .... Uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people.

This freedom guaranteed by the constitution allows the press to serve as a watchdog over the activities of the government and report same to the people as a way of informing them. The media is expected to function in a way that it will expose the government with the aim of making it accountable to the people.

The press while it serves the urban society on the basis of its traditional functions, the rural society must be served in another dimension. It should act as the “voice of the voiceless” for the rural society. The press should bring to the fore those things that need to be known about the rural society such as their needs, their vision, their aspiration, their strength, their weaknesses among other things. The media should be at the forefront of fighting the course of rural dwellers for development and better society. The press should aim at assisting the community in the following ways:

1. It should aim at creating a climate for change by inducing new values, attitude and mode of behaviour that favour and is capable of aiding modernisation.
2. It should raise the level of aspirations of community dwellers as an incentive for action.
3. It should liberate and open the minds of the people to make them prone to participating in decision making process at the larger society.
4. The mass media can help increase sense of patriotism and nationness.
5. It should make people realise their importance.
6. It should teach the people new skills – literacy, agriculture, hygiene, among others.
7. It should assist in changing power in the community by bringing knowledge to the people altogether.

The above explanation could be regarded as the traditional functions of the press. However, the libertarian views the functions in another perspective although still very much related to the traditional functions.

### **3.2 Libertarian Functions of the Press**

The press is very powerful as it can build and at the same time destroy the society. With the knowledge of this power in mind, the libertarian theorists put forward six major functions which are associated with the media. These are: - public enlightenment, servicing the economic system, servicing the political system, safeguarding good liberties, profit making and providing entertainment.

#### **1. Public Enlightenment**

Public enlightenment is seen as a major function of the mass media. The mass media are known as important partners in the search for truth. They are the leader among the various organs in the search for information and education. They provide people with the needed information for them to form their own ideas and can stimulate them through the presentation of other people's opinion or view. It is the most pervasive and inexpensive of education.

The media practitioners (journalist) through the print and electronic media carry out the function of informing the people about events of their government, economy of their immediate and distant environment. The powerful effect of information on the people cannot be undermined and this is why the media must provide proper information which is vital to clear thinking and ultimately sound judgement.

#### **2. Servicing the Political System**

The news media are indispensable in a democratic society. The realisation of the importance of the mass media makes democratic government to place heavy responsibility on both the citizen and the press. For good governance with others, each member of the society must be aware of the problems facing the state as well as the possible solution and consequences of actions taken or not taken. For a government that believes so much in public opinion, the media must be able to provide the people with the information and ideas needed for making sound decisions.

#### **3. Safeguarding Civil Liberties**

This is a product of the libertarian theory which supports individual autonomy. The libertarian principle believes that each individual should

pursue his own good in his own way. John Stuart Mills, a libertarian, cited in Daramola (2005) supports this when he wrote “The only freedom which deserves the name is that of pursuing own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their effort to obtain it”. Each is the proper guarantee of his own health, whether, mental and spiritual”. The libertarian believes that the press should not only protect their own freedom but also the freedom of all citizens.

#### **4. Making Profit**

The liberal economists proposed the idea of the “invisible hand” which means that in the economic place, each individual working for his own gain generally contributes to the wealth of everybody. In the market place of knowledge, as each individual freely expresses his opinion or ideas, he promotes the inevitable emergence of truth. The motive of making profit indirectly or ultimately guaranteed public benefits which make the press to be geared towards the wants and interest of the community. It is only a press that is not attached to the government or any faction that can actually serve the cause of truth and ultimately, the right of individuals and the interest of the public. If therefore the press is to be free to present views and information without fear or favour, it must be a private, independent business enterprise.

For example in Nigeria, government owned media-print or electronic, always conceal the truth if at all the story is reported. They are regarded as mouth piece to the government. They have no reason not to do so because they get subventions from government and the main aim is not to actually make profit. Whereas a privately owned commercial press will serve the interest of the public if it really want to survive and make profit through continuous patronage of the people.

#### **5. Servicing the Economic System**

The function of servicing the economic system becomes relevant to the press due to the emergence of modern advertising. Advertisement has been an integral part of the newspaper content right from the “Iwe Iroyin” by Henry Townsend.

As Nigeria develops and the population continue to increase, the media through mass production and mass distribution became more relevant in the economy as it brings products to the notice of the public and telling them the benefits of such products. The media now reports business through advertising and making several millions of Naira. The media brings together the buyers and the sellers of goods and services successfully through advertising. By so doing, they allocate the nation’s

resources, stimulate product variety, and help to make possible price that are favourable to consumers.

It also helps the economic system, through the provision of employments to thousands of workers in Nigeria. The effort of the media has helped to reinforce both the desire for specific goods. Advertising revenue is a major source of income to private radio and television stations as well as newspapers and magazines. Some newspapers like the Guardian have various advert schedules for specific days of the week. They help to boost the sales of such newspaper and invariably the revenue.

Advertising in the media are in three or four categories:-

1. Those aimed at inducing the purchase of one type of product.
2. Those aimed at inducing the purchase of a brand;
3. Those aimed at the emotion rather than the intellect,
4. Those directed at the intellect. (Daramola, 2005)

## **6. Entertainment**

This deals with the ability of the media to present messages that provides relaxation and amusement. It provides relief from boredom, stimulates our emotions, help fill our leisure time, keeps us company and exposes us to experiences and events that we could not attend in person. There are programmes that one watches or listens to without necessarily staying in a rest position. Some programmes amuse us even while we are working. They help us to relieve tension and at the same keep us abreast of happenings around us. Travel guide on Channel Television for example gives us an informative guide to places we have never been and may never be while at the same time it relaxes us.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the ways the press could assist in the development of the rural community through its functions.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The unit has taken a holistic look at the functions of the mass media. It enumerated the traditional function and explained the way the functions are used in the society. It also pointed out the libertarian function which ultimately is an embodiment of all the traditional function.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

In this unit, we looked at the functions of the press that are traditional that they carry out in the society. We also examined the functions of the press as proffered by the libertarian theory.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

With relevant examples, discuss the functions of the press as highlighted by the libertarian principle or theory.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

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## **UNIT 5      MEDIA AS THE FOURTH ESTATE OF THE REALM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

In unit 4, we looked at the different functions of the press as well as how these functions operate within the society. This unit takes a look at the press functioning as the fourth estate of the realm within the society.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the role of the press as the fourth estate of the realm
- describe how this role is achieved
- explain how this role of the fourth estate is hampered.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Media as the Fourth Estate of the Realm**

The first three estates of the realm are the three arms of government – the executive, the legislative and the judiciary. These three arms function according to the constitutionally provided roles within the society. The position of the press as the fourth estate is not explicitly stated in the constitution. It is regarded as the communication arm of public administration in the society.

The communication system like the other arms of government, wield so much power as an institution. They are the means through which other institutions make their power felt in the society. The ability of the media to spread information to a large number of people over a large area at the same time makes the system a source of power. This is why other social institutions especially the institution of governance attempt to use it for their own end. Information is power; it is a necessary ingredient

for good governance and effective administration. This makes it even more important.

The position of the media as the fourth estate was further buttressed by the Section 22 of the 1999 constitution of Nigeria.

It states:

“The press, radio and television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people”.

This section of the constitution of the Nigeria state expresses, though not explicitly, that the mass media is expected to function as the watchdog on the government in our society. This role involves mass media and their operators and it saddles them with the responsibility to monitor and watch over every activity of the government and its agencies. By so doing, it will ensure they are accountable to the citizens of this nation. Just as there are the checks and balances among the three arms of government, the media and the government also exercise the checks and balances. The government makes the laws that guide the operation of the media. The media also scrutinises the activities of the government including law making by analysing the law and where necessary call for a review. This they do by blowing government cover so that the society is able to see the ills and dangers in the policies that have been made.

The media as an unofficial fourth branch of government is designed to observe and report on the executive, legislature and judiciary; it is expected to keep the citizen informed about activities of their elected representative to do this. The media is expected to have an adversarial relationship with the government where the press followed a different objective from those in power.

In the discharge of this function and in playing this role, the mass media contends with several trials and tribulations. The government makes several laws that aim at repressing the media from performing its role. Knowing the power that the mass media wield, every government looks for a subtle way if not outright, to gag them from carrying out their activities for the fear of revealing the secret of the government.

In addition, ownership of the media has influence on their activities. Every owner wants to exercise total control of the media. While it may be difficult to sustain a direct day-to-day influence of proprietor in the editorial content, the power exercised by these barons can and do influence the direction of editorials of these media.

The economy of the country has become crucial to the media in play the role of the fourth estate appropriately. The scope of the operation of the mass media as well as professionalism is being lost due to rush for government patronage by media owner, senior management and editorial staff. This has led to a lot of unethical practices in the profession. State correspondents are now appendages to the governor's offices in the state. Reduced professional capacity in quality and quantity has resulted in much dependence of scheduled events and hand-outs called press releases. There are no more or reduced critical analysis of issues; investigative journalism, in Nigerian journalism.

Ponderous essays and opinion now fill the pages of newspapers. In-house productions and documentations have been replaced with talk shows, phone-in-programmes and video drama on radio and televisions

Ethnicity is another issue that has negatively affected the fourth estate in Nigeria. This though may not be seen be as severe as the economic and material context of the media, its effect with respect to public perception of national issues could be very important as a limiting factor to the role of the Nigerian press in the democratic process. There is the general belief that the Nigeria media based of factors of ownership, location, content and orientations as well as the market served are ethnic in orientation.

Some commentators are of the opinion that Nigerian media predominantly express a Yoruba worldview because most newspapers, magazines, television and radio stations are based in what is called the Lagos-Ibadan axis. Ayo Olukotun in Oso and Umoru (2011) attest to this when he said,

The locational concentrations of media institution in South-West Nigeria as well as the occasionally tendentious perspectives of media, however, have made it easy for establishment politician and corrupt office holders struggling for survival to categorise media as sectional and ethnic.

This makes it easy for the elite to categorise any national issues reported in the media as sectional and ethnic crisis as a result of the stigmatisation of the media.

These are issues that the media as the fourth estate face in the country. Some of this issue are found in other societies as well.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the factors that influence the role of the press as the fourth estate negatively.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

This unit has been able to explain the position of the press as the fourth estate of the realm. It has equally highlighted those things that bedevilled the mass media to perform these functions appropriately. One thing that is certain here is that the mass media would a strong power in the society. But has powerful as it is, there are issues that faces it which weaken the mass media.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit mentioned that the media serve as the watchdog on the society. It equally explains that there are trials and tribulations that work against this media in our society. One major one is the loss of professionalism in the way mass media operates.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Examine the role of the media as the fourth estate of the realm pointing out those factors that militate against it.

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## **MODULE 3      MEDIA INDUSTRY AND SOCIAL STRUCTURE–OWNERSHIP AND CONTROL**

Unit 1	Political Economy of Media Ownership
Unit 2	Media and the State-Control of Media
Unit 3	Concept of Press Freedom
Unit 4	Press Censorship
Unit 5	Cultural Imperialism and Media Independence

### **UNIT 1      POLITICAL ECONOMY OF MEDIA OWNERSHIP**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Meaning of Ownership
3.2	Types of Ownership
3.2.1	Government Ownership
3.2.2	Private Ownership
3.2.2.1	Multiple Ownership
3.2.2.2	Cross- Media Ownership
3.2.2.3	Conglomerate Ownership
3.2.3	Corporate Ownership
3.2.4	Party Ownership
3.2.4.1	Party Ownership in a Socialist One Party State
3.2.4.2	Party Ownership in a Democratic Multi-Party State
3.3	Structure of Media Ownership in Nigeria
3.4	Forms of Media Ownership in Nigeria
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

#### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous module, we took a look at the mass media, its relationship with the society, theories that influence its mode of operation in various societies as well as its functions. This unit takes a look at the political and the economy of the mass media with respect to ownership.

## **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define ownership
- list the various types of ownership
- describe how ownership influences the operation as well as content of media productions.

## **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

### **3.1 Meaning of Ownership**

The “Mass Media” has been commonly defined as “modern means of giving news and opinions to large number of people especially radio and television”. With respect to this topic, mass media will comprise the electronic media (radio, television and internet) and the print media (newspaper, magazine among others). The mass media have been instruments of information dissemination and of propagating and sustaining the culture of the society.

In discharging this and other duties, there are some factors that influence the objective and judicious discharge of these duties. One of these factors is ownership of the media which results in the control of both the management and content. The ownership of the media determines a host of things that goes into their activities. Some of which are negative influences that result in unprofessional and unethical practices at some point. Despite these, ownership of the media has to be taken up by some people. What then is Media Ownership?

By nature, man is generally possessive and has a natural tendency to desire wealth which has compelled on the human folk to strive to own properties in which man has vested interests. Ownership deals with owning something or having control over something. It refers to the autonomy an individual has over an organisation. It is a state or act of possessing a thing or object.

Media ownership therefore, is the possession or act of owing of a medium of communication. It may be as a result of partial or total financing of a medium by an individual, organisation or a government.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Define media ownership.

## 3.2 Types of Ownership

There are different kinds of ownership all over the world. The ownership pattern in a society depends largely on the ideology of such society. For example the ownership pattern expected in America will be largely private ownership because of the libertarian ideology. The following are the types of ownership that exist:

1. Government Ownership
2. Private Ownership
3. Corporate Ownership
4. Party Ownership

### 3.2.1 Government Ownership

This is the ownership where government is the major financier whether it is total or partial of the media organisation. What is paramount here is that such government must have control of the major shares of the media institution. The idea of government control over mass communication is that media exist to serve the government. Truth and public service are both determined by what government officials decide is good for society. There is a call for the government to own and operate the media at one end. This is the case in countries like Cuba, China, and North Korea.

What this translates to is that the government controls and directs the contents of such a medium. M.K.O Abiola cited in Raufu (2003) said, You cannot have accountability of the government to the people via the mass media organisation in circumstances in which the media are 100 percent government controlled and the effect of such short sightedness will be the government talking to itself.

When government determines and influence the content of the media which is usually the case with government ownership, the suppressed and gagged journalist will find it difficult to tell the leader that he is crazy should that be the actual case.

Ownership in Nigeria has been an exclusive preserve of the government except where the president gives such right to the private which will be out of his own consent and magnanimity. This consent has been granted to many private individual today.

### 3.2.2 Private Ownership

The magnanimity of the government and the need to open up the media sector has made the government to license private ownership of the

media (broadcast) which has hitherto been an exclusive preserve of the government. This ownership have given individuals and group of persons or corporation who either completely owns or has a larger share in the financial upkeep of the medium for the purpose of information dissemination and is able to finance such medium adequately.

These independent individuals or groups or corporations run a single media-enterprise and nothing more. The president of the country is the only person who gives his consent before one can own an electronic media in Nigeria. This however did not start until 1992 when the government liberalised the ownership of the media. As a result, there are several private radio and television station in Nigeria today.

Media ownership under the private is divided into three. These are Multiple Ownership, cross ownership and conglomerate ownership.

### **3.2.2.1 Multiple Ownership**

One of the ownership methods of media is Multiple Ownership. It is also called chain ownership. This is a situation where one company owns the same type of medium in more than one market area. For example Silverbird Television has television stations in different parts of the country and they are not a network of station but operate under the same name with programmes and news content varying one from another. Also the Africa Independent Television has television outfits in different locations – Lagos and Abuja. They operate differently though they have programme that are shared.

This type of ownership enjoys some economic advantages in terms of economic scale. This advantage is enjoyed by the newspaper outfit mostly. It enjoys the advantage of bulk purchase which reduces the cost of production. It equally utilises and explore to the optimum skills of the same set of staff for the production of the media output of various media in this chain. One other advantage is the fact that output of one newspaper does affect that of the other.

### **3.2.2.2 Cross-Media Ownership**

This refers to the ownership of a combination of several media. The inference here is that both broadcast and print media can be owned by an individual or group at the same time. This can be better described as a person or group owning a newspaper and broadcast outfit at the same time. It could be two newspapers and radio or television or the three together.



When a person controls a variety of media in the same vicinity, there is the tendency for that person to control the information source of that area (society). In a situation where media are specialised, the situation may confer “authority” status on such media which may or may not be correct in the actual sense. This could be safely said to be the set back of this pattern of ownership.

This is not to say that it cannot breed positive impact. Severin and Tankard (1992) cited in Raufu (2003) mentioned some possible situation that could arise.

1. Both the newspaper and the broadcast outfit will share news.
2. Economic resources arising from the possible sharing of buildings, facilities etc put the organisation at advantage.
3. This also fosters cooperation among staff because they see themselves as one family and work together as one.

### **3.2.2.3 Conglomerate Ownership**

This is when large companies own media along with other business interest that operates together. The conglomerates involve many different types of businesses. Example is the Silverbird group. They own radio stations (Rhythm FM), television stations (Silverbird Television), they are into cinema management (Silverbird Galleria spread across the country), and they are also into beauty pageant promotion (Miss Nigeria). The issue here is that objectivity is usually murdered on things that affect any part of the business.

On the other hand, the excessive private ownership shown in the multiple and cross media ownership shown in the multiple and cross media ownership can make the private individual owner or conglomerate become influential as to exert negative influence in the society due to the desire of the owner to make profit not minding what is produced.

Conglomerate operates in two ways – vertical integration and horizontal integration.

**The Vertical Integration:** This is a system business model in which a company owns different parts of the same industry thereby controlling both the production and the distribution facilities. See table below:

**Vertical Integration:** This usually occurs when both the production and distribution facilities are owned by company. (Mass media is a changing world pp.16)

Books	Newspapers/ Magazines	Movies/ Television	Recordings/ Radio	Internet
Library agencies	News services/syndicates	Talent agencies	Talent agencies	Website designers
Publishing houses	Publishers	Studio	Record labels	Web portals
Printers/ paper mills	Printers/paper mills	Film/video manufacturer	Recording manufacturers	Information services
Book clubs	Subscription/ delivery services	Distributors/ Networks	Record clubs / Networks	Internet service providers
Bookstores	Newsstand	Theatre/station	Record stores/station	E-commerce sites

**The Horizontal Integration:** This is another of the conglomerate form. It occurs when a company buys many different types of businesses. In this case, a newspaper company does not buy a paper mill but it buys a radio station or a TV station. Most conglomerate combines both vertical and horizontal integration. This is not very common in Nigeria.

### 3.2.3 Corporate Ownership

This is the ownership that allows for a joint venture or partnership between the government Federal or State and the individual citizens of the nation. The emphasis here is equal participation of both parties with regard to the financial involvement so that one side does not dominate the other.

In the media industry, we do not have this type of ownership in Nigeria as of the moment. The only time you see such is when government collude with media owners to suppress the news.

### 3.2.4 Party Ownership

Party ownership refers to a situation that arises when the power to own the media is exercise by the political party (ies) that exist in the country due to the party's financial control over the funding of the media organisation. This ownership system appears in two ways.

1. Party ownership in a socialist one party State.
2. Party ownership in a democratic multi-party State.

### **3.2.4.1 Party Ownership in a Socialist One-Party State**

This is more or less like government ownership because the only existing party is the ruling party and it is this party that owns the media. The collapsed U.S.S.R by the reason of its political ideology operates this system where the media belongs to the party and government at the same time.

### **3.2.4.2 Party Ownership in a Democratic Multi-Party State**

In this system where there are many political parties each of which wants to rule, the parties will want to create a channel of communication that will function as its mouth organ. The setting up of these mass media organisation by each of these political parties is what is referred to as multi-party democratic state. The media set up is always an appendage of that party that created it.

## **3.3 Structure of Media Ownership in Nigeria**

Ownership of the media in Nigeria is a constitutional issue. The provisions of the constitution have been very clear and explicit about who can own the media and how media can be owned. Section 39 Subsection 2 of the 1999 explains and stipulates who can own the different media in Nigeria.

Without prejudice to the generality of Sub-section (1) of this Section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium of the dissemination of information, ideas and opinion.

It goes further,

... No person other than the government or of a State or any other person or body authorised by the President shall own, establish or operate a television or wireless broadcasting station for any purpose whatsoever.

Much as the constitution gives individuals the right to own medium of information dissemination, the clause that follows it emphasises the importance of the control of the government over certain media. It puts other media outlets, except the print media, exclusively under the Federal and State government. It also placed the power to control its ownership under the president. These media are mainly the broadcast media – radio and television.

The Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation is the organisation saddled with the responsibility of discharging this responsibility on behalf of the President of the Federal Republic of Nigeria. Aside approving licenses

for broadcast media organisation, NBC also monitors the activities of media houses to ensure compliance in terms of programme content so that it is within the purview of sensibility, responsibility, morality and nationality. This nature and power of the broadcast media has necessitated this.

### **3.4 Forms of Media Ownership in Nigeria**

Media Ownership in Nigeria is in three forms:

1. Federal Government Ownership
2. State Government Ownership
3. Private Ownership

#### **1. Federal Government Ownership**

The Federal Government became involved in the ownership of the media as a result of funding. The funding could be total or partial. In the case of partial funding, the government owns a larger part of the shares that are used to fund such medium. This ensures that it has a control over the medium. The Federal Government could either make provision for the entire fund in establishing and running the medium so that it has an undivided claim to its ownership or it may provide for the highest percentage of the needed fund. In the New Nigeria newspaper, government has a total ownership as it provided for the entire needed fund. However in the Daily Times, it has a controlling percentage of the shares. In the broadcast media, the Federal Government control is total for both the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA) and the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN). Federal Government is also the sole owner of Voice of Nigeria (VON).

Federal Government Ownership style could be described as cross ownership. This is because it owns both the broadcast media (Television and radio) and print media.

#### **2. State Government Ownership**

This is a situation where State government owns and controls medium of communication. The medium can be owned by individual state or a conglomerate or group of states. For example in Nigeria, every State has its own television station or radio station for both. This they use as their mouth piece in putting across the State position on diverse issues both national and state. There is Lagos Television (LTV) for Lagos State, Kwara Television (KWTv), Borno Television (BRTV) among others. They also own radio stations. Most States do not own print media outfit. Kwara State used to have one – *Herald* but this does not have a national outlook.

The *Sketch* that is based in Ibadan is an example of a multi-state owned media outfit. It is funded by the defunct Western Region comprising of Ogun, Ondo and Oyo states. Oyo has the highest share and Ogun the lowest. With the creation of additional States in the South Western Nigeria, Oyo, Osun, Ondo and Ekiti states. The businesses of the states include the Oodua Investment.

### **3. Private Ownership**

This form of ownership allows individuals and corporate bodies or a group of persons to own a medium for the purpose of disseminating information. This means that the person(s) must have a controlling share if not outright total control financially over the running of the medium. For example, The Guardian is funded by late Alex Ibru, late Olu Aboderin owns 51% share in The Punch, Channels Television is owned by John Momoh, African Independent Television is owned by Chief Raymond Dokpesi. There are also radio stations owned by private individuals across the country.

In general terms, ownership of the media in Nigeria is majorly a government and private sector idea. The constitution allows the private, individual or group, to own medium of information dissemination howbeit with the approval of the regulatory agency that represent the government.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Identify the various forms of ownership and discuss any two, briefly.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Media ownership and its various types have been dealt with in this chapter. The definition of media ownership, as well as the various types of ownership has been treated.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This chapter provides the meaning of ownership and media ownership. It also explains the various types of ownership. It went further to mention the form of ownership structure that exists in Nigeria.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Examine types of ownership; highlighting the ones that exist in Nigeria.

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## **UNIT 2      MEDIA AND THE STATE – CONTROL OF THE MEDIA**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Meaning of Media Control
  - 3.2    Model of Media Control
  - 3.3    Forms of Media Control
  - 3.4    Types of Media control
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

The previous unit treated the ownership of the media. In this unit therefore, we want to look at control of the media. The meaning of control and the various forms of control will be examined.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- define media control
- mention the types of control that exist
- explain the various forms of control.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Meaning of Media Control**

The word control is defined by the Webster's New International Dictionary as "application of policies and procedures for directing, regulating and coordinating production, administration and other business activities in a way to achieve the objective of the enterprise". This definition emphasises the exercise of restraining or directing influence over something. The mind set is to rule or to subdue whatever it is.

With regards to Mass media of Communication control, there is the lack of freedom from all manners of interference be it proprietor ally, legal or

economic institution regarding what should be the editorial content of the media.

In simple terms, Mass media control is “the act of exercising restraints or direct influence over the media of mass communication with the intention of dominating it or ruling it. The aim here is to ensure that its acts according to dictates of the government, proprietor or both.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Define mass media control in your words.

### 3.2 Model of Media Control

Before discussing the control of mass communication, there is the need to look at the theoretical model of control. Broadcasting being limited resources has more regulations than do magazines. Although the content of magazines is not regulated, magazines are affected by a complex array of postal regulations. The control of media varies from countries to countries. This means that the control over the point or broadcast media in one country can be totally different in another country.

One way we could look at control of mass media is through a model developed by Osmo Wiio. In his model, mass communication is viewed on a two dimensional, open-closed continuum of the receiver system (the audience) and the message system (the media). This is illustrated below:

1.0 Type 1 Audience Open + Message closed  CONTROLLED (MASS) COMMUNICATION	Type 2 Audience Open + Message closed  CONTROLLED (MASS) COMMUNICATION
Type 3 Audience Open +Message closed  PRIVATE COMMUNICATION	Type 4 Audience Open +Message closed  DIRECTED (MASS) COMMUNICATION

**Closed Message System 1.0 0.0      Open**

(Source: Bittner, 1991:318)

The left vertical line represents the audience and the bottom horizontal line represents the message system. The degree of control is represented



numerically as 0.0 to 1.0 with 1.0 standing for the most open system and 0.0 the most closed system. For example, the most closed system, a Type 3 private telephone system is actually private communication, not mass communication. Type 2, uncontrolled mass communication, which directs its messages to anyone who can hear them, represents the other end of the model, a completely open mass communication system.

Each medium operates under varying amount of control. An in house magazine for example is more closed in terms of message and audience than a metropolitan newspaper.

### 3.3 Forms of Media Control

There are basically two forms of media control. These are editorial control and managerial control.

1. **Editorial Control:** - This is the professional prerogative of the editor. It describes a situation where editor, as the “gate keeper”, controls the content of the medium. He chooses between “in and out” (what goes into the paper) and is consequently responsible for either relaying or suppressing the truth. The control of news content starts from the reporter himself. This is because it is not everything that he sees at his beat that he reports. The editor determines what goes into the paper and what will not be published. The editor is held responsible for whatever comes out of his paper. He must therefore; censor whatever comes out of the paper.
2. **Managerial Control:-**This type of control is in the operation of the media outfit. This is a situation where the proprietor dictates policies; oversees administration and consequently controls the media either directly or indirectly through appointment of personnel in the running of the organisation. He designs the type of managerial system he wants and appoints those whom he feels fit the purpose adequately. At this point, professionalism may not be his main goal and this would affect the administrative style of the medium and invariably the content of the media with respect to hospitality.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Explain the various forms of media control.

### 3.4 Types of Media Control

Media control is of three types. These are: - Government Control, Advertorial Control and Proprietor ally Control.

#### 1. Government Control

Government not only own media in Nigeria but it equally exercise control over private media howbeit indirectly. Ownership of the media is provided for in the constitution and it is maintained by constitutional provision that allows both government and private individuals to own the print media and put the broadcast under the exclusive preserve of the government be it State or Federal. An individual is granted concession to establish any of the broadcast media only by the president of the nation. The granting of the license is at the mercy of the president but for now the final advice on whether or not it should be granted is in the hand of national Broadcasting Commission (NBC).

Government control the kind of news that is reported from their own media as well as those that comes from foreign media particularly those that have something to do with them. There is no problem with a medium that government is the major financial. Where the problem lies is the media controlled by private individual. Government has come up with different methods of control. These include:

- (i) *Imposition of Heavy Taxes:* - Any press that chooses to be an anti government press by being stubborn is an enemy of the government. Government seek to check antagonistic press so as to maintain popularity with the citizenry. One of the ways by which government does this is through the imposition of a heavy tax on the media outfit. This is believed will bring about the much desired submission on the part of the media. Economic hardship is believed to be a way of reducing antagonistic media and ensure the existing ones become finally.
- (ii) *Allocation of Newsprint:* - This is done by distributing newsprint to various newspapers by government or indirectly by the media organisation. Where government imports newsprint, it gives large quantity to friendly media while a little quantity is given to those antagonistic to them. In the case where media organisation import the materials themselves, the government discriminate in the form of quota of import license allocated to the media houses. The friendly media house gets high quota while the unfriendly gets low quota. It may even come in the form of duties imposed on the importation of these materials including machines and other equipments.

While the friendly media get reduced duties and concessions or waivers, anti government media get heavy duties imposed on their wares.

- (iii) *Legal Control*: - This is mostly used to restrict the activities of the press. There are laws that are designed to protect individuals or group against defamation, a statute to preserve the standard of decency and morality and to protect the state against the treason or seditious utterances and publications. The legal restriction takes various forms.

These are defamation, sedition, state security, obscenity, etc.

- a. Defamation: - The law of defamation is of two types. It comprises of libel which is a written defamation and slander which is the verbal defamation. It is basically an utterance to a third party that tends to lower the a living person in the estimation of a right thinking members of a society or which make them to shun or avoid that person or disparage his reputation with regard to this work.
- b. Sedition: - this is a political and criminal offence against the state which is punishable by conviction. It comprises all the practices whether by word or deed or in writing which are capable of subverting the government and the law of the state.  
Any statement that is capable of inducing discontent and incites people to unrest and rebellion is prohibited by the law. This control is meant to ensure stability and orderliness in government.
- c. State Security: - this is a law against the publication or transmission of any classified matter to an unauthorised person on behalf of the government. It is an offence to obtain, reproduce or retain any classified matter that one is not authorised on behalf of the government to obtain, reproduce or retain.  
The main reason here to prevent here in to prevent the people secretly searching for secret information and communicating such vital information so that the security of the state does not fall into the hand of the enemy. If such information is allowed to be transmitted, it will amount to giving the secret and security of the state.
- d. Obscenity:-this is a law against the publication of obscene materials. Obscene publication or materials is defined by Elias (1969) cited in Raufu (2003) as any publication that has “tendency.....to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influence and into whose hand a publication of this sort may fall”. By allowing the publication of obscene

materials, the government is promoting corruption of public morals. This is why it is necessary to use legal control on indecent publication.

## **2. Advertisers Control**

That money controls business is saying the obvious and no exaggeration in the statement. Therefore, for mass media organisation to survive, they need advertisements which provide the money on which the media thrive. Advertisers are therefore, an indispensable part of the media. If one publishes anything that would have negative effect on ones' advertisers is like cutting the branch on which one stands. As such, newspapers ensure they satisfy their advertisers to maintain their patronage. They write favourable news about them and suppress unfavourable ones.

The method of control under the advertisers can be described as **Economic Control**. This is because advertisers may threaten to withdraw their subscription to such media house to tow their line of thought. Any attempt to go against this may spell doom for the media house to which such advertisers had subscribed. Therefore, media houses often publish stories concerning their advertisers instead of better stories because if advertisement is withdrawn, a huge monetary loss will be incurred by the organisation.

## **3. Proprietor ally Control**

In Nigeria, proprietorship of mass media is majorly of two types – government and private proprietorship. The control is therefore, from both the government and private angle. The idea here is that “he, who pays the piper, dictates the tune”.

In Africa mostly, government owned media are more or less dependent on government for decision making and are seen as praise singers who projects only the government. It is this way because they depend on government for a larger part of their finances and they in turn have a huge influence on the media so that it affects the direction of media contents.

Private owners create greater problems. Editors in the private media are not able to push forward their own ideas, thoughts, like, dislike and professionalism in some cases with the scrutiny of their media owner. Every private proprietor has a purpose for setting up the business. For some it could be profit; for some it could be to wield influence; it could be to enhance popularity or to further their political ambition. The first thing he will target will be to control and direct the business towards achieving this initial objective which he considers more important than any other objective.

We could describe this control as aims and objective control. This is because the activities of the media and its mode of operation are tailored towards the achievement of the aims and objectives of the owner. If the aim is profit making, the economic control where advertisers are protected editorially will be at the fore front. Should it be popularity, then, there will be more trouble for the media professionals under the organisation as they will be involved in how best to promote the image of their proprietor. They usually end up mortgaging their conscience and professionalism as well as objectivity if they are not ready to quit and seek for job elsewhere.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the various mode of media control.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Media control varies from one society to another. This is because the governmental principle of a society determines what obtains with respect to media practice. The control of the media is necessary to ensure orderliness and protection of the social institutions in the society. However, this should not be to hinder the mass media from discharging its functions.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has examined the definition of control, a model of control and the forms of control. It also looked at the various types of control.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Explain the legal control of the media with example.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

- Bittner, J. R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Book Nig. Plc.
- Raufu, A. (2003). *Mass Media and Society: Issues and Perspectives*. Lagos: Meek Associate.
- Rodman, G. (2006). *Mass Media is a Changing World*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

## **UNIT 3      CONCEPT OF PRESS FREEDOM**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Press Freedom: Meaning
  - 3.2 Features of a Free Press
  - 3.3 Characteristics of a Free Press Society
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

The previous unit examined the control of the mass media. This unit will look at press freedom. It will attempt a definition of press freedom and what the criteria are for a free press.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of the unit, you should be able to:

- define press freedom
- identify the criteria for a press freedom
- determine if you have a freedom of the press in your society.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Press Freedom: Definition**

Press freedom is an issue that has been well discussed. This concept established that media practitioners especially journalists reserve the right to probe, to dig, to pry into the activities within the society for the purpose of obtaining information, news and opinion and publish same without hindrance. It presupposes that the gathering and reporting of news and opinion should operate without any restrictions or constraints. This means that journalist like every other Nigerian, have the right to hold opinion and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference. This is the fundamental human right guaranteed every individual by the constitution and journalists are no exception to this right. We can find this freedom in the constitution of various countries of the world – Nigeria, France, USA, Britain, Spain etc though there could be variation in the implementation of the freedom.

What then is Freedom of the Press or Press Freedom? When General Yakubu Gowon was the Military Head of State, he set up a committee to look into the issues and problems associated with press freedom. Based on their term of reference, the committee defined Press Freedom as:

The freedom to gather information, to publish such information, protect the sources of information, to inform, educate and entertain society without direct or indirect control, to serve as a forum for free expression of opinion, to circulate freely without let or hindrance to publish newspaper, periodicals or operate other media without license or similar restrictions, to resist or respond to pressure from economic, political or other interest groups according to its light.

A renowned English constitutional lawyer, Blackstone Prenown cited in Raufu (2003) says “Press Freedom consist of laying no previous restraints upon publication and in freedom of censure from criminal matter when published”.

Also Tokunboh Onagoruwa (1998) cited in Raufu (2003) define Press freedom as:

“The right of the media practitioner to make his or her view known on any matter without seeking permission or approval from any persons or authority and without being subjected to any form of harassment, molestation, intimidation, prosecution or prosecution.”

All the definitions examined above show that the nature of society and its socio-political structure will determine how that particular society will define press freedom. If we look back at our discussion on the theories of mass communication, we would discover that the definition of freedom in the libertarian society is quite different from what obtains in soviet-communist. This is because libertarians believe freedom to be openness –an open market place of idea where everyone expresses his or her own opinion without being scared of any consequences. The soviet-communist on the other hand believes that the class structure is the problem. Therefore, freedom is having a classless society where everybody is equal. But generally speaking, press freedom can be defined as:

“an unrestricted access to obtaining information from any desired sources and to process the information to the society without requiring any written permission before fear of intimidation, harassment, molestation, persecution or prosecution”.

This definition took into cognisance some of the experiences of media practitioners in the discharge of their civic duty of being the whistle blower. Many journalists have been subjected to various measures of intimidation, harassment, persecution and even prosecution. Media house do suffer proscription from publishing what the state considers a threat to the authority or state security.

### The Forms of Press Freedom

There are several forms that press freedom takes. These include:

- (a) Freedom of the press with limited absence of government restraints on publication.
- (b) Press freedom with total absence of government restraints on publication.
- (c) Press freedom with total absence of government restraints on publication and availability of the enabling condition that makes access the information possible. An example of this is the Freedom of Information Bill that is proposed in Nigeria.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

With reference to the various definitions above, attempt your own definition of Press Freedom.

### 3.2 Features of a Free Press

A free press must possess the following:-

- 1. It must be financially independent.
- 2. It must be free from the control of the government be it partial or total control.
- 3. It should encourage freedom to express opinion by multiplicity of voices on any public issues.
- 4. The press must be seen as partners in the search for truth where every individual reserves the natural right to search for truth.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

What are the features of a free press?



### **3.3 Characteristics of Free Press Society**

The following are the characteristics of a free press.

- (a) The publication should be free from any paid censorship by any third party.
- (b) The act of publication and distribution should be open to any person or group without permit or license.
- (c) Attack on any government official or political party (different from attacks on private individuals, treason and breach of security) should not be punished even after the event.
- (d) Media should not be compelled to publish anything.
- (e) The publication of 'error' is protected by the publication of truth where opinion and belief are involved.
- (f) There should be no restriction on collection of information by legal means.
- (g) There should be no restriction on export or import as well as sending or receiving of messages across national frontier.
- (h) There should be the right of journalist laying claim to some degree of professional autonomy in their organisation.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

State the characteristics of a free press society.

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Generally, every society claims to operate freedom of the press but from observations and from the discussions, few are actually living up to this billing. This unit has explained to us what press freedom really means. It has equally pointed out those things we should look out for in a free press society.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has explained the definition of press freedom, the form it takes in societies as well as its features. It also discussed those characteristics of a society with free press.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss with a relevant example the features of a free press.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Bittner, K. R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Book Nigeria Plc.

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## **UNIT 4      PRESS CENSORSHIP**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Definition of Censorship
  - 3.2 Types of Censorship
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

In the previous unit, we looked at press freedom. This unit will be taking a look at press censorship. It is one of the several methods used in silencing the various publications in the media.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define press censorship
- discuss the topic appreciably
- mention the different types of censorship

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Definition of Censorship**

The concerns of journalism are designed to establish a self-imposed code of good taste and decency. This code is against and discourages publication of rumours, obscenity or any other type that would bring strong feeling of hatred on a particular race, nationality, tribe or other group of people. This is why it is usually said in media parlance “when you are in doubt, you leave it out”. This is a form of censorship.

Censorship is an act of examining books, films, letters, publication etc with the intention of removing anything believed to be offensive morally, harmful and politically dangerous. When one decides to control his/her speech with the mind of avoiding a certain consequence, it is a way of censoring the mind. Censorship is really a tool of authoritarianism and tyranny.

Press censorship therefore is “an undue” interference in the performance of the professional duties of the media by any person, group of persons or government with the purpose of suppressing unfavourable thoughts ideas or opinion”. It is used to suppress criticism from people or group believed to be opposition to the government but it is this censorship that is more pronounced and it is the most restrictive. Government usually seeks to ensure that whatever is published is in their favour and in accordance with what they have laid down.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Define Censorship and Press Censorship.

### **3.2 Types of Censorship**

Censorship is of different types. These include:-

#### **3.2.1 Government Censorship**

The government is generally believed to always resort to censorship in the face of criticism which cannot be quelled by the withdrawal of government advertisement and other forms of subtle or indirect pressure that may have been mounted on the media. This has continued to attract a lot of serious criticism because of the consequences. Censorship of the media is more pronounced under the Military administration or authoritarian government than in a democratic government or libertarian society.

Government adopts a number of ways in censoring the media. There are

- (a) *Pre-publication Censorship:* - This is a case where government has to scrutinise all stories to be published before the stories are published. Stories are first sent to the information office or an agency sanctioned to do so before they are published. Where this is in operation, there is always a strict supervision which ensures compliance and that government desires alone are published.
- (b) *Out-right Seizure of Publication:* There are instances where an edition of newspaper or magazine is seized. It implies that the day's publication is made illegal for public consumptions.
- (c) *Proscription of News Media:-* This deals with the revocation of registration and scrapping of mass media organisation. This was very common under the military regimes. In Nigeria, armed soldiers and armoured tanks, in some cases, are used to seal off the media house before the proscription is announced.

### **3.2.2 Criminal Censorship**

Criminal censorship is used to describe all forms of censorship that include beating, threats and murder of the media practitioner to suppress or remove offensive information. There had been several journalists that have suffered criminal censorship in the past. Dele Giwa was murdered in cold blood via a parcel bomb delivered to his house by a dispatch rider on Sunday October 19, 1986. In recent years some journalists were killed at different times in order to stop them from doing their job. A journalist was attacked recently for photographs taken at a mortuary in Lagos when corpses of those who died in the ill-fated Dana Air plane were being transferred. There are arrests and detention of journalists by authorities during criminal censorship.

### **3.2.3 Economic Censorship**

This has to do with finances of the media. There could be the threat of withdrawal of advertisement by advertisers if editors will not think twice before publishing something that has negative effect on the business. The censorship could even occur where there is a main body (organisation) and it is subsidiary (ies). The organisation may decide to stifle its subsidiary and starve it of funds if it refuses to do the biddings. This type of censorship is economic.

### **3.2.4 Self-Censorship**

This is the restriction that journalists place on themselves in the discharge of their duties. Journalists themselves select the stories they believe will not have negative consequences on the security of their society. There are times journalists kill some stories not because they were paid or induced but because they understand the repercussion of letting such information get to the public. It is foolishness for a journalist to expose his country's military acquisition to the public after a facility tour when you are aware of foreign presence within your society. Self-censorship practice is the practice of responsible journalism. It is associated with "gate-keeping" in the process of news gathering and news production by media organisation. Self-censorship is required not only to protect the interest of the state but also that of individuals.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

List and explain briefly the various types of censorship.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The meaning of press censorship and its types have been discussed. This unit has exposed us to the fact that governments, mostly the military, use the censorship of the media to suppress criticisms, which make them uncomfortable. They therefore, employ every means to ensure they bottle-up whatever is not in their favour. Rightly to the various ills suffered by media practitioners have also been discussed.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit looked at censorship, media censorship and the types of media censorship. Four different types of censorship were mentioned and discussed in this unit.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Media censorship of the press is both externally imposed and personally imposed. Discuss.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

- Bitner, J.R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Book Nigeria Plc.
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## **UNIT 5      CULTURAL IMPERIALISM      AND      MEDIA INDEPENDENCE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Definition of cultural imperialism and media independence
  - 3.2    Cultural hegemony
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

Cultural imperialism and media independence as the focus of the people, has effect on the social institutions therein. As such, the various media within such society exhibit certain things that are taken from the culture of that environment. Media need to be independent of the cultural influence within the society.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- define cultural imperialism and media independent
- explain the meaning of cultural hegemony

### **3.0    MAIN CONCEPT**

#### **3.1    Definition of Cultural Imperialism and Media Independence**

Cultural imperialism refers to the domination of a culture by another culture. It refers to the way a culture or the way of life of a particular group influences and changes another culture.

Media independence refers to the freedom and ability of the media to make decision and report events without having to be influenced by the culture of the environment. Cultural imperialism is something that is in place in African media practice especially in Nigeria. This has been a concern of media scholars since the 1970s and into the 1990s. The influx of foreign culture into the country particularly. American culture

has great influence on the Nigerian media. In many countries, traditional culture has been displaced and replaced with the American culture. This influence is made possible by the way things are done in American media. The quest for freedom of expression all over the world has made America to be sending out more media materials to other countries, than what it imports; and along with the productions of media for diverse audience, all help in ensuring the American influence in other countries' media.

The dominance of foreign media or their hegemony on the local media is so great that most media houses write and produce their programmes in line with this foreign influence. At a time in Nigeria some media houses were beaming mainly foreign programmes, especially the entertainment programmes, to their local audience. This dominance usually discourages unearthing local contents.

This hegemony of dominance in international media relation is being rejected. Its substitution with notions of indigenisation and hybridisation, which seems to conceal rather than expose hegemony inherent in the globalisation project, is now being attempted.

Cultural imperialism issue did not just start. It has been in existence since after independence. Two factors made scholars to be concerned about cultural imperialism in Nigeria. First was the evidential asymmetrical relationship between Nigeria, other African countries and developed Western countries. The second is an evident erosion of cultural value and pride in western values. These two factors were the reasons for the emergence of cultural imperialism debate. While the first which is on the asymmetrical relationship between Nigeria and other African countries could be seen as political angle to the debate, the second on the erosion of values and dependence is on the economic.

A problem that arose in the struggle against cultural imperialism was that scholars in communication media studies find it difficult to resume the criticism against cultural imperialism when they return to their academic enclave, accepted or in some cases sought for appointment with the state agencies or government itself. Most of them are usually placed in a position where they directly formulate and/or implement policies that encourage cultural imperialism in another way. This makes the theory of cultural imperialism to suffer hugely at all fronts.

The issue of non-government organisation has further aggravated the problem with critics against cultural imperialism. Scholars in communication media studies have NGOs consultancy firms and are advisors to NGOs. The funding that comes to these organisations, are not for any other thing, but research on improving or enhancing existing



institutions and to use media to achieve a better short-term outcome in a particular project. This is mainly administrative research.

Cultural imperialism as it concerns media content and production is huge and the media face a lot of challenges that make it difficult to fight this menace to a logical end.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Define cultural imperialism and media independence. What are those things that make American influence on other country's media huge?

### **3.2 Cultural Hegemony**

Cultural imperialism is concerned with the attempt to reject the notion of hegemony or dominance in international media relations and its institution. Cultural hegemony is high in the developing countries of the world and their media is equally affected. The indigenous ways of doing things are being discarded for the foreign style.

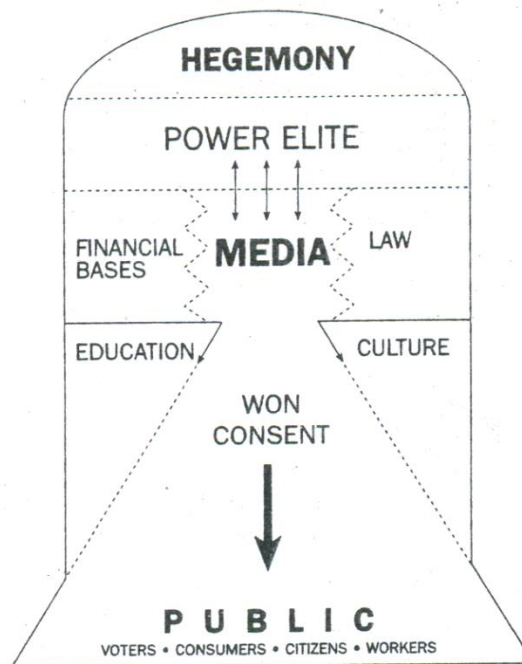
It is possible for people to live happily and fulfilling without having the faintest idea of what hegemony means. The word is however critical to the study of culture, communication, history, sociology etc.

Hegemony means "control over something". Hegemonic control is a special form of control that is not based on coercion or force but resulted from successful persuasion or enculturation. Hegemony is working when there is a general consensus – the mass of the population accept the controlling influence and decision making of that part of the society. Hegemony is won by consent. The media is the most powerful of all the agencies that exhibit this hegemonic control. Hence, the powers of elite are able to exert pressure if not control over the media to own it.

The theory of hegemony is attributed to the Italian philosopher Antonio Gramsci who argued that "a state of hegemony is achieved when a provisional alliance of certain groups exerts a consensus which makes the power of the dominant group appear natural and legitimate (legal)". Before there can be hegemony, there must be harmony or agreement that the hegemony acts on. This is why it is said that hegemony can only be sustained by winning the consent of the dominated ones. If they are in opposition, it will not work.

Hegemony works most smoothly when there is a substantial degree of social, economic, political and cultural security in a society. Once the security is undermined social division becomes rampant, hegemony is at a risk. Then, the repressive state apparatus are brought into action.

Hegemony provides the Power Elite with the consent of those that they ruled. Below is an illustration on hegemony.



Features of Hegemony

Though hegemony differs in times and circumstances, what is common to them all are the governing influence of ideology – a public expression of what in personal term is described as **values**.

### SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Present the features of hegemony in a graphical form.

## 4.0 CONCLUSION

One thing that is important here is that the influence of a culture on another culture is in existence and is strong. The control of foreign culture on other media especially Third World countries and particularly Nigeria is so enormous. Attempts at fighting against this imperialism are usually thwarted in various ways. It is good to note that control or dominance cannot occur without the consent of the dominated, or the controlled. This is what ensured that there is harmony in the constituent social element. Hegemony gives the power elite the needed consent of the rules.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has been able to define cultural imperialism and media independence. It has also explained cultural imperialism as well as cultural hegemony. The features of hegemony are presented in a graphical form for easy understanding.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Cultural imperialism still exists in the Nigerian media. Discuss.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Mohammed, D. M. (2011). "Mass Media, Intellectuals and Cultural Imperialism discourse in Nigeria." In Lai, O. & Umaru P. (Eds). *Mass Media and Society in Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Ltd.

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## **MODULE 4      MEDIA AS A SOCIAL AGENT**

Unit 1	Media as a Social Agent
Unit 2	Media and Political Subject
Unit 3	Media and Social Inequalities: Race, Gender, Class
Unit 4	Media and Audience
Unit 5	Media and New Technology
Unit 6	Globalisation

### **UNIT 1      MEDIA AS A SOCIAL AGENT**

#### **CONTENTS**

1.0	Introduction
2.0	Objectives
3.0	Main Content
3.1	Mass Media as Messenger of Society
3.2	Mass Media as Agent of Social Control
3.3	Mass Media as Agent of Social Change
3.4	Mass Media as Means of Social Interaction
3.5	Mass Media as Adjuncts of Industry
4.0	Conclusion
5.0	Summary
6.0	Tutor-Marked Assignment
7.0	References/Further Reading

#### **1.0      INTRODUCTION**

This unit will be examining the roles played by the media in bringing the elements of the society together. We shall be looking at the roles of the media as a messenger, as agent of social control, as agent of social change and as an adjunct of industry.

#### **2.0      OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the various ways the media play the role of social agent
- state the means or methods used by the media in playing these roles
- point out how these roles have been effectively played.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Mass Media as Messenger**

The role of mass media as the messenger of the society is a universal phenomenon. This is made possible through the technologies of electronic communication. Mass media send texts and visuals across the globe. Today, a swifter and more extensive mass media system is in operation, more than ever before.

Mass media help to shine light on the social and cultural aspect of the society. They do this by reporting political, economic, legal, religions and technological development in the society. For example, Nigerians got to know about the fraud in the oil sector through the mass media. The same goes for the conflict between the former Chief Justice of the Federation, Justice K. Alu and President of the Court of Appeal- Justice Ayo Salami.

Much controversy is not generated by mass media when playing this role. It is usually a work of reporting-crime news, Civic meetings, government events, business trends, etc. However, problems arise when the mass media become interpreters of events. This is seen as being subjective or ‘slanting’ the news”.

#### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the role of mass media as a messenger of the society.

#### **3.2 Mass Media as Agent of Social Control**

The mass media being the communication arm of the ruling class is a strong agent of public social control. Mass media help to inculcate in the public the prevailing beliefs and values. The mass media is a powerful means of maintaining and sustaining the existing order in the society because it is the major source of socialising the younger generation and teaching them the customs and beliefs of the culture.

This role contradicts the stand of the liberation theory that sees the press as liberating people from ignorance and superstition. Some observers believe that this role is the most dominant because it is so pervasive and extensive. It can also be regarded as the engineering of consent. This is because communication functions in any society to mobilise public opinion and engineer consent necessary for a stable society. Mass media has been able to replace coercion and force with subtle persuasion. This way, it has brought about change in the form of social control.

**SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain briefly the role of the mass media in the engineering of consent.

**3.3 Mass Media as Agent of Social Change**

Social change can be described as the process by which alteration occurs in the structure and the function of a social system. Social change is a process because society and its component institution constantly go through evolutionary changes. This change is one of the most fundamental phenomena in the human history as man perpetually tries to gain knowledge about his environment so that he can increase his control over it.

There are so many reasons why people or societies change; but one thing that is paramount and important is that individuals themselves must change if a society or a nation is going to be transformed or grow. Subsequently, groups must change because individuals live in groups, work and play in groups.

Society change demands that individuals participate collectively in group decision making and actions. This is where sharing and exchange of information and ideas occur. Communication and mass media facilitate and enhance individual participation in collective decision making an action. The mass media help in promoting social culturally viewed behaviour and at the same time discourage anti-social action-pollution, bribery and corruption among others. It also helps to promote innovative farming methods, new technologies and chemical inputs-fertiliser etc in the rural society.

**SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain the role of mass media as agent of social change.

**3.4 Mass Media as Means of Social Interaction**

Mass media are the means of sharing and exchanging information, ideas, and opinion in a modern society. Mass media is primarily a link to politics, markets, religious beliefs, etc. The mass media also help to maintain the status quo in the society because the beliefs, customs, norm and values of society in which they operate are usually portrayed. In addition, they also serve as means of challenging established orders in any society.

The mass media have tremendous power because they have the ability to spread information, ideas messages etc. to a huge numbers of people.

Mass media are powerful in modern society as the means through which the powers of other institutions are felt. Other institutions attempt to use them to their own ends. As a result, the mass media are equally influenced by other institutions within the society. The mass media interact with the social institutions within the society.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

In what way do the mass media play the role of means of social interaction?

### **3.5 Mass Media as Adjuncts of Industry**

Mass media are businesses not minding the size. They are marketing institutions. According to George Gerbner (1969), cited in Akinfeleye (2008), “they are the cultural arm of industry.” Notwithstanding the discussion, mass media do not just perform certain functions but equally play specialised roles in the society and this has further emphasised their importance in the society

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit has examined the roles the media play in the society. The inter-relatedness of these roles is inherent in the discussion. Mass media do not just perform certain functions but they equally play specialised roles in the society and this has further emphasised their importance in the society.

### **5.0 SUMMARY**

We have discussed the role of mass media under five different headings – as messengers of society, as agents of social control and agents of social change. We also considered the mass media to be agents of social interaction and adjunct of industry.

### **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the role of mass media as social agents.

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

- Daramola, Y. (2005). "Mass Media and Society in Nigeria: Selected Functional Perspective." In: Akinfeleye, R.A. (Ed.). *Mass Media and Society: A Multi-Perspective Approach*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.
- Watson, J. (2003). *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.



## **UNIT 2      MEDIA AND POLITICAL SUBJECT**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Meaning of Politics, Ethics and Reporting
  - 3.2 Goal of Political Reporting
  - 3.3 Reporting Political Issues
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

This unit will look at the way the media handle political issues and report such issues to the public. When we take into account the roles of the media in the society, then it is important to look at this aspect.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain the relationship between the media and politics
- state the basic goal of political reporting
- discuss the ethical issues arising from political reporting.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Meaning of Politics, Ethics and Reporting**

Over the years, politics has been defined in various ways by different scholars. Omolayo and Arorolaju (1987), cited in Akinfeleye (2008), posits that “At whatever level, politics is essentially characterised by the struggled for power and influence, disagreement, bargaining or negotiation, reconciliation, resolution and consensus.” Harold Lass, as well, also in Akinfeleye (2008), simply puts it as “who gets what, when and how”. In this respect, the main ingredient of politics is power. Lass believes that politics is basically a struggle for position, influence by which those who monopolise such positions in the society are able to make decisions. Having all pervasive consequences to all these, there was a dissenting opinion. A school of thought holds the view that politics and government are together and cannot be separated from each other.

In all these definitions and explanation, what then is politics? Politics is the practice which involves the struggle for power and influence, disagreement, bargaining or negotiation, reconciliation, resolution and consensus which are done sensibly with the purpose of gaining an advantage.

Ethical issue is an important aspect of media practice. The media is easily criticised once the activities go against the ethical provision which attempt to determine what is right and what is wrong in the discharge of one's duty. According to Merrill (1982) cited in Akinfeleye (2008) "it is very much a normative science of conduct with conduct considered primarily as self determined voluntary conduct". One thing that one must be sure of here is that ethics is a voluntary action therefore, notable communication scholars have described it as self-legislation and self enforcement .A journalist must be able to control his actions or decisions before he can talk about ethics. It guides a journalist in deciding how he would anchor the story by ensuring that the principle of fairness is strictly upheld. This is what ethics is all about.

Reporting simply to give an account; anyone who gives account is reporting. In the media, when an account of an event is given, it is regarded as reporting. This is why the person who provides such accounts of an event is called a reporter. He is a person who is trained in the art of information gathering. The event that has been collated arranged and disseminated is what we called the news.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain briefly the meaning of politics, ethics and reporting.

### **3.2 Goal of Political Reporting**

The basic goal of political reporting can be inferred from section 22 of the 1999 constitution of the federal republic of Nigeria. This section explains the duties of the mass media as upholding the fundamental objectives that we have in Chapter 2 of the constitution alongside upholding the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people. The fundamental objectives include the economic, social, educational, foreign policy, environment, directive on Nigerian culture.

What is important to political reporting is the need for every media organisation in Nigeria to align itself with the political objectives of the states. Accordingly, national integration shall be actively engaged whilst discrimination on ground of place of origin sex, religion, status shall be linguistic association of ties shall be prohibited.

(Article 15 (ii) of 1999 constitution)

The media show their unflinching support to realising the political objectives by educating and enlighten the people about what is going on in government. The opinion of members of the public is sort and articulated in the environment of government with the aim of checking unpopular actions. The media help the people to participate in the day to day affairs to the society, take an informed decision and to keep a check on the authority who rule on their behalf. This is achieved by the treatment of various tropical issues that affect the society on regular basis.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What are the goals of political reporting?

### **3.3 Reporting Political Issues**

Having looked at the meaning of politics, ethics and reporting and having considered the goal of reporting politics, it is important to look at reporting political issues in the media. One would understand that whatever comes out of the media, positive or negative, will have a powerful influence on the people and the direction of their thought.

Political reporting is the rendering of an account of occurrence in the policy as it concerns politics and governance. There is something that should be considered while a political reporter in sourcing for stories or anchoring stories. This is due to the fact that he realises the power that he wedges and the influence that his report could have on the society. There are some questions he needs to first ask himself - which are fundamental ethical questions, namely:

- (i) Does the story promote democracy and justice?
  - (ii) Does the story promote unity and national cohesion or integration?
  - (iii) Does the story enhance the standard of journalism practice?
- (Akinfeleye, 2008:180)

Ability to answer these questions appropriately will help both the reporter and his medium to make the desired or expected impact through every published story. As an agenda setter, it will help in meaningfully setting the agenda for the society to discuss on as usually is the case.

Contrary to this, there have been distortions when it comes to political reporting in Nigeria; Gate keepers (media practitioners) are allowing themselves to be misinformed by uninformed government functionaries. This usually happens because media men, sometimes, neglect the ethical provisions of the profession.

Another thing that creates problem in the reporting of political issues is the lack of understanding of political issues, lack of understanding of political terminologies most of the time; our media writers do display a lack of understanding of key unavoidable political terminologies in reporting. They usually fail to examine the words of politician before publishing such. They display this in the reporting of Honourable Jagada's call for the impeachment of former President, Chief Olusegun Obasanjo in 2001 in the wake of the indictment of the National Assembly over the looting of the national treasury. His utterance was given prominence instead of educating him on the system of government in place in the country at the time. Vote of no confidence is a term used in a parliamentary system of government.

They equally displayed a lack of the knowledge of the nature and structure of the country where they operate, which political reporting equally requires. A political reporter should know that in Nigeria where Federalism is in place, for example, the clash of centripetal and centrifugal forces must always occur and when it does, it must not be misconstrued as dangerous in the polity. As a result of the separation of power and checks and balances, there will sometimes be conflict between the various organs of government most especially legislative arm and the executive arm. This should not be over exaggerated by the media.

The media in reporting political event must be careful not to raise unnecessary alarm. The ethics of the profession must be upheld and strictly followed. Nigerian political writers need to imbibe the needed skills for political reporting. The lack of the skills may lead to publishing stories that are not in line with the ethical provisions of the profession.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What are the things a reporter must consider when reporting political event?

### **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit has discussed political reporting and the things that are expected from political reporters. They are expected to be knowledgeable about the field they are reporting on so that the society is not misled or misinformed in any way.

## 5.0 SUMMARY

This unit has taken a look at the meaning of politics, ethics and reporting. It also looked at the goals of political reporting as well as reporting political issues.

## 6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT

Explain the political reporting in the light of the question provided by Akinfeleye (2008).

## 7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING

Akasoro, O.G. (2011). News Agency of Nigeria as a Channel for Political Communication in Nigeria. In: Oso, L. & Umaru, P. (Eds). *Mass Media and Society in Nigeria*. Lagos: Malthouse Press Limited.

Popoola, I. S. (2008). *Ethical Dimensions of Reporting Politics in Nigeria*. In: Akinfeleye, R. A. (Ed.). *Mass Media and Society: A Multi-Perspective Approach*. Lagos: University of Lagos Press.

## **UNIT 3      MEDIA AND SOCIAL INEQUALITY - RACE, GENDER, CLASS**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Media and Racism
  - 3.2    Media and Gender Differences
  - 3.3    Media and Class Differences
- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
- 6.0    Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0    References/Further Reading

### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

The previous unit looked at the media and political subject. This unit will be looking at the media and social inequality – race, gender and class.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- explain how the media handle issues that relate to gender
- enumerate the ways the media treat the issues of class and race
- explain how the public views the activities of the media on the issues of social inequalities.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1    Media and Racism**

The persuasive power of the press is particularly effective if its reporting is consistent with the interest of most readers. This is particularly in relation to the coverage of race and ethnic affairs in most countries. Ethnic and racial conflicts have been a major conflict in the news. For example, the various crises in the northern part of Nigeria have had to involve ethnic groups and races. Immigration and integration are the high points of social issues and reporting in the media in Nigeria, in recent years. There is a remarkable alignment of the press with a particular section of the population, which most times, is the dominant group. There have been various reports in the media that portray only

those issues that affect people who are in control of the media. At one time, the media has been accused of putting across a Southwest agenda because most of the media existing in the country are based in the southwest region of the country.

Ethnic and racial discriminations have not, however, been eradicated in the media. The minority groups have remained in socio economic positions that have been regarded as that of an underclass. The news that affects the major ethnic group is given prominence than those that affect the minority.

This picture that is full of contradiction put humanitarian value of equal rights against ethnic and racial dominance in virtually every aspect of the society. This is also evident in the coverage of ethnic affairs in the news media including Nigeria. The media have been instrumental in the reproduction of the ethnic status quo as well as in the perpetration of racism and ethnicity. We have this scenario in some countries of the world.

The liberal press takes a more complex position on ethnic affairs; it advocates discrimination, prejudice and racism; it usually maintains critical distance from the racist right. It is also a part of the problem of racism and not solution because it plays a more subtle role in the reproduction of ethnic inequality.

The news media are not the only elite institutions involved in the reproduction of racism, but they are the most effective and successful actor in managing the ethnic consensus and in manufacturing public consent. In the western world, the report about Africa, mainly, has been in the negative - crime, unrest, bad governance, corruption, diseases and death. The good parts are sparingly reported

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Briefly explain the media and racism.

### **3.2 Media and Gender**

Female scholars have extensively shown the prevalence of male claim of superiority in the mass media up till today despite the little gains in the employment of female journalists and programme markers in the media and slow acceptance of some major demands of women's movement. Most of the things said about the minority hold here, though not as much as in the previous case, in the case of the position of women in the media and in the news. Most journalists are men; and women, mostly do not have access to higher editorial positions. Women are not so often

quoted as source because they are not so credible and in terms of news, they are less newsworthy.

Almost all major news topics are male oriented as the social and political domains they define. Women's movement may, up to certain point, be benevolently covered as long as it is not "radical", and the male position is not seriously threatened. Women's engagement in political protest against nuclear arms, for example, is amusingly reported so long as it is playful; but it is ignored, attacked, marginalised as soon as it appears serious.

Sexual intimidation may be covered for spectacular cases, for example Clinton and Lewinsky; but it is usually taken reluctantly as a daily problem. The special contributions of women are usually ignored, especially in a male-dominated domain such as politics and science. Their little presence in disrepute domains like war or crime is not usually acknowledged.

Feminism is usually ignored and marginalised because readers are assumed to be male. Even media practitioners are referred to as "gentlemen of the press." It does not mean that only the male are practitioners in the media industry, it is assumed to be a male domain.

### **SELF-ASSESEMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the ways the media cover issues relating to gender.

### **3.3 Media and Class Differences**

The working class is hardly covered more than minorities and women. Most mass media are business corporations. Deeply integrated commodity status of news has become something important to be emphasised.

Class conflict is increasingly presented as a thing of the past, if at all. Classes are recognised as relevant social formations. Workers receive less coverage as with women and minority. They are seen as being less active and have passive access to the media. They are considered less credible source and are less quoted. They have less news value unless they decide to go violent and embark on strikes. Business news focuses on business elite and not on the workers. The contribution of workers to the economy is taken for granted and ignored. They could receive the blame if there is any recession.

The health hazard, exploitation, etc., for which business owners could be blamed are ignored and usually not given adequate coverage. Strike



actions are usually covered as a problem for the public and a threat to the economy. An example is the January 2012 fuel subsidy strike action in Nigeria. It was reported by some media as an act to sabotage the economy of the nation. The economic loss of the days of the strike lasted were the major focus of media programmes and news report. This was so because in industrial conflict, only the perspective of the management is given prominence in interviews, discussion sessions and style of coverage. Workers are hardly visible except with respect to negotiation with their leaders.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

What are the perceptions of worker to the media as compared with the management?

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Generally, the media coverage of race, women and workers are not of any prominence. Priority is given to the elite and business owners above race, women and workers (class). They are generally regarded as not being so newsworthy and less credible. This makes media attention to be drawn away from them and they are given less coverage.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has looked at the media and racism, and media and gender differences. It also examined class system (management versus workers).

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

The media has not been fair enough in the coverage given to race, gender and class. Discuss.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Eitzen, D. S. & Maxine, B. Z. (2006). *Social Problem*. Boston: Allyn and Bacon.

Teun, A. & Van, D. 'Power and the News Media.' *A Paper presented at University of Amsterdam*.

## **UNIT 4      MEDIA AND AUDIENCE**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 The Complexity of Audience Response to Media
  - 3.2 Theories Relating to Audience Perception
  - 3.3 Emancipatory and Repressive Uses of Media
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Audience plays a central role in media study. In this unit, we will briefly look at some conflicting perspectives on audience response to media communication, issues of dependency, the use and gratification theory, emancipatory and repressive use of the media.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the complex response of audience to media
- explain the theories relating to audience response to the media
- discuss the emancipatory uses of the media.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 The Complexities of Audience Response to Media**

The proof of how and to what extent audience makes use of media is hard to nail down. However, researchers are basically in the business of analysing audience use and response with the mind of measuring the power of the media - what the media is capable of. Do the media have the power to shape, modify or alter our attitudes? Do they teach us ways to think? Do they create consensus among us? Do they stir in us alarm, make us more anxious, more security minded? To what extent have the media been an agent of change?

The trouble in all these questions raised is that our perceptions of audience response are always difficult to disentangle from the actual facts of audience. The word audience is constantly used in the media but

we must admit the difficulty in providing definition for the word. It is like attempting to define what friends are. They may be many, but the friendship can be of varying degree.

Denis McQuail in his book *Audience Analysis* cited in Watson (2003), posits that the mystery of the simple word is being used to an increasingly diverse and complex reality. Pertri Alasuuntari cited in Watson (2003) states that:

there isn't really such thing as the audience out there, one must bear in mind that audience is, most of all, a discursive construct produced by a particular analytical gaze. Summarily, one can say the audiences exist in the mind's eye of those seeking to define it for a particular purpose.

Despite the doubt about "audience" being merely a general term, we need to acknowledge that there are several people who believe they know what audiences are, what they 'do' with media and how the media affect them, as well as being able to predict their reactions.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXCERSISE**

Why is it difficult to define the word audience?

### **3.2 Theory Relating to Audience Perception**

We will, briefly, look at some of the theories that point out issues relating to audience.

#### **3.2.1 Uses and Gratification Theory**

There is the general view that audience were easily brain washed; that they always believe what they were told and seemed, somehow, to have no mind of their own. The uses and gratification theory shifted attention from the message markers of the mass communication process to the message receivers' audience.

The dominant question now relates to whether the audience use the media to gratify their needs. This approach work on the basis that there is a multiple response to media messages; that people are capable of making up their own minds accepting some messages and rejecting others using the media for a variety of things and using them differently at different times. An important factor here is the influence upon members of the audience of the cultural and social origin from which their needs arise.

These needs are in four categories namely:

1. Diversion
  2. Personal relationships
  3. Personal identify
  4. Surveillance
- 
1. Diversion- we use the media to get away from routines, to ease worries or tensions.
  2. Personal relationships- media personalities become known to us as much as we know people in real life. It could be so intimate in some cases. The people we see in the media, television, somehow become our friends and neighbours as well as companions. We want to see them often on programmes, follow their activities, adopt some of their virtues and some of them even become our role models.
  3. Personal Identity-some of the things we see in television programmes, for example, become ours. We may share some of the troubles. We may need to watch some programmes to be able to relate in issues as unemployment, disappointment, loss of loved ones, rejections, fallout etc.
  4. Surveillance- we use the media to gain information, to keep an eye on the world, and to clarify what opinion we hold about it. In an election, we may not want to vote, but we are able to make an informed choice through access to the media.

### **3.2.2 Dependency Theory**

Observers of audience reaction to the mass media during the 1980s brooded over the power of the media to create in the mind of the public a measure of dependency. This made dependency theory to have a considerable influence since that time; media analysts are constantly attempting to measure the degree to which audience are depends on the media for information and possible guidance clarification to be used to form our concept of the world.

Sandra J. Ball Rokeach and Merlyn Defleur in an article titled 'A Dependency Model of Mass Media Effect' cited in Watson (2003) highlighted the following role functions in relation to audience dependency:

1. The resolution of ambiguity or uncertainty but in the direction of closing down the range of interpretations of situations which audience are able to make
2. Attitude formation
3. Agenda setting
4. Expansion of peoples system to beliefs
5. Clarification of values but through the expression of value

The author argues that the media is capable of activating the audience but at the same time it is capable of deactivating the audience. They believe that the lesser the diverse sources of information in the world, the more likely the media will affect our thoughts, attitudes and how we behave. They are also of the view that media influence will increase when there is 'high degree of structural instability in the society due to conflict and change. In the analysis of audience and its needs, there are inevitable conflicts of interest.

### **SELF-ASSESEMENT EXERCISE**

Highlight the role function of the media in relation to audience dependency.

### **3.3 Emancipation and Repressive Use of Media**

This is connected to ownership and controls as well as audiences potential to choose and make the best for themselves of that choices. The uses of the media refer to how the media operate or are permitted to operate as it concerns their perception of audience. This is in disparity with its repressive use. Han Magnus Enzensburger believes the nature of media output conditions the nature of reception. The emancipator mode is characterised by a decentralisation of programme control. Each receiver is conceived of as a potential transmitter as well as reviver. Audience is mobilised as individual members of communities rather than treated as isolated individuals making up a mass.

#### **Differences between Repressive and Emancipatory Use of Media**

<b>REPRESSIVE</b>	<b>EMANCIPATORY</b>
1. Centrally controlled programmes	Decentralised programmes
2. Single transmitter, various receivers	Each receiver a potential transmitter
3. Immobilisation or Isolate Individuals	Interaction for participant through feedback
4. Inactive behaviour of consumer	Politicking (a Learning Process)
5. Production by specialist	Collective production
6. Control by owners or bureaucrats	Societal control through self-organisation

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Differentiate between repressive use of media and emancipatory use of media.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

Audience is an important element in the news media. It is not referring to merely the number of people seated at a theatre; for whom a news report is meant and who watches a television programme, rather it encompasses the heterogeneous audience whose satisfaction or otherwise cannot be really determined. We have seen some of the factors responsible for some of these actions or responses. Some of them are due to the needs of these audiences which need to be met.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has considered the complexities of audience response to media. It considered two theories on audience perception - uses and gratification and dependency theory. It also looked at emancipation and repressive use of the media.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the theories relating to audience perception.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Bittner, J. R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Nigeria Plc.

Watson, J. (2003). *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

## **UNIT 5      MEDIA AND NEW TECHNOLOGY**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0 Introduction
- 2.0 Objectives
- 3.0 Main Content
  - 3.1 Cable Television Technology
    - 3.1.1 Two-Way Cable
    - 3.1.2 Pay Cable
    - 3.1.3 Cable Radio
    - 3.1.4 Fibre Optics
    - 3.1.5 Subscription/Pay TV
  - 3.2 Microwave and Satellite Technology
    - 3.2.1 Microwave Technology
    - 3.2.2 Comsat and Intelsat
    - 3.2.3 Domestic Satellite Systems
  - 3.3 Teletext and Videotext
    - 3.3.1 Teletext
    - 3.3.2 Videotext
  - 3.4 New Design in Television Receiver
  - 3.5 Internet and World Wide Web
  - 3.6 Impact of New Technology on Mass Media
- 4.0 Conclusion
- 5.0 Summary
- 6.0 Tutor-Marked Assignment
- 7.0 References/Further Reading

### **1.0 INTRODUCTION**

Technology is transforming the face of everything all over the world. The mass media is no exception. This unit will examine these technologies that are part of communication and information technology. We will look at cable television, microwave and satellite technology, teletext and videotext, new designs in television receivers internet and the world wide web as well as the impact all these technologies have on the mass media.

### **2.0 OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- identify the new technologies in mass communication
- list various new technological developments in mass media
- explain the workings of these new technologies
- discuss the impact of these new technologies on the mass media.

### **3.0 MAIN CONTENT**

#### **3.1 Cable Television Technology**

Breakthrough in receiving clear and interference free signal from distance station occurred in the late 1940s. This had previously been on difficult thing to happen. To achieve this, a large antenna was placed on a hilltop well above the average terrain. It is from that distance signals would be carried via shielded wire called cable directly into home television receivers. This marked the beginning of cable television or community antenna television. Residents whose televisions are connected to a community antenna paid a monthly rental fee for the service. Other people still use their roof top antenna but at the expense of a good reception of signals. People soon realised that they needed to be connected to the local cable system. The development of colour television set made cable television become even more helpful.

There are three components of the cable system as discussed below.

1. Head set: this is the centre of any cable system. It comprises of both human being and technology. The human side are the personnel operating the cable system. The technical components include the receiving antenna system. Also, television production facilities – camera, light and other studio hardware – are part of the head end. Therefore, the head end is defined as “the human and hardware combination responsible for originating, controlling, and processing signals over the cable system.
2. Distribution system: This is the system that disperses the programming. The cable itself is the main part of these systems. It is a coaxial cable. The primary cable or the main transmission line is called the link cable. The branch offs that follows this – feeders is called sub-trunks. These are the ones that go into the apartments.
3. Home Connection: This is done with a drop cable. This coaxial cable goes directly into the house where it is connected to a home terminal. The home terminal connects directly to the back of the television set.

The cable television system has different variations.

##### **3.1.1 Two-Way Cable**

This is sometimes called two-way interactive television. It allows subscribers the opportunity to send feedback to the head end. It helps to bring a wide variety of services like shopping, banking and education into the home. There is a feedback loop which allows subscribers to



communicate with system's central computer. The feedback loop is of different types. There is a single cable used for both transmitting and receiving from subscribers. Another uses two cables with one bringing signal to subscribers and the other taking return signal from subscribers to the head end. The third is a round robin cable loop. It is one cable with separate drop cables.

### **3.1.2 Pay Cable**

This is the delivery of information and/or services to cable subscribers by assessing fees beyond the regular rental fee. This is different from Pay TV or Subscription TV. Pay cable affords one the opportunity to see first-run programmes. Subscription is required for pay cable. The subscriber either pays on monthly or per programme basis.

### **3.1.3 Cable Radio**

The radio is another medium carrying cable systems and this wired concept also applies to it. The principle is similar to that of the television. Distant station programming is cabled into a local community and homes connect to it. It could reduce the economic strength of broadcasters when a community decides to import one or more stations outside the local market.

### **3.1.6 Fibre Optics**

Fibre optics is thin strands of glass through which light passes. The light which travels at a very high speed carries the broadcast signals. Its use has dramatically increased the amount of information that can be carried on any single cable system.

### **3.1.7 Subscription/Pay TV**

The usual over-the-air television transmission has allowed anyone who has a receiver at home to receive the programming. What is happening now is a growing interest in subscription TV or Pay TV. The signal is scrambled as it leaves the station transmitter and it is descrambled on the home receiving set with a special device. Subscribers pay a monthly fee for the descrambler attachment and they can receive programmes on a first-run. This is fast gaining ground and is becoming the norm in the Western world.

## **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Cable television marks the beginning of media revolution. Discuss.

## **3.2 Microwave and Satellite Technology**

Microwave and satellite technology has become the new order in the communication world. Information is now being relayed via satellite and they are received almost immediately.

### **3.2.1 Microwave Technology**

Microwave transmission is now being used at a higher frequency to standard AM, FM and television frequencies. They are very short electromagnetic waves. The higher the frequency, the farther the electromagnetic waves will travel in a direct line-of-sight path between transmitter and receiver. Therefore, microwaves always travel by line-of-sight transmission. Microwave antenna dots almost every landscape from roofs of skyscrapers to the top of mountains. Using a high frequency line-of-sight transmission, they can carry television signals over a long distance through series of relay antennas that are approximately 30 miles apart. It has the advantage of low cost and increased efficiency of transmission over traditional land-line systems.

### **3.2.2 Comsat and Intelsat**

At the time of this development, the world was becoming so interested in satellite development. The United States Congress by passing the Communication Satellite Act of 1962 created a quasi-governmental Communication Satellite Corporation (COMSAT). This became the early planner of satellite systems on an international scale when it became the manager of International Satellite Consortium. This consortium was established under two agreements. The first agreement was by 14 countries and ratified by 54 countries. It metamorphosed into International Telecommunication Satellite Organisation (INTELSAT) in 1974 with more than 80 countries as members. It is now presided over by a Secretary General. Approximately, there are over 100 members today with Nigeria also involved with the launching of her satellite few years back. It is equally responsible for more than 95 percent of the world's communication traffic.

The satellite uses an improved technology called Beam Separation. Beam Separation allows the same frequency to be used for transmitting a signal both to and from the satellite. It creates a more efficient use of frequency. Further to this, improved antenna systems allow a more directed "beam" to an earth station thereby removing the power normally wasted by beaming signals over the ocean areas for example.

### **3.2.3 Domestic Satellite Systems**

There are numerous domestic satellite systems that work with global communication of the INTELSAT satellite. Western union operates a domestic satellite system called Westar. This satellite system is capable of carrying different types of information including video, data and voice. Sending and receiving earth stations operate in major metropolitan centre along with mobile facilities. The potential of living smaller antenna systems, such as small satellite dish antennas replacing larger consumer models and now in use, may change our media habits and how we use both mass and more personalised communication system.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the technology used by satellite in capturing and disseminating information.

## **3.3 Teletext and Videotext**

This is another of the advancement in the new technology as far as mass communication is concerned.

### **3.3.1 Teletext**

Teletext is a system where a computer is connected with a television transmission system and can send data to home receivers equipped with a special decoder. The home viewers can select standard television programming, the teletext signal or both. Teletext involves the over-the-air broadcast of information.

### **3.3.3 Videotext**

This employs the use of wired connection between a central computer and a home receiver. The wired connection, via telephone or cable system, permits a two-way relationship between the user and the transmission system. The user here too can select pages of information. The difference here is that the user gets information instantly as it is called up from the data bank.

## **3.4 New Design in Television Receiver**

The development in new technology for mass communication is not limited to the equipment for the production and transmission of signals alone. It also includes the receiver gadgets used by the consumers at home. These gadgets ensure that the signal sent by the station is well

received by consumers and that the images and reception are clear and appealing. Manufacturers of television receivers have gone ahead to design different devices using the latest technology. Today, there are stereo-television, cable-ready television, component television, large-screen television, high-definition television as well as digital television. These new designs, interference in signal and poor audio and picture quality are fast becoming a non-existence. Images on the screen are becoming clearer.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The technological development in the media is not limited to equipment alone. Discuss.

### **3.5 Internet and the World Wide Web**

We cannot talk about the internet and the World Wide Web (www) without talking about the computer. Computer is not a modern invention but an already existing rudimentary computer called the Abacus. Computer is enabled through electronics which makes it programmable so that series of formulas or algorithms could be stored and retrieved. Today's computer has three components –

1. The central processing unit (CPU) which processes the algorithms that crunch the numbers;
2. Random-Access Memory (RAM) which holds the data currently being worked with;
3. Storage (in the form of a hard drive or another device) which stores data, including programmes and documents.

We should not go into history of internet development but we must mention that it is a military invention because it came about from military funding. It became a civilian affair when government helped to develop it. Its popularity with civilian is dependent on its being in expensive and easy to use. It has evolved into a system with these four basic components: e-mail, information and entertainment service, electronic commerce and cyberspace communities. The latest happenings around the world can be seen on the internet almost as it is happening. Messages and information are exchange between people via the e-mail. There are enough entertainment and information. One can read newspapers online without holding any live newspaper. We have online newspapers and online magazines sites. Business transactions can be done on the internet and payment made via the internet and the goods will be delivered appropriately. The world has just become a global village with the cyberspace community – face book, twitter, BB messaging, yahoo messenger, Skype, among other applications. It aids

the relationship between people who may not see themselves face to face for several years due to distance and yet they live and relate and are updated about happenings around them.

The World Wide Web (www) is a software system that simplifies internet navigation. This was invented in 1989 by Tim Berners Lee and he made it public in 1993. One of the high points of his innovation is hypertext links (hyperlinks). These are highlighted word and images within a web page that allow the user to move from one site to another by simply pointing and clicking a mouse button. To access a document on the internet, web surfers don't need to enter complicated retrieval command or even know where the document resides. The World Wide Web is by far the most diversified communication medium, and has something for every cultural group and for those who would like to develop an understanding of those groups. The development of the World Wide Web has made every media organisation develop their own website through which information they have processed could be located.

The internet has no restrictive power on the audience. There are issues or challenges with this unlimited freedom – fraud, spam, sending of virus, infringement on copyright, child pornography, malicious hacker attacks and identity theft. Yet, it has helped to transform the media in terms of development.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the positive impact of internet development to the society.

### **3.6 Impact of New Technology on Mass Media**

Looking at the fore goings, one cannot but say that the impact of new technology on the mass media has been tremendously positive. There is no innovation that does not have its own problem but the positives when compare with the negatives outweighs the negative.

Technology has taken communication to a new height. Community relation now exists as if there had been gap between the communities. Happening around the world are beamed directly into our living room without any form of interference.

The meaning of mass communication is now being redefined with all these advancements. Information can be gotten without necessarily tuning a television set or getting to the comfort of our homes. The rate at which entertainment is brought to our door steps is alarming. One needs not get to a cinema before enjoying a full dose of entertainment.

Without mincing words, new technological developments have helped advance the effectiveness and efficiency of the mass media in all societies of the world.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain some impacts of new technology on media development.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

The new technological development cuts across both the equipment and the receiver gadget. This makes it an important element in the mass media. It has helped to change the face of the mass media in all societies of the world. The cable television, the microwave technology, the satellite, internet etc have all helped to ensure that information reach the end users as at when due with a huge reduction in interference (noise) in the channel. This is why it is possible to a clear signal – sounds and pictures – at home.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has discussed the cable and satellite technology, teletext and videotext. It also looked at new design in television receiver and the internet and World Wide Web. We equally discussed briefly the impact of the new technology on mass media.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the impact of new technology on the mass media in your country.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

- Bittner, J. R. (1991). *Mass Communication: An Introduction*. Ibadan: Heinemann Educational Books Nigeria Plc.
- Rodman, G. (2006). *Mass Media in a Changing World*. Boston: McGraw Hill.
- Watson, J. (2003). *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process*. New York: McGraw Hill.

## **UNIT 6      GLOBALISATION**

### **CONTENTS**

- 1.0    Introduction
- 2.0    Objectives
- 3.0    Main Content
  - 3.1    Issues of Control
  - 3.2    The Struggle for Dominance: Private Sector Vs Public Sector
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- 4.0    Conclusion
- 5.0    Summary
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### **1.0    INTRODUCTION**

A current challenge for globalisation in the media is to adapt to the indigenous cultures of new markets. There has been advancement in the growth of the media in recent years especially in the third world countries. This unit will therefore, be taking a look at key issues pertaining to the global arena of the media. This unit will be looking at issues of control and competition for public attention. It will also be examining the global imbalances in information and cultural exchange.

### **2.0    OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- state the meaning of globalisation
- discuss the issues of control and ownership of media
- explain the demand for public attention
- describe the imbalance in information and cultural exchange.

### **3.0    MAIN CONTENT**

Information has proven to be a vital product of the late 20th century and stands to increase in ‘commodity-value’ in the 21st century. It is therefore, of great importance and concern to the major player on the public stage. More important to our interest as major watchers is how that information is used to shape public perception of reality.

Between the nation-state and big business, an alliance occurs which explores in relation to the public and private spheres of mass

communication, trends in deregulation and privatisation, and fears of cultural encirclement of the public by the great corporations.

Though new technology has facilitated the growth of information and speed of access development globally has been uneven, with core nations (developed countries) being rich information and peripheral nations (developing countries) being information-poor or deficient.

### **3.1 Issues of Control**

Communication is power and that power is obtained and held through control. Whoever controls the means of communication has the potential power to influence the ways in which the society works. In the study of mass media, therefore, it should be a constant task to monitor control and the controllers; most importantly when there are few powerful advocates for the public domain of communication. Governments work with corporations; corporations influence government and the media are most of the time part of corporate portfolio.

The technology of computer, cable, satellite, and video has opened up wonderful opportunities for information access and transmission; opportunities which could likely undermine or circumvent the hierarchical control of media systems. There is no 'high-way patrol' in sight. Robert Machesney being so enthused about this development said, "We stand on the threshold of an era in which society finally has the technology to democratise societies in a manner unfathomable only a few years back."

He was referring to the control on the media and information held before the technological advancement. Though there seems not to be a control but there are still 'high-way patrols'. He went further to mention that 'the great barrier to the democratic application of these technologies is the corporate control of communication and the relative powerlessness of the public in capitalist societies'. This is because of the profit drive of these corporate bodies which tries to regulate or subvert the information that comes to the public.

Media history has exposed the vulnerability of information made public by mass communication to distortion. What is usually mortgaged in this ménage of media and myth-making is the truth or at least the path towards public understanding of the truth. There is disinformation or to be more precise, distraction in the media dissemination of information. This is so because certain information has to be distorted or better still modified to conceal the truth for certain reason. It is based on the control exerted on the media by owners.



There is also what is called myth-information. Views are expressed in mythologies. The significance of myth is its ability to transform meaning of history and also the truth. The story (news story or information) is drained of its historical truth through the restriction or re-invention of information. The 'skeleton' then awaits an ideological re-creation that is, a preference for image over the truth, of mediated over live reality. There are times this sort of reinvention comes up. One of such is during war or disaster. The public gets useful information (enough to the war effort) but less generously with damaging information such as data on civilian casualties. Certain information is concealed from the public to avoid a greater consequence hence the story needs to be reinvented.

The vulnerability of information in the public domain to vanishing report is another case. In this case, genuine issues are treated as if they are of marginal importance by downsizing them or strike them off the public agenda. Some information is removed from the purview of the public and is concealed from them. An example was during the sickness of the late President, Umaru Musa Yar'Adua. The then Minister of Information, Mr John Ode was asked if the president had travelled abroad for medical treatment on his ailment. He responded that the president had travelled for the lesser hajj to Saudi Arabia. He tried to distort the information that the media had about the president travelling out for medical attention by concealing the truth from the public. He maintained the same position despite being bombarded by series of questions on this issue. A serious issue can be downsized by the media and it will be taken off the public agenda particularly if it will have negative effect on the generality of the public.

The media is not alone among those who stir up the pot of myth and guide us into what to think. Also, the media-culture machines of government and other elite forces in the society. From looking at the news value, there is the tendency to personalise issues, sensationalise events and make presentation spectacular.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Explain briefly the issue of control.

### **3.2 The Struggle for Dominance: Private Sector Vs Public Sector**

There are other issues connected to the issue of who controls the dominant means of communication, who speaks for the public and how. The target, notwithstanding the issue on ground, is consensus – public interest, public support or public acquiescence. The public could sense

the struggle for their support and suspect that this is as much in the interest of the communicator as in their own interest. There is usually an uneasiness and move by the thoughtful public against the desire of governments, of authorities to control the message systems. We always talk about rights of access and expression. The private sector enterprises also desire to dominate message system in the name of profit. For this, we usually demand a regulation that can protect us from such exploitation.

The struggle has always been between public and private ownerships and control. In this regard also, it is not a case of categorising ownership and control – public or private - rather, it is more about the degree and extent of that control. The point here is the monopolistic tendencies; the problem, the capacity of agencies representing the public in establishing and sustaining checks upon those tendencies. With the deregulation and privatisation of public utilities of various kinds – telecommunication and broadcasting – the traditional checks and balances – regulatory requirements – are now threatened and at risk.

The public here is where the audience is located. It is the market place where consumption of information and stories take place. The private needs the audience to win consumers. It is only in the public sphere that certain values and practices can be maintained.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

The struggle for dominance is basically on the consent of the audience. Discuss.

### **3.3 The Global Imbalances in International and Cultural Exchange**

It is important for us to be constantly aware of the interconnectivity of issues and the inter-relationship of the local and global media. What is important for us to see is the uneven distribution of micro-context and macro-context. Having equal opportunity depends on an equal spread of information because information is hinged upon which decisions can be made to the benefit of the individual, the group or the nation. Active players in a competitive world would be at a disadvantage without the necessary information. Cees Hamelink cited in Watson (2003) gave these statistics about availability of information. He pointed out that there are averages of 1,400 free public libraries per country in Europe, while Africa has average of 18, America and Japan are served by 150 and 120 respectively while in 30 countries there are only One and in 30 other countries there is no newspaper at all. This information imbalance puts a great proportion of the world's population at a serious disadvantage

making it susceptible to exploitation and manipulation. Except this imbalance is rectified, they are destined for a future of continued deprivation. It is these disparity and deprivation that make rich nation learn more of what is going on in a poor country and even more, quickly than the poor country knows about itself. This is done through satellite which has becomes a spy-in-the-sky which aids the user to detect crucial detail of a country from an altitude of 150 miles.

There are differences too in the flow of such information. Those information coming from periphery (developing countries or information –poor countries) is raw, unprocessed and unmediated while the information coming from the core (developed countries or information-rich countries) is packaged and with an attached price. It sometimes or most times arrives as disinformation. This is seen with various agencies or services – CIA, KGB, FBI, SSS, among others. The information flow in their direction is usually imbalance. This imbalance is not dismissed lightly by the view that ‘eventually the poor will catch up’. The aim is that by the time the disadvantaged will clearly understand the message and close the information gap, the advantaged would have gone another step ahead. The inadequate information capacities of the disadvantaged nation are a serious obstacle to their own effort to combat poverty and other deprivations. This is because so much information on these poor nations is kept in data bank of the information-rich nations; the disadvantaged nation’s sovereignty is at a risk.

When a country does not have enough independence to nurture its own language or languages, its own forms of literary, musical and dramatic expression, its own historical and artistic heritage, then it is vulnerable to cultural invasion and the desire for (the need for) cultural self-determination is put at risk.

### **SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE**

Discuss the global imbalance in information based on the data provided by CeesHamelink.

## **4.0 CONCLUSION**

This unit has taken a look at the area of globalisation in the media. The control of the content of the media was viewed in relation to what comes out of the media to the public. There is some information that has to be concealed for certain reason which could be in the interest of the general public. At this point, there is usually some kind of distortion in the flow of information. The information rich countries are usually in possession of in first hand information about the information-poor countries which puts the sovereignty of the poor nations at risk.

## **5.0 SUMMARY**

This unit has taken a look at the issues of control and the struggle for dominance in the media of the control of the audience. We also look at the global imbalances in international and cultural exchange.

## **6.0 TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

Discuss the concept of globalisation in relation to struggle for dominance and information imbalances in the media.

## **7.0 REFERENCES/FURTHER READING**

Rodman, G. (2006). *Mass Media in a Changing World*. Boston: McGraw Hill.

Watson, J. (2003). *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process*. New York: McGraw Hill.