



# EDO UNIVERSITY, IYAMHO EDO STATE, NIGERIA



## DEPARTMENT OF MASS COMMUNICATION MAC 314: COMMUNICATION AND SOCIETY

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**General Overview of lecture:** This course examines the media of mass communication as a social institution with particular attention to pertinent sociological concepts, themes and problems. The role and relationship of the mass media vis-avis major social institutions is also explored. Emphasis in the course is focused on the sociology and professionalism of mass media communicators, mass media contents and the issue of cultural imperialism of mass media dependency; internal dynamics and control of mass media organisations and mass communication politics. The role of communication in development is also critically examined.

**Prerequisite:** The students are expected to have a good background of the understanding of the concept of communication and its functions in the society

**Learning Outcomes:** At the end of the study, students should be able to define communication and understand its role in society; understand and apply theories of mass communication to the Nigerian environment; understand the freedom and limitations of the press in the Nigerian societies among other things.

**Assignments:** We expect to have 3 homework assignments throughout the course. We shall also have a Mid-Term Test before the Final Exam. A Term paper will also be given at the beginning of the class to be submitted on due date.

**Grading:** Home work, test and Term Paper: 30% of the final grade. Final comprehensive (according to University schedule): 70% of final grade.

### Reference Text

**Title:** *Media and Society*.

**Author:** Ate, A.A

**Publisher:** National Open University of Nigeria.

**Year:** 2008

**Title:** *Mass Media and Society.*

**Author:** Daramola, I

**Publisher:** Rothan Press

**Year:** 2005

## MAIN LECTURE

### Course Details

**Week 1-2:** Understanding Communication: Sociology of Mass Communication

**Week 3 – 4:** Theories of Mass Communication

**Week 5 – 6:** Understanding Society, Media Ownership and Control Mechanism

**Week 7:** Press Freedom

**Week 8 -9:** Culture and the Mass Media, Globalisation and the mass media

**Week 10 -11:** The Mass Media and other agents of socialization; Media professionalism

**Week 12:** Revision

### LECTURE 1: UNDERSTANDING COMMUNICATION

**Introduction:** Communication is the backbone of human civilization. It is an expression of information, ideas, cultures, attitudes and other components of the society between an individual to another or between groups.

**Objective:** At the end of this topic, you should be able to define communication, understand its types and identify the functions of mass communication in the society.

Experts (Udall and Udall 1979, Eyre 1983, Chappel and Read 1984) cited in Ate (2008, p.2) see communication in line with the above. Let us consider their views on the issues at stake:

- Communication is the process by which one person (or group ) shares and imparts information to another person (or group) so that both people (or group) clearly understands one another (Udall and Udall, 1979).
- Communication is not just giving of information, it is the giving of understandable information and receiving and understanding the message (Eyre, 1983).
- Communication is any means by which a thought is transferred from one person to another (Chappel and Read, 1984)

More recently, Castells (2014, p.3) defines communication as “the process of sharing meaning in the basis of information transfer.” There are two broad categories of human communication. These are verbal and non-verbal communication. Verbal communication is done through the use of words. It takes place in an oral form or written form. Non-verbal communication on the other hand is carried out without speech.

Soola (1998), Akalugo (2003) cited in Ate (2008), Sybil, Ode and Soola (1990) and Baran (2012) identifies other forms of communication such as intrapersonal communication, interpersonal communication, group communication and mass communication.

- **Intrapersonal Communication** is the process of transfer of information which takes place within an individual e.g soliloquy (Soola, 1998).
- **Interpersonal communication** is also known as face-to-face communication. Under this communication, the exchange of ideas, opinions, information is between two people. Here, the sender shares his ideas or information with the receiver unlike intrapersonal communication where the communicator keeps his ideas to himself (Akalugo, 2003).
- **Group communication;** when three or more people come together with a view to achieving a specific goal, a group is formed. Their coming together may be by design or by accident but so long as there is an exchange of ideas and information among the group, you have group communication (Sybil, *et al*,1990).
- **Mass communication** is the process of creating shared meaning between the mass media and their audience (Baran, 2012).

Communication serves as an instrument of social interaction. It helps us to understand ourselves, keep in touch with other people, understand them and be able to predict their response to situations (Sambe, 2005). Communication process involves action, reaction and interaction.

It is important to throw more light on mass communication viewed by Sambe (2005, p.28) as “a device by which a group of people working together transmits information to a large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience simultaneously.” In communicating to the masses, Wilson (2005, pp.3-5) suggested that” first, the language of the communication must be available to and be understood by a relatively large segment of the population of each country. Second, the communication messages should be deeply rooted in and reflect the cultural sensibilities of the generality of the people.”

Mass communication is unique because its message is often general and targeted at a very large audience, who are anonymous in nature and heterogeneous in composition and posture. Under mass communication, there is low degree of feedback and low level of interaction. The message is rapid and transient in nature as it is meant to be consumed immediately(Ate, 2008).

### **Functions of the Mass Media**

The mass media perform some functions in the society. Ate (2008) takes us through the conventional and other functions of the media:

#### **Conventional Functions**

##### **1. Information**

This is the first and primary function of the mass media. Information dissemination is creating awareness on the part of the people. Communication experts believe that people could be informed of what is happening or what has happened. The role of information as the pivot in the growth and development of societies cannot be over emphasized. No wonder there has been systematically studied by sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists. Their study proves that information can indeed lead to social change in the society.

The mass media provide information to the entire society on daily basis. Such information comes through news on radio, television, newspaper and magazines. The news raises the awareness of listeners as in the case of radio, viewers (television) and readers (newspapers and magazines).

## 2. Education

The education function of the mass media is meant to teach the people by imparting knowledge with a view to broaden the horizon of members of the society. Through different programmes like “Who wants to be a millionaire?”, “Super story”, etc, members of the public can develop themselves mentally and morally. Through the education via the mass media, people can discover themselves and the potentials in their environment and harness such potentials for the holistic development of the society. It can be said therefore, that the mass media is a school of its own. Through it, a lot of people have been delivered from the bondage of ignorance and illiteracy and it has the power to introduce light in the life of the audience.

## 3. Entertainment

Another important function of the mass media is entertainment. The media can make the people laugh and forget their sorrows. Entertainment through the media can come in different forms - sports, drama, motion pictures, short stories, crosswords, puzzles and cartoons. All these forms of entertainment are by-product of the mass media.

## Other Functions of the Mass Media

Apart from the traditional or conventional functions of the mass media, i.e to inform, educate and entertain, the mass media also perform other numerous functions. Harrold Lasswell in Sambe (2004) identifies the following functions of the mass media:

### 1. Surveillance

This means keeping close watch over someone or something. In the context of mass communication, surveillance means that the mass media is to inform and provide information to the society by keeping watch on the activities of government and correcting uncomplimentary occurrences. Lasswell describe the surveillance role of the media as the “watchman function”. The surveillance function often corresponds to what is generally called news handling. This

includes the collection and distribution of information about events in the environment, both outside and within any particular society.

## 2. Transmission of Cultural Heritage

This function of the mass media focuses on the transmission of knowledge, values and social norms from one generation to another or from members of a group to newcomers.

The existence of a community depends on the ability of its members to share common values and to agree on what constitute acceptable behaviours. Also, the continued existence of the society depends on the ability of its members to transmit the values and norms of the society from one generation to another. This can be done through songs and preservation of certain artifacts.

People's way of life in terms of dressing can also be preserved by the mass media. The same thing is applicable to certain cultural festivals which can be preserved for the sake of posterity by the mass media.

## 3. Status Conferral

Another function of the mass media is the bestowal of prestige on people who attempt to remain well informed about events in their community. In Nigeria, for instance, being well informed about what is going on in government and society generally is a source of prestige. People who are well connected are looked upon as opinion leaders. The function of status conferral comes from being the subject of news reports. The mass media have the power to make instant celebrities of hitherto unknown persons either for good or bad.

The electronic media, most especially, have conferral effect on the audience. People or organizations that are featured in the media tend to acquire some level of importance above the ordinary. (Sambe, 2004).

## 4. Interpretation and Prescription of News

The chief function of interpretation and prescription is to prevent such undesirable consequences of the mass communication of news. The selection, evaluation and interpretation of news –

focusing on what is most important in the environment, according to Sambe (2004) tend to prevent over stimulation and over mobilization of the population.

Like surveillance, he observed that the activities of news interpretation and presentation for behaviour, when performed as mass communication can also be dysfunctional both at the societal and individual level. On the societal level, experts believe that some activities can impede social change and enhance social disorder in a society. At the individual level, the dysfunctional role of the mass media is believed to create panic among individual members of the society.

Another important function of the mass media in modern society is the agenda setting function. The agenda setting function of the mass media presupposes the fact that the media can lead members of the public in taking very sensitive decisions on issues of public significance be it politics, economic and social standings. The agenda setting function of the media is predicated on the fact that the mass media can influence a thinking of members of the public through its court of public opinion. In addition to the aforementioned functions of the mass media, Folarin (1998:5) added national integration; social-economic modernization; and cultural creativity as functions of journalism.

**Assignment/Exercise:** i. Define communication. ii. Outline the functions of mass communication in the society.

**Conclusion:** There is a link between communication and society and that link can be better appreciated in our next topic.

## **LECTURE 2: SOCIOLOGY OF MASS COMMUNICATION**

**Introduction:** The relationship between the society and the mass media is interwoven. From theoretical perspectives to operational stand point, the mass media reflects the society in which they operate. The political systems, the cultural and economic systems of the society among others are projected in the media system of a given society. The mass media assist in creating

meaning or social construction of reality in the social world. That gives us a background of the concept of media sociology.

**Objective:** At the end of this lecture, you should be able to know the meeting points between communication and society.

Sociology refers to the systematic study of relationship that exists between individuals and groups within a given society. They exhibit a regular pattern of relationship which is called the social order. (Talabi, undated). Mass communication on the other hand is the process of transmission of norms, values attitudes, information, mores and other byproduct of the society through digital or mechanical devices to a relatively large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience simultaneously.

Society is the network or web of social interactions. Nwanu (2017) observes that you can't study mass communication without understanding the behavior of man in the society. To understand the relationship between sociology and mass communication, he challenges us to study the difference between messages we receive from machines (robots, or voice operated) and messages we receive from a real person (an announcer on radio, or a presenter on TV or a newspaper reporter). His verdict: surely, most of the channels of mass communication (radio, TV, newspapers, video, books, music, etc) would be useless without human operators.

Sociology of mass media can also be appreciated from the angle of the social effect media devices and messages have on our personal and societal lives. Mehraj, Bhat and Mehrej (2014, p.57) confirms this development:

The mass media occupy a high proportion of our leisure time: people spend, on average, 25 hours per week watching television, and they also find time for radio, cinema, magazines and newspapers.

Also making a submission in the same vein, Croteau and Hoynes (2013, p.2) underscore the power of the media to humanity:

The media surround us. Our everyday lives are saturated by the internet, television, radio, movies, recorded music, newspapers, books, magazines, and more. In the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, thanks in part of the proliferation of mobile devices we

navigate through a vast media environment unprecedented in human history. Yet our intimate familiarity with the mass media often allows us to take them for granted. They are like the air we breathe ever present yet rarely considered.

It is important for us to identify areas where the mass media has affected our social lives. By so doing, we will appreciate the concept of sociology of mass communication better.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Identify any message from your environment and point out societal symbols/elements in such message.

**Conclusion:** It is completely and absolutely impossible to divorce communication from society.

### **LECTURE 3: THEORIES OF THE MASS MEDIA**

**Introduction:** There are different kinds of mass media theories. However, we shall consider only normative theories in this lecture segment.

**Objective:** At the end of the lecture, you should be able to apply normative theories of the mass media to the Nigerian society.

#### **Normative Theories**

The basic assumption of Normative theories is that the media tend to assume the form and coloration of the society in which it operates. The well known four theories are, Authoritarian, Libertarian (or free press), Soviet Communist and Social Responsibility theories. McQuail (2000) also draws attention to two other emergent normative theories, namely, Democratic-Participant Media Theory and Development Media Theory, thus bringing the number of Normative theories recognized in the literature to six. The theories are summarised by Ate (2008) as follows:

- **Authoritarian Media Theory**

Dates from the 16th century, the theory describes a situation in which the

mass media are subordinated to state power. Whether the media ownership is private or public, they are expected to service the government or its functionaries and are forbidden to criticize government or its functionaries.

The instruments of authoritarian control of the media are many and varied. They include heavy taxation, repressive legislation and direct or subtle state control of staffing. Others are suspension of publication, and rough treatment of journalists which were the hallmark of Babangida and Abacha regimes in Nigeria.

- **Libertarian Theory (Free Press)**

The Libertarian theory or free press theory believes that an individual should be free to publish what he or she likes to hold and express opinions freely. It is based on the concept of “free market place of ideas” which held that good ideas would inevitably drive out bad ones if both were guaranteed free expression.

The theory does not however obliterate the laws of defamation, sedition, obscenity and invasion of privacy. It believes that human beings including journalists are rational and have the ability to differentiate between right and wrong. The theory exists mainly to check on governments or its functionaries and therefore must ideally be free from government control. The clearest expression of the libertarian principle can be found in the first amendment to the American Constitution, which infringes on freedom of speech or of the press is a good example of the theory at work.

- **Democratic Participant Theory**

The main thrust of this theory as enunciated by McQuail lies on the insistence that the existing bureaucracy and professional hegemony in media system should be done away with so as to ensure easy access to the media by allowing potential users and consumers.

Conclusively, it insists that previous media theories have failed to deliver the expected results and therefore calls for grassroots participation in the control of the mass media.

- **Social Responsibility Theory**

The social responsibility theory can be aptly described as a child of the industrial revolution. The industrial revolution and the emerging multimedia society provided the conducive environment for the development of a theory that is based on the assumption that while the press should be free, it must nonetheless be responsible. This theory places emphasis on the moral and social responsibilities of people, who, and institutions which operate the mass media.

The main theme of the message therefore is “In Public Interest”. It holds the position that one has the right to print, but he does not have the right to libel. It admits no censorship, but depends solely on the maturity of proprietors, editors and reporters.

The main difference to the libertarian theory of the mass media lies in the demand for social responsibility which, if need be, can be enforced on the media by other institutions when it acts contrary to the laid down principles of social responsibility.

- **Development Media Theory**

Development media theory was put forward as a means of paying for the imbalance in development and information flow of the Third World Countries and a solution to the technological problems facing them. The Third World Countries are bedeviled by problems that make the development of mass media system difficult. Some of these problems are the absence of communication infrastructure, the professional skill, the production and cultural resources and the available audience. The major tenets of Development Media Theory as enunciated by McQuail are:

- ✓ Media must accept and carry out positive development tasks in line with naturally established policy
- ✓ Freedom of the media should be open to economic priorities and development needs of the society
- ✓ Media should give priority in the content to the national culture and language
- ✓ Journalists and other media workers have responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination tasks.
- ✓ In the interest of development, the state has a right to intervene or restrict media operation.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Attempt to formulate a communication theory that is suitable to your environment.

**Conclusion:** A theory is a means to an end not an end itself. It is dynamic and based on the changing nature of the society.

#### **LECTURE 4: UNDERSTANDING SOCIETY**

**Introduction:** The term society can be defined as the network of social interaction. Daramola (2005:1) sees society as the “web of social relationship.” It is the “whole complex scheme” or “whole tissue” of social relationships.

**Objective:** At the end of the lecture, you should define society.

A sociologist, George Simmel in Daramola (2005:2) defines society as “a number of individuals connected by interactions.” Equally, an anthropologist, Ralph Linton in Daramola (2005) sees 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.

Society could be organized or unorganized. It could be complex or simple, depending on its structure. The Nigerian society is complex and heterogeneous in nature. Nigeria has up to 250 tribes and there is diversity in terms of culture in the country. The economic, social, political and religious activities in the country among different tribes or sub-groups reflect the diversity of the Nigerian society. Nigeria has a rich cultural heritage which is been expressed in different traditional festivals and fiestas among different ethnic nationalities in the country (Ate, 2008).

Because of the diversity of Nigeria in terms of tribes and other variables, the country, sometime, finds itself in ethnic controversy. Commenting on the effects of ethnic chauvinism on the Nigerian press, Umechukwu (2001:139) wondered:

... why did the press sink into a low ethnic ebb? Ethnicity is so entrenched in the Nigerian psyche that the political stratification cannot be anything but ethnic; economic and cultural activities in the country cannot be anything but based on ethnic principles. It is important to stress that within the context of our cultural diversities, the mass media and other stakeholders have been trying to define national unity and national interest. It is also important to state that despite our heterogeneity as Nigerians, we share so many things in common.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Discuss the complexity of society.

**Conclusion:** Understanding the society is the first wisdom to effective communication.

## **LECTURE 5: MEDIA OWNERSHIP**

**Introduction:** There is a popular adage that he who pays the piper dictates the tune. Media ownership and control are important concepts in the mass media. In this lecture, we shall beam a searchlight on media ownership.

**Objective:** At the end of this lecture, you should be able to understand the concept of media ownership with a particular emphasis on types.

Media proprietorship simply means media ownership. Media ownership refers to the right to own, establish and control the mass media. (Talabi, (undated), p.37). In Nigeria, three types or patterns of media ownership can be identified. These are: (i) Government ownership (ii) Private ownership, and (iii) Public ownership. Government ownership refers to public ownership of the mass media (both print and electronic). Government for political reasons, own the media especially radio and television (Ate, 2008, p.33).

Private ownership is the situation where private individuals own, finance and control the mass media. In Nigeria, media ownership was only allowed for the print media until 1992 when the then Head of State, General Ibrahim Babangida lifted embargo on the ownership of the electronic media (Talabi (undated), p.37).

Public ownership refers to the scenario whereby the media operators/proprietors hold the media in trust for the public. Under this pattern of ownership, the media are operated for the public by charter and are supposedly “autonomous” or independent to a great extent. (Talabi (undated), p.42, Ate 2008, p.33).

Harping on the implication of ownership structure, Akapa (2010, p.21) noted that “press ownership in Nigeria is an admixture of private and government ownership. The influence of the owners on what the press produces or reports are undeniably profound and entrenched in the dictum “he who pays the piper dictates the tune.”

The key motivation for press ownership are two: political and economic, with the political motivation being the stronger factor. Most proprietors of the press, be it individuals or government, set up such outfits basically to enhance their political interest (Akapa, 2010). In line with Akapa’s submission, Duyile (2011, p.87) who probed the issue from newspaper angle noted that “in most cases, the original political or otherwise intension is confided in the editor and the managing director employed to run the newspaper.” The success or failure of media organisation is dependent on political and economic variables. Jose (1975, p.225) x-rayed the issue from newspaper perspective when he declared “for political or economic reasons, newspapers are folding up all the times.”

### **Media control mechanisms**

There are several ways by which those who wield political power can control mass media in any society. This can be through the arsenals of authoritarian control such as repressive legislation, heavy taxation, direct or indirect control of essential production inputs, rough treatment of media workers, issuing of death threat and in some extreme cases assassination of media workers (e.g Dele Giwa), censorship and closure of media houses (e.g *Daily Concord*, OGBC, Abeokuta, during the Babangida regime).

Another method of exercising control over the broadcast media is through the indirect control of the media structures as identified by Ate (2008). These include:

i. **Management Structure:** It is the ownership structure that determines management of any media organisation. In a situation of government ownership, the management is usually

structured to reflect government's thinking and interest. In terms of the private sector, the media is structured in such a way as to protect the interest of the proprietor.

ii. **Finance:** The financing of the media is dependent on the ownership. In developing countries like Nigeria, government sends subvention to its media houses, even when such media establishment still source funds from other sources. Therefore, in a situation of government ownership, government can exercise the power at its disposal to put financial pressure on such media organisations with a view to forcing them to conform to the policies and philosophy of the proprietor.

Other sources of finance especially in public financed broadcast organisations according to Akpan (2006:198-199) are:

iii. **Syndication** – is a process by which broadcast stations are supplied programmes by programme production companies. Each copy of the programme would be used by three or more stations before being returned to the syndicate for inspection and re-issue in rotation pattern.

iv. **Barter Programmes** – in addition to buying programmes from syndicates, stations can receive programme for little or no money under an arrangement known as “barter”. In a “barter deal,” syndication companies would make programmes available to a broadcast station at normal or no charge in return for the right to run advertisements on the station accepting the programme.

v. **Production:** The production structure refers to the technological equipment used for production. They are very expensive and African countries do not have the capacity to produce their own technology. They can only acquire the media equipment from developed countries. The exercise of political power can affect a country's media structure if such a country breaches international laws and is subsequently ostracized. Such ostracism could lead to refusal of the developed countries to trade with the offending country.

During the regime of General Sanni Abacha, Nigeria was given a pariah status with an indefinite suspension by the Commonwealth of Nations after the execution of Ken Saro-Wiwa and eight other Ogonis.

vi. **Distribution:** This is more prevalent in the broadcast media industry. The distribution of broadcast signals is determined by the cost of materials for distribution and geographical factors.

However, unlike developed countries where channels and frequencies are allocated on the basis of needs, distribution of channels in a country like Nigeria is carried out at times on the basis of political exigency.

This has left the private and state government owned media at a disadvantaged position in terms of area of coverage. The stronger channels VHF for television and SW (short wave) bands are reserved for federal government owned stations. The weak ones in terms of coverage such as UHF channels on television and mostly FM (frequency modulation) band on radio are allocated to state government and privately owned stations.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Identify three radio stations and three newspapers in Nigeria and state their ownership structure.

**Conclusion:** Media ownership is driven by economic and political factors among other things.

## **LECTURE 6: PRESS FREEDOM IN NIGERIA**

**Introduction:** Press freedom is practically the same thing with freedom of expression which many people believe is the mother of all freedoms. Press freedom connotes a free flow of information and the rights to disseminate information without hindrances whatsoever (Ate, 2008). The nature of the society determines the extent of press freedom it enjoys. For instance, the United States of America enjoys a reasonable degree of press freedom as it is enshrined in its constitution. The Saudi Arabia's constitution gives little room for press freedom while the Nigerian society gives freedom to the press and at the same time takes it away.

**Objective:** At the end of the lecture, you should be able to evaluate press freedom in Nigeria.

### **Constitutional Guarantees for Press Freedom**

The 1960 constitution provided under Section 24 for freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference. (Momoh, 2004:62). Momoh also observed:

Section 24 of the 1960 constitution became Section 25 of the Republican Constitution of 1963 and formed the major part of Section 38 of the 1989 Constitution, Section 40 of the 1995 draft constitution, and Section 39 of the 1999 Constitution.

Let us examine Section 39 of the 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria in full in order to appreciate constitutional guarantees for press freedom in Nigeria. It states as follows:

(1) Every person shall be entitled to freedom of expression, including freedom to hold opinions and to receive and impart ideas and information without interference.

(2) Without prejudice to the generality of subsection (1) of this section, every person shall be entitled to own, establish and operate any medium for the dissemination of information and opinions:

Provided that no person, other than the Government of the Federation or of a state or any other person or body authorized by the President on the fulfillment of conditions laid down by an Act of the National Assembly, shall own, establish or operate a television or wireless broadcasting station for any purpose whatsoever.

### **Limits to Press Freedom in Nigeria**

There is no absolute press freedom anywhere in the world. Nigeria which professes to have one of the freest press in Africa has a lot of limitations to press freedom. Sunday (2006) cited in Ate (2008) argued that press freedom is limited in the overall interest of the society by:

- The constitution
- The legislature
- The courts
- The government

It is contradictory to discover that the same constitution which guarantees press freedom takes away the same freedom it gives to media men. The 1999 constitution for instance, has given conditions for expression of freedom. According to this statute book, expression of freedom is subject to any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society.

Section 39(3) of the 1999 constitution states as follows:

(3) Nothing in this section shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society-

- (a) For the purpose of preventing the disclosure, of information received in confidence, maintaining the authority and independence of courts or regulating telephony, wireless broadcasting, television or the exhibition of cinematograph film; or
- (b) Imposing restrictions upon persons holding office under the Government of the Federation or of a State, members of the armed forces of the Federation or members of the Nigeria Police Force or other Government security services or agencies established by law.

Ate (2008) x-rays other limitations on the laws empowering the media/press freedom as chronicled by Momoh (2007:13-14):

Section 45(1) of the constitution provides as follows:

*“Nothing in sections 37,38,39,40 and 41 of the constitution shall invalidate any law that is reasonably justifiable in a democratic society:*

- (a) in the interest of defence, public safety, public order, public morality or public health; or*
- (b) for the purpose of protecting the rights and freedom of other persons.”*

2. The section that affects the media is section 39 which we already know guarantees freedom of expression and freedom to own, establish and operate a medium for imparting information, ideas and opinions to those who are willing to receive them. It is when we look at details of the limitations on the exercise of the freedom under section 39 we discover that media practitioners need to be more serious in investigating the mines that litter the road taken.

3. The media must therefore look at the various laws that have been promulgated in the interest of defence, public order, public morality or public health, and for the protection of the reputation of others. We will here look at the Criminal Code to point to the extent which the polity has gone in protecting itself against interests that may be opposed to public good.

4. Part 2 of chapters 2-10, for example, deals with offences against public order. They include:

- (a) Treason and certain other offences (secs 37-49)
- (b) Sedition and the importation of seditious or undesirable publications (secs 50-60). These include power to prohibit importation of publication (sec 58); publication of false news with intent to cause fear and alarm to public (59); and defamation of persons exercising sovereign authority over a state (sec 60).
- (c) Offences against the Executive or Legislative power (sec 61)

(d) Unlawful societies (sec 62-68)

(e) Unlawful assemblies (sec 69-88A) especially section 88A which deals with provoking breach of the peace by offensive publication.

(f) Offences against the administration of law and justice, and against public authority (sec 89-97) especially section 97 dealing with disclosure of official secrets.

(g) Corruption and abuse of office (sec 98-111). These provisions have been reinforced with the setting up of the Economic and Financial Crime Commission and the ICPC.

(h) Offences relating to the administration of justice (secs 113-133)

5. There are also provisions for punishing offences against public morality (secs 214-233A); and public health (secs 243-251).

6. The greatest danger the media faces today is coping with the protection which the laws give to those whose reputation has been called to question. Many media house do not fully appreciate the cost which neglect of this protection can cause the organisation in terms of payment of damages.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Identify the **give** and **takeaway** portions of press freedom in the 1999 Nigerian constitution.

**Conclusion:** There is no absolute press freedom anywhere in the world. However, civilized democracies and societies give more freedom to the media compare to timid and authoritarian societies.

## **LECTURE 7: CULTURE AND THE MASS MEDIA**

**Introduction:** Culture speaks volume of the society. It is the tissue and backbone of human existence. The media transmit and preserve culture from one generation to another by way of mandate.

**Objective:** At the end of the lecture, you should be able to define culture, evaluate its components and establish the relationship between culture and the mass media.

Culture is simply the totality of people's way of life. Sanderson (1988) defines culture as the total life ways characteristic of members of society including tools, knowledge and patterned ways of thinking and acting that are learned and shared and are not the direct product of

biological inheritance. Basically, culture has five characteristics – it is a system; it is diverse; it is shared; it is learned; and it is based on symbols. Culture according to Daramola (2005:64) is “an entity that is made of many parts.”

Rodney (1976:41) argues that culture embraces what people ate, and what they wore, the way they talked, the manner in which they treated their dead and greeted the new born.

Culture is the way and manner people socialize and go about their businesses. One of the popular definitions of culture endorsed by E.B Taylor and many Anthropologists and Sociologists is that culture is the complex whole of man’s acquisitions of knowledge, morals, beliefs, art, custom, technology, etc which are shared and transmitted from generation (Otite and Ogionwo, 1979:26).

With regards to Nigerian culture, Ate (2007:8) observed that the way Nigerians cook, speak, dance, sing and dress speak volumes of their culture. He maintains that culture encompasses values, mores, attitudes and people’s belief system. By way of features, culture is symbolic. It is learned, shared and integrated.

### **Components of Culture**

Basically, culture has two components. These are material and nonmaterial culture. Material culture has within its fold all the artifacts of the society e.g tools fashioned by man, shelter, clothing, weapons, etc. Non-material culture according to sociologists consists of ideas behind the making and transformation of material objects for the use of man. These include norms, values, belief system to mention only a few. Because non-material aspects of culture are mental creations, they are also referred to as psychological aspects of culture. (Okolocha *et al*, 1999:136).

### **Culture and the Mass Media**

Culture includes the language, the philosophy, the religion, the values and the ideologies to be found among the people. It also includes its science, its political beliefs, its moral codes, its forms of arts and recreation. Culture provides the basic form of the many ceremonies and rituals of social life such as wedding, funerals, greetings, etc (Daramola, 2005:54).

One of the functions of the mass media as identified by Harold Laswell in Sambe (1994) is preservation of cultural heritage from one generation to another. Based on that role, the mass media can be described as a preservative institution for all aspects of culture, whether material or non-material.

Sambe (2008:61) contends that the media have dominant and critical roles in shaping and re-shaping Nigerian cultures and norms. According to him, through their coverage of cultural festivals, traditional dances, exhibitions of local arts and crafts, folklore and vernacular discussion programmes on radio and television as well as publications in magazines, the mass media play a role in enforcement and transmission of culture. This role, he argued is heightened by the ability of the media to define, analyse and interpret issues in form of news, features, editorials and documentaries.

Culture, as earlier noted in this unit from the perspective of characteristics is learned, shared, integrated and symbolic. It is crucial to state that the mass media – Radio, TV, newspapers and magazines make the learning, sharing and integration of culture possible among people of diverse backgrounds irrespective of distance, race, sex and other variables.

The mass media also convey meanings in form of symbols to the relatively large, heterogeneous and anonymous audience simultaneously. In today's complex and large society, the mass media remains one of the fundamental tools to facilitate cultural and social change. Through the mass media, Africans are conversant with western customs, traditions and values and vice versa.

With the use of satellite broadcasting, the entire universe has become a global village and learning of people's way of life is being carried out on a daily basis. In the course of transmitting culture to other parts of the globe, the westerners who had the technology and buoyant economy often super-impose their cultures on developing nations or third world countries. This takes us to a very crucial issue of cultural imperialism by the media which shall be discussed later in the course of our study.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Discuss the role of the mass media in the cultural preservation of your community.

**Conclusion:** Mass communicators should harness and husband the cultural elements of their societies in the dissemination of information to the citizenry.

## **LECTURE 8: GLOBALISATION AND THE MASS MEDIA**

**Introduction:** The age in which we live is on the move. Ideas are on the move, money is on the move and people are on the move courtesy of globalisation. With globalisation, distance is dead, mobility is on the rise and simultaneity is also on the rise.

**Objective:** At the end of this lecture, you should be able to define globalisation, understand its effects and its link with the mass media.

Globalization is a term or concept that describes that growing worldwide interdependence of people and countries. The concept of globalization has been captured by Khor (2000:1) as the “defining process of the present age.” Through globalisation, the social, political and economic connections which cross-cut borders between countries decisively condition the fate of those living within each of them (Giddens, 1997:62).

### **Effects of Globalization**

Globalization as a concept according to Ate (2008) is like a fruit that has a sweet and bitter taste. It has been proved to be both useful and harmful. In a global community both luxury and poverty co-exist. On a positive side, proponents of globalisation believe that the concept has the potential of eradicating poverty in the 21st century. Globalisation can also help in propagating local and international cultures. Capturing the strength of globalisation, *Awake!* (2002:7) argues that “the ideas, news, money and technology have created a new global neighbourhood that can bring benefits.” Globalisation has also enriched some people and nations and has brought about unprecedented breakthroughs in the era of global communication.

On the negative perspective, globalisation has its own headaches. Even though, the concept can bring ultimate prosperity, it is argued that globalisation has an economic consequence of

widening the gap between the rich and the poor. While global wealth has undoubtedly increased under globalisation, it has become concentrated in fewer hands and few countries.

Statistics from *Awake!* (2007:7) show that the net worth of the 200 richest people on earth now exceeds the combined income of 40 percent of the people who live on the planet. The magazine argued that “while wages continue to rise in wealthy countries, 80 impoverished countries have actually seen decline in average income over the past ten years”. The economic globalisation, it is believed has been influenced by market forces, whose major interest is in nothing but profit. Summarizing the negative effects of globalisation, Khor (2000:1) states:

...the lack of tangible benefits to most developing countries from opening their economies, despite the well publicized claims of export and income gains; the economic losses and social dislocation that are being caused to many developing countries by rapid financial inequalities arising from globalisation and the perception that environmental, social and cultural problems have been made worse by the workings of the global freemarket economy.

Globalisation as an evil wind also promotes crime and terrorism. It also promotes diseases, viruses in no small measure among other things.

### **Globalization and the Media**

The mass media is a powerful tool of globalisation. Through newspapers, magazines, internet, TV, radio and other channels of communication, people across cultures, races can be connected for a common course. No wonder, with the miracle of technology in the present age, the entire world has become a global village. It is important to stress at this point, that the media as the mirror of the society promotes both the negative and positive aspects of globalization depending on the prevailing circumstances (Ate, 2008).

There is no gainsaying the fact that the exchange of ideas is an important characteristic of globalisation. *Awake!* (2007:7) reasoned that the internet symbolizes the inter-exchange of ideas in a global era. However, the magazine bemoaned the fact that the internet is not used to spread beneficial information, culture and commerce, some web sites “promotes pornography, racism or gambling”.

On the TV and films, *Awake!* (2007:7) states: Television and films have enormous influence on how people think. The messages on the world’s screens often come out of Hollywood, the world’s principal factory on make-belief. The values that this vast entertainment industry reflects often promote materialism, violence or immorality. They may be totally alien to the local culture of many countries of the world. Nevertheless, government, educators and parents invariably find it impossible to hold back the tide.

Through the mass media, radio, TV, newspapers, magazines etc, the impoverished people in developing nations for example, know how their rich counterpart in developed countries live. Such gross unfairness in the global neighbourhood, *Awake!* Observes, clearly “sows many seeds of unrest and frustration”.

Another dimension to look at the issue of globalisation is within the media context itself. This is the viewpoint some people describe as globalisation of the media. Here, the rich and the powerful nations of the world with robust economic and technological advantage dominate the media at the expense of poor countries. This domination gives rise to imbalance in the flow of information between the rich and the poor countries. To stem the imbalance, the new world information order- an international system of the production, distribution and consumption of information has been recommended by global community as a way forward (Ate, 2008).

The big four international news agencies- Reuters, American Associated Press (AP), United Press International and Agence France Press currently define news to the global community courtesy of globalisation technology.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Discuss the benefits and pains of globalisation with a particular emphasis on the mass media.

**Conclusion:** With globalisation, humanity is re-united communication wise, irrespective of place, race and gender.

## **LECTURE 9: THE MASS MEDIA AND OTHER AGENTS OF SOCIALISATION**

**Introduction:** The mass media is the mother of other agents of socialization. It connects other social agents and relays them to the society. It is therefore a connective tissue that serves other agents of socialization and the society in general.

**Objective:** At the end of the lecture, you should be able to evaluate agents of socialization and their relationship with the mass media.

Social institutions are establishments that tackle some basic problems or needs in the society. Such establishment of social organisations is put in place to guarantee an ordered social life. Social institutions according to Obeta (2003:77) are: the basic social organisations that regulate and organize most of the activities of individuals in society into definite organisational pattern in order to achieve the fundamental goals of societal life. Without social institutions, none of the perennial, basic problems of any society will be solved. Social institutions ensure that patterns of behaviour of individual members are regulated according to some definite, continuous and organized patterns. This regulation is upheld by norms and by sanctions which are legitimized by society.

### **Types of Social Institutions**

Obeta (2003:77-78) identifies the following types of social institutions:

- The Family and Kinship Institutions

This institution regulates behaviour patterns in the area of procreations, biological relations between individuals in society and the initial socialization of the new members of society. Daramola (2005:100) argues that the family pattern varies from society to society and that it is the basic institution that keeps the society going. He described the family as the primary social invention that shapes us into human beings. The family according to him, is characterize by common residents, economic cooperation, security, affection and care.

- Educational Institutions

Educational institutions deal with the socialization of the young into adults as well as the differential transmission of knowledge, values, attitudes, skills and other aspects of cultural heritage of society from one generation to another. It is an indisputable fact that education involves learning and socialization. Daramola (2005:112) sees education as a principal mechanism for developing human skills and knowledge. Education according to him ranks as one of the most important institutions in modern society today. Apart from the family, where the infant begins the learning process, he contends that education also offer another opportunity from three years of age to 20 or 30.

The educational institution, be it primary, secondary or tertiary according to him is concerned with the transmission and creation of culture. Cooper cited in Daramola (2005:115) identifies three categories of education. These are formal, informal and non-formal education.

- Economic Institution

The economic institution is central to the survival of society. It deals primarily with the production, distribution and consumption of goods and services.

- Political Institution

The political institution ensures that man is organized into political units. It deals with the control and the use of force within the society, and the maintenance of internal and external peace, as well as the mobilization of resources for the implementation of various goals etc.

- Legal Institution

This institution articulates and sets-up just laws that will guarantee justice, fairness and equity in order to ensure that there is order and peace in society. Laws may not change the ‘heart’, but they restrain the ‘heartless’.

- Religious Institution

Religious institutions deal with man’s relationship with his Creator.

- Health Institution

Health institutions performed a variety of health related functions that are aimed at satisfying the health needs of the members of the society.

- Others

There exist other institutions which deal with the differential distribution of positions, rewards, and resources and the access to them by the various individuals and groups within the society, etc.

### **Social Institutions and the Mass Media**

There are different agents of socialization in any given society. According to Daramola (2005:81), “man is not genetically programmed to live in the society. Rather, he has to learn the rules and codes necessary to make him function in a society.” He defines socialization as a process whereby the culture of a society in general or a social institutions in particular is transmitted to individuals.

The agents of socialization are the family, school, peer group, church/mosque and the mass media. An individual learns much from the family and other social forces that make acquisition of social knowledge and skills necessary for interactions of members of the society. In this unit, our major concern is on the mass media which makes social engineering possible for members of the society (Ate, 2008).

The mass media according to Ate (2008) are connecting tissues to other agents of socialization or social institutions. The media as an institution serve as a social interface between the society and other agents of socialization. While the family, peer group, the school, church/mosque cook norms, values, attitudes etc for the consumption of the society, the mass media as an institution assist in serving the tantalizing dishes to the tables of members of the society in a powerful manner. In Nigeria, for instance, the Nigerian Television Authority, NTA, has been linking or connecting families or friends to one another through its *News Line* programme.

The newspapers, through their letters to the editor column, have also been connecting members of different agents of socialization together. Daramola (2005:95-96) analyses the role of the mass media as a potent social force in the socialization business. He observes that the mass media are very powerful socializing agents as they reach large, heterogeneous and widely dispersed audiences. He contended that the mass media do not only teach the individual or public the norms and values of society, but also reinforce such norms and values. As political instruments

of socialization, Daramola further noted that the mass media can influence political beliefs and education of individuals.

**Assignment/Exercise:** Justify the assertion that the mass media is the mother of socialization institutions.

**Conclusion:** The mass media will continue to play a lead role in the socialization market square of humanity due to its multiplicity platform.

## **LECTURE 10: MEDIA PROFESSIONALISM**

**Introduction:** There are arguments and counter arguments on the position of the mass media as a profession and a vocation. While practitioners parades themselves as professionals other organized professionals tends to see the media as a vocation or a trade. This issue will be discussed in this lecture.

**Objective:** At the end of the lecture, you should be able to interrogate the concept of media professionalism.

The issue of professionalism of the media is another crucial thing that needs to be tackled here. The notion of professionalism has become a major ideological force of press management in the separation of news workers from fellow employees and the public (Hardt 2001, p.86). Situating media practice in Nigeria in the angle of professionalism is another area of divergent views. Talabi (undated, p.23) declared that “mass media profession does not qualify to be called profession if all parameters are taking into consideration - years of training, code of conduct, backed up by law, etc.” Contrastingly, Duyile (2011, p.5) insisted that “journalism is now a licenced profession. It takes guidance from professional codes of ethics to improve its own standards. It has disciplinary bodies like press councils which can suspend or authorize disbarment of erring journalists for unprofessional conduct.”

One understands and appreciates the veteran journalist’s (Duyile) passion for journalism in Nigeria but looking at the spirit, letters and holistic practice in the country, journalism is far from

being a profession. It is disoriented, underrated, demotivated, debased and disfigured by many forces – economic, political, cultural, etc.

Popoola (2018, p.25) recalled how he conducted a study on the performance of Nigerian press in political campaigns and contentions that characterized the presidential elections of 2003., 2007, 2011 and 2015 in Nigeria. His verdict: “In all these studies, the Nigerian press has engaged in intrigues, political backstabbing and unprofessional conducts which widened the gap of hatred and animosity among contestants for political power.” Suffice to say therefore that Nigerian media proprietors are presiding over a bunch of unprofessional who are indoctrinated to pursue political interest and bread and butter issues.

By personal experience as a journalist who practiced before moving into academics, I can testify that journalism is as jealous as the God of Israel in terms of taking the time of practitioners, but it has zero reward. By the time journalism is through with a person, he/she must have been used and abandoned. Things are gradually changing for good because of the convergent platforms we now have.

**Assignment/Exercise:** In your own opinion, establish whether journalism is a profession or a vocation.

**Conclusion:** Media professionalism is an evolving concept that will continue to stimulate the interest of professionals and scholars.