

MEDIA OWNERSHIP, FUNDING AND CHALLENGES:IMPLICATION FOR STATE OWNED MEDIA SURVIVAL IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study examines ownership, funding challenges and its implication for state media survival in Nigeria. The study adopted two research designs- survey and focus group discussion. The participants comprised of 66 registered journalists from Taraba State Broadcasting Service (TSBS) and Taraba Television (TTV). The researchers examined the entire population in order to totally eliminate sampling error. The instruments used for data collection were the questionnaire and the focus group. Sixty-six (66) questionnaires were distributed to the sampled population. Out of the sixty-six (66) questionnaires, sixty-two (62) questionnaires which constitute (94%) were answered correctly by the respondents, while two were not returned and three were not aptly answered hence rendered void. Furthermore, a focus group discussion was conducted on the 5th of November 2017 with six participants from each media station that forms the sampled population. The people who took part in the focus group discussion were reporters and other top management staff. The data collected were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Intrinsically, the data collected through the use of questionnaires were analysed via the 2016 Microsoft statistical package using simple frequency counts and percentage, presented in arithmetic tables. Also, the data collected from the focus group were analysed qualitatively and this involves an in-depth description of the participants' responses. The findings of this study established that government-owned media in Nigeria are currently in a very poor state economically, managerially, technologically and politically. In addition, misappropriation of the fund, shortage of staff, lack of modern/adequate equipment management, poor salary, inadequate funding and employment of non-professionals were discovered to be the major challenges affecting media outfits in Nigeria. In this view, this study suggests that under-funding, which is unfavourable to the operation of state-owned media should be avoided.

Keywords: *Funding; media challenges; Nigeria; ownership; Taraba.*

1. INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Research has indicated that media ownership in Nigeria started in private hands ever before government got interested in mass media. Reverend Henry Townsend, an Anglican missionary, established the first newspaper in Nigeria, IweIrohin in 1859. Other newspapers followed suit to tap the gains of the growing interest in reading and western education. Additionally, the urge for self-government spurred Nigerians to organize mass movements to challenge colonial repression. Mass media appeared as a second tool used to challenge colonialism (UKONU, 2005). Before 1992, the broadcast media in Nigeria have been under government ownership and control. This connotes that private broadcast media ownership was not legalized as at that time. The Decree 38 of the National Broadcasting Commission promulgated in 1992 during General Ibrahim Babangida's regime changed the history of broadcast media ownership in Nigeria as private ownership of radio and television was legalized.

Over the years, ownership and control of the media has been a thing of concern among communication scholars across the globe. This is because this phenomenon usually has an adverse effect on media content. McQuail claims that the media always reflect the involvement of those who finance them. He aptly captures that fundamental to the understanding of the media structures is the question of how the powers of ownership are exercised (MCQUAIL, 2010). The belief that ownership ultimately determines the nature of media is not just a Marxist theory, but virtually a common-sense axiom summed up in

Altschull's (1984) 'second law of journalism': 'the content of the media always reflects the interest of those who finance them.' As such, media ownership and control in Nigeria is now one of the burning topics in journalism practice because media owners, most specially the government always used the media as a megaphone to project their ideas even at the detriment of developmental issues. Amidst the current economic situation and the fluctuation in workers' salary funding of state-owned media in Nigeria has become problematic. This scenario stimulates media practitioners across the country to look for other means of survival in order to make ends meet and also to run their stations. It is obvious that government-owned media in Nigeria are currently in a very poor state both economically and managerially considering the present status of the political economy of the mass media.

Olube remarked that "the present state of government-owned media in Nigeria is deplorable and needs urgent attention of the government to improve upon its credibility." Unarguably, it will be sufficient to say that journalists in government-owned media in Nigeria are poorly remunerated (Olube, 2013). They are frequently handled as ordinary civil servants even when they risk their lives in the course of discharging their responsibilities. It is against this background that this study aims at x-raying media ownership, funding challenges and its implication on state median survival in Nigeria.

Statement of research problem

Currently, the only state-owned newspaper in Taraba state (Sunrise newspaper) is not working as a result of non-payment of staff salaries amongst other fund related challenges. In the same vein, the only state-owned radio station (*Taraba State Broadcasting Service, TSBS*) barely operates for good twenty-four hours daily while the state-owned television known as (*Taraba Television, TTV*) also has its own bitter experience. Suffice to say the state-owned media in Taraba state are bedevilled with challenges which range from the fund to other managerial issues. The findings of Olube's study conform to the aforesaid problems of government-owned media, which are economic, political, managerial and technological factors, which poses the difficulties experienced in

government-owned media. Thus, this work tries to probe into media ownership, funding challenges and its implications for state media survival in Taraba State, Nigeria (OLUBE, 2013).

Aim, objectives and article structure

The aim of this study is to examine ownership, funding challenges and its implication for state media survival in Nigeria. Intrinsically, the study is guided by the following objectives:

- To investigate if state-owned media are rightly financed by the government;
- To ascertain the problems peculiar to the government-owned media in Taraba State;
- To examine the effects of these problems on management staff and the public;
- To proffer solutions to these problems.

As set out in (Fig. 1), this paper is divided into five main sections describing the introduction and background; literature review and theoretical framework; methodology; data analysis; discussion, conclusion and recommendations.

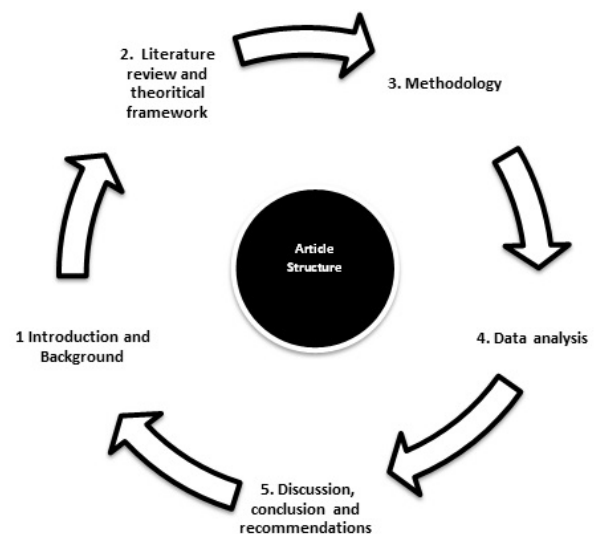


Fig. 1. Article structure

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Literature review

In recent decades, a growing body of research has established the nexus between media ownership, funding challenges and its implication for survival in Nigeria. For instance, Olube reported that inadequate support is one of the

major problems of government-owned media in Nigeria. He came to a conclusion that the deplorable condition of the government-owned media requires an urgent need by the government to improve upon its performers and credibility. In addition, he postulates that the present state of government-owned media in Nigeria is deplorable and requires the immediate attention of the government in order to enhance its performance and credibility (OLUBE, 2013).

Similarly, in a research study conducted by Nwanyanwu (2009) who examined the constraints on Journalistic practice in Government-owned media organizations in the South-South geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The researcher found that government officials and agents interfere with state-owned media operations; as such, they are made to seek to protect the government's interest at all times.

In a separate survey conducted by Eze, it was divulged that the involvement of the media owner directly and expressly affects the reportorial and broadcast style of the media. The study further argues that the media is grossly affected by the ownership factor and continued to hinder it from effectively performing its traditional functions to society (EZE, 2007).

Theoretical Framework: Media ownership theory

According to Muhammad, the media ownership theory was developed in 1984 by Altschul but was later on refined by Shoemaker and Reese in 1991. Altschul cited in Muhammad argues that "the content of the press is directly correlated with the interest of those who finance the press." The theory holds that the media have always been a reflection of the interest of their owners. For instance, Altschul contends that where a media organization is commercially owned, the contents will reflect the point of view of the news organization's owners or advertisers.

Muhammed holds that Shoemaker and Reese (1991) attempted to refine the media ownership theory. In his word, Shoemaker and Reese (1991) try to refine the theory and hold that the owners of a media organization have the ultimate power over the news content of the media. They argue that the main focus of a news organization owned by a publicly held corporation is to make profit,

and objectivity is considered as a means of drawing the reader's desire by advertisers. The theory also holds that the content of news is built into the economic objective of the company. Though in some rare cases, the owners may choose to make profit secondary to an ideological goal, such as promoting a particular agenda, the organization cannot indefinitely ignore the economic goal. Especially when stockholders own media houses, public service is usually sacrificed for the sake of profitability (MUHAMMAD, 2006).

McQuail (2010:191) postulate that media contents always reflect the interests of those who finance them. Not astonishingly, there are various kinds of ownership for the different media, and the powers of ownership can be practiced in different ways. As implied by Altschull's remark, it is not just ownership that matters. The wider question is who actually pays for the media product. Although there are media whose owners do personally pay for the privilege of influencing the content, most owners just want profit, and most media are financed from different sources.

The media ownership theory also holds that news organisations funded primarily by commercial sources are far more likely to use objectivity and newsworthiness as their principal standard in making news judgement. The reason, Shoemaker and Reese (1991) cited in Muhammad is that a commercial media is more responsive to its audience and advertisers. They also state that media which are financed by 'interest' sources are far less likely to place greater emphasis on objectivity and newsworthiness. Instead, their content is more likely to reflect the thinking of the special interest group, thus, Shoemaker and Mayfield explained "media content" is the product of the complex set of ideological forces held by those who fund the mass media" (MUHAMMAD, 2006).

The theory then points out the important role that ownership plays in a news media organisation; they argue that "although the news department may be organizationally buffered from the larger firm, content is still controlled indirectly through the hiring of promotional practices." The theory concludes by holding that ownership has become such a powerful force behind the media organisation that not only

editorial, columns and commentary, but the coverage of news and feature reflect the practical beliefs or interests of the owners.

As stated above, there is a large number of theories in the field of communication, but the rationale behind choosing the media ownership theory is not far-fetched from the fact that government-owned media in Taraba state and even in Nigeria at large always seek to promote the ideology and the image of the government whether admirable or dreadful. To put it another way, government-owned media in Nigeria are apparatus used for promoting government propaganda and ideology. The reason behind this nonchalant practice is due to the fact that these outfits are financed and managed by the government. Therefore, one could say that there is a link between the selected theory and the topic under investigation; hence this makes the theory relevant and suitable for this study.

3. METHODOLOGY

Research design

The aim of this study is to examine ownership, funding challenges and its implication for state media survival in Nigeria. To accomplish this, we employed a mixed method research design so that we can explore and explain the research problem. A mixed method, which includes qualitative and quantitative data, helps us to complement findings and triangulate, and in turn validate the data from different sources. Hence it is more likely to get a more convincing answer to a research problem (CRESWELL et al., 2003). Therefore, a survey (questionnaire) and a focus group discussion (see ANNEX) were adopted. According to Wimmer and Dominick (2000) cited in Jibril (2017), combining qualitative and quantitative method is regarded as triangulation (JIBRIL, 2017). Consistent with this notion, Asemah et al. claim that a single method can never adequately shed light on a phenomenon (ASEMAH et al., 2012). Hence, using multiple methods can help facilitate deeper understanding. In addition, this study used a qualitative study approach to support the quantitative method because we considered necessary to develop a context-based understanding of the individual experiences of the participants (STAKE, 2013).

Participant and study area

The participants of this study comprised of journalists from Taraba State Broadcasting Service (TSBS) and Taraba Television (TTV). These stations are located in the Capital of Taraba state which is Jalingo. Jalingo is a city in Northern Nigeria. It is the capital city of Taraba State and holds an estimated population of 1,118,000. It is located in the North Central part of Taraba state (see Fig 2). It is the busiest city in Taraba state as well as the only city that hosts a number of media houses (APUKE & APOLLOS, 2017). Due to these reasons, researchers deem it fit to study such area.

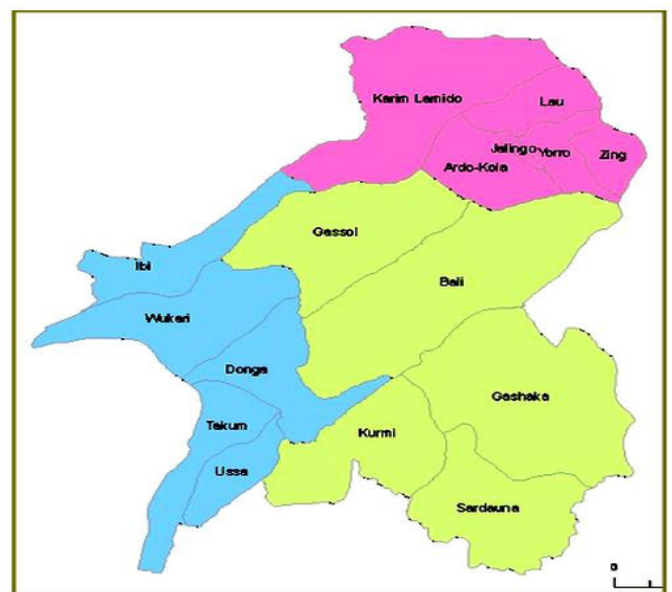


Fig.2. Map of Taraba depicting Jalingo at the top right corner highlighted in pink (APUKE & APOLLOS, 2017)

4. RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS, SAMPLING TECHNIQUE AND DATA COLLECTION

There is a total of 66 registered journalists in the Taraba State of Nigeria as documented by the Nigerian Union of Journalists, Taraba State Chapter. The researchers examined the whole population in order to totally eliminate sampling error. This sample determinism method is referred to as census sampling. The instruments used for data collection were the questionnaire and the focus group. The questions that were used in this study were entirely formed by the

researchers, however, questions from past studies (OLUBE, 2013; EZE 2007) were consulted. The authors modified the questions so as to fit into this present study’s objective. The questions were then examined by two experts in the field of communication. This was done in order to validate the questions, as such; the questions that were not completely relevant to the research objectives were expunged by the experts. Sixty-six (66) questionnaires were distributed to the sampled population. Out of the sixty-six (66) questionnaires, sixty-two (62) questionnaires which constitute (94%) were answered correctly by the respondents, while two were not returned and three were not aptly answered hence rendered void.

In order to get a deeper understanding of the ownership, funding challenges and its implication for media survival, a focus group discussion was conducted [on the 5th of November, 2017] with six (6) participants from each media station [TSBS and TTV] that form the sampled population. The focus group participants were selected based on their working experience. This selection process is called convenient/judgmental sampling (CRESWELL et al., 2003). It is believed that a media staff that has served for a longer period of time will have an in-depth understanding of the challenges confronting media operation in Nigeria and therefore it will provide a comprehensive answer to the questions raised. As a result, the focus group participants included reporters and other top management staff. A consent form was signed by each participant before the beginning of the focus group session. For the sake of anonymity, the participants were reassured that their names will not be employed in the concluding analysis. Therefore, the participants were identified using their focus group code (See Table 1 for the focus group participant’s profile). For example, TSBS 1 represents participant one from TSBS and TTV 5 represent participant 5 from TTV. Additionally, Table 1 shows that they were four (4) female and two (2) male, which make up three (3) management staff and three (3) reporters in TSBS focus group. While, in TTV they were four (4) male and two (2) female, which make up three (3) management staff and three (3) reporters in the focus group. All the focus group participants were 23 years and above.

Each focus group discussion (i.e. an audio tape discussion) lasted for about 60-90 minutes to complete. The discussion was conducted in two different sessions, one for each media outfit that forms the sampled population. The morning session discussion was conducted in Taraba State Broadcasting Service (TSBS), while the evening session was held in Taraba television. While the focus group session was ongoing, the lead investigator took notes, while the second and third investigators recorded the conversations. This note-taking enabled the authors to document the participant’s facial expressions such as a frown, head nodding and sighing.

Table 1. The focus group participants profile

Media House	Focus group number	Gender	Work category	Age Range
TSBS	TSBS 1	Female	Management staff	23 and above
	TSBS 2	Female	Reporter	
	TSBS 3	Male	Reporter	
	TSBS 4	Male	Management staff	
	TSBS 5	Female	Reporter	
	TSBS 6	Female	Management staff	
TTV	TTV 1	Male	Reporter	23 and above
	TTV 2	Female	Reporter	
	TTV 3	Male	Management staff	
	TTV 4	Female	Management staff	
	TTV 5	Male	Reporter	
	TTV 6	Male	Management staff	

Note:

Data analysis

We analysed quantitative data using descriptive statistics. This involves entering data into the 2016 Microsoft statistical package using simple frequency counts and percentage, presented in arithmetic tables and graphs. For qualitative data, we applied thematic analysis, which is coherent with the method adopted in similar prior studies (BRAUN & CLARKE, 2006; PARAJULI & DONEYS, 2017). The results from both data sources were used collectively to complement and expand the findings.

Presentation and analysis of data

The aim of this study was to examine ownership, funding challenges and its implication for state media survival in Nigeria. Therefore, the results are based on the objectives investigated and analysed which include inquiring if state-owned media are rightly financed by the government in Nigeria; the problems peculiar to the government-owned media the effects of this problem on management staff and the public; and the solutions to these problems.

Respondents' profile

Based on the data of the quantitative aspect of this present research, thirty-three (n=33) 53.2% were male; while twenty-nine (n=29) 46.7% were female. This means that there are more male than female in the quantitative sampled population. This finding disagrees with a study belonging to Nwammuo and Ekwugha (2013) who found that females comprised the bulk of media practitioners in their field (NWAMMUO & EKWUGHA, 2013).

In this present study, it was found that 29% of the respondents were within the age of 18 - 30 years(n=18), whereas 50% of the respondents fell under the age category of 31 - 40 years(n=31). A further 21% of the respondents aged between 46 - 60 years (n=13). This implies that the population is comprised solely of adults. Furthermore, 53% of the respondents were married (n=33) while 44% were single(n=27). However, 3% of the respondents were divorced(n=2). 13% of the respondents had GCE/SSCE(n=8). Holders of Diploma were 32%(n=20). HND/Bachelor degree holders were 55%(n=34) and 3% of the respondents were Masters' Degree holders(n=3). None of the respondents is a PhD holder representing 0% of the population. This implies that the bulk of the respondents had at least a diploma or degree qualification. Nwammuo and Ekwugha (2013) agree with these findings, as their study showed that 99% of media practitioners had tertiary education (NWAMMUO & EKWUGHA, 2013).

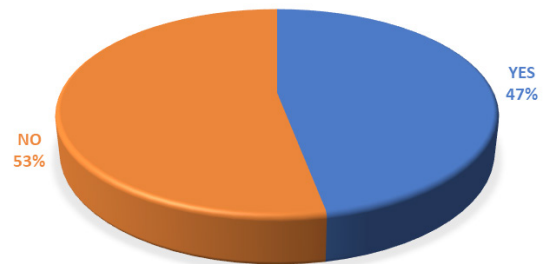
Inquiring if state-owned media are rightly financed by the government in Nigeria

Table 2 and Figure 2 show an inquiry from the participant's if the media they work for are rightly financed by the government in Nigeria.

Table 2. Is your media outfit rightly financed by the government?

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Yes	29	47
No	33	53
Total	62	100

Is your media outfit rightly financed by the government?



Source: Field Survey 2017

Fig. 3. Media outfit and government finance

It was found that 47% respondents divulged that their media outfits are rightly financed by the government (n=29), while, 53% of the respondents dispute the aforesaid assertion. (n=33) The implication of the above information is that the government doesn't give priority in funding state-owned media. This confirms Olube's findings (2013) who affirmed that government-owned media in Nigeria are faced with financial related challenges. This finding is consistent with the result of the focus group which demonstrates that most of the participants agreed that funding is a serious challenge bedevilling government-owned media. In his view, one of the participants said: "Government only released sufficient funds to our media station during electioneering campaign" [TTV 1]. This means that the government releases sufficient fund to media outfits whenever they intend to reach their political ambitions or gain favours from masses. Supporting this opinion, another respondent from TSBS remarks that "Government do not support our organization anymore, there are debilitated equipment and facilities all over our media outfit that requires a change" [TSBS 3]. Holding up to this notion, a reporter lamented that "As reporters, we are supposed to be sophisticated and equipped; however, we still use the

traditional method of information gathering. Other developed nations have moved into the usage of information communication technological equipment, yet, the government do not support to upgrade our organizational standard and this has weakened our effectiveness” [TTV 5]. These views suggest that state-owned media in Nigeria are not fully and rightly financed by the government.

Possible challenges of journalistic practice

Table 3 demonstrates the possible challenges that confront the journalistic practice in the studied media organizations. From the survey, it was found that 5% of the respondents concurred that misappropriation of the fund represents one of the journalistic challenges in their media outfit (n=3), while another 5% pinpoint the shortage of staff (n=5). Likewise, 3% of the respondents consider that the lack of modern/adequate equipment represents the major constraint in their media station (n=2). 5% of the respondents consider that the management is not given free hand as a constraint (n=3). Eight respondents (14%) share the view that poor salary represents a restraint.

Table 3. Which of the following do you perceive as possible challenges of journalistic practice in your media organisation?

<i>Responses</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage %</i>
Misappropriation of funds	3	5
Shortage of staff	5	8
Lack of modern / adequate equipment	2	3
Management hasn't given a free hand	3	5
Poor salary	8	13
Inadequate funding	5	8
Employment of non-professionals	11	18
All of the above	25	40
Total	62	100

Source: Field Survey 2017

Meanwhile, 8% of the respondents pinpointed inadequate funding as a constraint (n=5), 18% identify employment of non-professionals as a constraint (n=11), whereas 40% share the opinion that all the aforementioned challenges exist in their media organization (n=25). This confirms Nwanyanwu’s (2009) findings which claim that government-owned media are currently in a very poor state economically, managerially and otherwise.

The findings of this survey are similar to the results of the focus group discussion carried out. In the focus group discussion, it was revealed that the employment of non-professionals, insufficient funding, poor remuneration, absence and shortage of modern/adequate facilities, lack of staff, corruption and misappropriation of funds were the major constraints to state own media outfit and journalistic operation in Nigeria. One of the focus group participants remarked that “there are no modern facilities in our media organization and this has negatively affected the way we cover news reports. For example, we don’t do on the spot reporting because we do not have such equipment” [TSBS 1]. Another participant stated that “the employment of non-professionals is really affecting our media station, there is low output because some of the staff are not well-trained journalists” [TTV 1]. Sharing the same opinion, a management staff from TSBS likewise commented that “corruption and misappropriation of fund affect the productivity of our media organization. There are times whereby the government release the money, but the top politicians and management staff of our organization embezzle it” [TSBS 4].

The implication of this information connotes that government-owned media are bedevilled with numerous challenges ranging from misappropriation of fund, shortage of staff, lack of modern/adequate equipment, etc. This suggests that these challenges have a tendency of affecting the modus operandi of state-owned media outfits thereby having an implication on the survival of these outfits.

The effects of the above problems on management staff and the public

Table 4 inquires from the respondents whether the problems they identified affect management staff and the public.

Table 4. Does the problem identified above affect the contents of your programmes?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	39	63
No	20	32
Don't know	3	5
Total	62	100

Source: field survey, 2017

We found that 63% of the respondents acknowledge that the problems they identify in table 3 affect the contents of their programme(n=39), while 32% of the sample population were of the view that it doesn't touch on their programme content(n=20). Finally, three respondents which constitute (5%) were neutral. This information indicates that the programme contents of the sampled media stations were greatly influenced by the challenges they encounter which perhaps adversely affect their social responsibility functions. This result confirms with the finding of the focus group which shows that the highlighted problems confronting the media outlet affect their news content, productivity and growth. The focus group participants all agreed that without adequate financing no media house will flourish. Consistent with this view, one participant claimed that *"the problems confronting our media outfit affect both the staff and the public, the public are not being given timely news reports due to lack of adequate facilities and funding"* [TSBS 2]. Another respondent maintained that *"the shortage of staff puts so much pressure on us and this affects our productivity"* [TTV 6]. Supporting this view, a participant from the focus group also divulged that *"our programme contents are greatly influenced by the challenges we encounter which adversely affect our social responsibility roles"* [TSBS 3]. Consequently, another participant divulged that *"journalists from state-owned media have a tendency of resigning from their job whenever other bigger opportunities surface because they were not gratified with their job"* [TTV 3].

Table 5. Do your news stories seek to protect government interest at all times?

Responses	Frequency	Percentage %
Yes	35	56
No	24	39
Undecided	3	5
Total	62	100

Source: field survey, 2017

Do your news stories seek to protect government interest at all times?

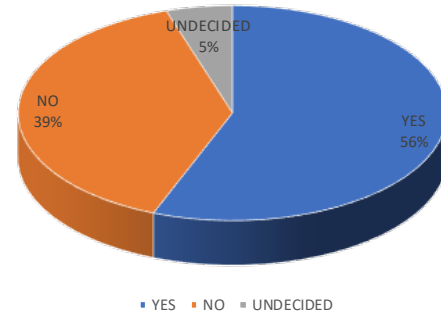


Fig. 3. Media stories protecting government interest

Table 5 and Figure 3 above confirm that thirty-five (n=35) (56%) respondents consider that their news stories seek to protect government interest at all time. Meanwhile, twenty-four respondents (n=24) (39%) held an opposing belief. Three (n=3) respondents (5%) were undecided whether their news stories seek to promote government interest at all time. The implication of the above information is that due to corruption and misappropriation of fund by the top management staff of the media outfits, state-owned media in Taraba state always seek to promote government interest even at the expense of misleading their audience. This suggests that the top officials try to cover up the government so that it will not checkmate the little money disburse to the media organization. This finding correlates to the theoretical framework upon which this study was built where Altschul cited in Muhammad (2006), in his media ownership theory, argues that *"the content of the press is directly correlated with the interest of those who finance the press."*

Confirming these findings, the focus group discussion revealed that the media outfit protects the government at the expense of the masses. This means that the media organizations lack objectivity when it comes to governmental reportage. In addition, the focus group data establishes that because the government mostly releases sufficient funds to media outfits whenever they intend to achieve their political ambitions or gain favour from the masses, the media outfit protects government interest at all times, so as to continue gaining the favour of the government, and this negatively influences their objectivity, balance and productivity.

How do you think funding related issues can be tackled in your media organisation?

This research question happens to be an open-ended inquiry. In answering this research question, most of the respondents were of the opinion that funding related challenges “*can be tackled through commercial news, advert, jingle, among others,*” while other respondents felt that funding related challenges can only be handled by the government. This is coherent with the result of the focus group. A participant in the focus claimed that “*it is only the government that can tackle the issue of funding; they need to checkmate whatever they do. They also need to provide adequate facilities and equipment to our media organization. I believe when this is done, it will boost the productivity of our media station*” [TSBS 6]. Another focus group member said that “*our media organization can raise funds for itself; we do not really need to depend on the government for every financial issue. Through good adverts and jingle, we can raise money to sustain ourselves*” [TTV 4].

Discussion, conclusion and recommendations

This study revealed that government’s owned media in Nigeria are bedevilled with a myriad of events. For example, a considerable quantity of the sampled population concurred that their media outfit were not rightly financed by the government. Likewise, some respondents highlighted the misappropriation of fund, the deficiency of modern equipment among others as the core challenges bedevil their media organization. This indicates that the state-owned media are not rightly financed by the government. Thirty-three (33) respondents which constitute fifty-five percent (55%) of the sample size concurred that their media outfit are not rightly financed by the government.

This work also reveals that state-owned media are financed based on the benefits the government gain from them. Thirty-five (35) respondents representing (56%) of the sample population were of the view that their media station is funded based on how effective they promote the government, and this is done mostly during political campaigns. This implies that the government does not give priority to funding state-owned media in Nigeria. This is consistent with Olube’s findings (2013) who claim that the

government-owned media in Nigeria are faced with financial related challenges. In the same vein, this result is consistent with the findings of the focus group discussion where most of the participants agreed that funding is a serious challenge bedevilling government-owned media. This means that the government releases sufficient funds to media outfits whenever they intend to reach their political ambitions or gain favour from the masses.

Additionally, the findings of this study reveal that misappropriation of the fund, shortage of staff, lack of modern /adequate equipment management, poor salary, inadequate funding, and employment of non-professionals are the major journalistic challenges in Nigerian media outfits. This confirms with Nwanyanwu’s(2009) findings, which established that government-owned media are currently in a very poor state economically, managerially and otherwise. Indeed, these challenges have a tendency of affecting the modus operandi of state-owned media outfits thereby having an implication on its survival.

This study also pointed out that the programme contents of the sampled media stations were greatly influenced by the challenges they encounter which adversely affects their social responsibility roles. Journalists from state-owned media have a tendency of resigning from their job whenever other bigger opportunities surface because they were not satisfied with their job. Furthermore, this survey divulged that most of the respondents claimed that fund related challenges “*can be tackled through commercial news, advert, jingle, among others.*” Most the respondents see sufficient funding from the government as the only panacea to fund related challenges.

Against this backdrop, it can be inferred that government-owned media in Nigeria are currently in a very poor state economically, managerially, technologically and politically. Suffice to say that the government needs to put in more effort to upgrade and improve the performance of the media. Funding is a requisite for executing developmental programmes like rural broadcasting or investigative reporting amongst others. Therefore, the government should clearly define the ways through which

these constraints will be efficiently and effectively curbed and this can only be achieved if the government puts forward the funds available, avoids politicizing appointments into the managerial cadre, does not dismiss the journalists who writing the truth and does not censor the activities of the journalists who have been trained to carry out their responsibilities. In view of the findings of this study, the following recommendations are suggested:

Government-owned media should be encouraged to embark on more ventures so as to yield revenue that they can rely on in times of difficulties.

- Funds should be adequately released at the right time.
- Under-funding is unfavourable to the operation of any state-owned media and should, therefore, be avoided.
- Out of date equipment should be replaced with modern broadcasting equipment in order to stand the challenges of modern broadcasting.
- The government should stop interfering with the editorial policies of its media outfits.

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ANNEX

Questionnaire and Focus group questions

Section (A) Demographic Data

1. Sex: (a) Male { } (b) Female { }
2. Age(a) 18-30 { } (b) 30-45 { } (c) 45-60 { } (d) 60 and above
3. Marital status (a) Married { } (b) Singled { } (c) Divorced { }
4. Qualification:(a) GCE/SSCE { } (b)ND/NCE { } (c) HND/Bachelor's Degree { } (d)MSc/MA { } (e) PhD{ } (f) others, specify _____
5. Kindly select your media outfits (a) TSBS Jalingo { } (b) TTV Jalingo { }
6. Kindly tick your department (a) news and current affairs (b) editorial (c) programmes (d) others specify _____

Section (B)

1. Is your media outfit rightly financed by the government?
(a) Yes { } (b) No { }
2. Which of the following do you perceive as possible challenges of journalistic practice in your media organisation??
(a) Misappropriation of fund { } (b) Shortage of staff { } (c) Lack of modern /adequate equipment { } (d) Management not given free hand { } (e) Poor salary { } (f) Inadequate funding { } (g) Employment of non-professionals { } (i) All of the above { }
3. Does the problem identified in (2) above affect the contents of your programmes?
(a) Yes { } (b) No { } (c) Don't Know { }

4. Is the funding of your media organization based on how effective you promote government activities? (a) Yes { } (b) No { } (c) Undecided { }
5. Which of these ways does the government control your media organization? (a) Funding { } (b) Setting up of editorial board { } (c) Prior censorship { } (d) All of the above { }
6. Do government officials/agents interfere with your operation? Yes { } No { } Undecided { }
7. Do your news stories seek to protect government interest at all times? Yes { } No { } Undecided { }
8. Do you think your media outfit is objective in its reportage? Yes { } No { } Undecided { }
9. Are you satisfied with your job? Yes { } No { }
10. How has the problem above affected you in person? Yes { } No { }
11. How do you think funding related issues can be tackle in your media organisation?

Focus group discussion questions

1. Is your media outfit rightly financed by the government?
2. Do the problems identified above affect the contents of your programmes?
3. Is the funding of your media organization based on how effective you promote government?
4. How does the government control your media organization?
5. Do government officials/agents interfere with your operation?
6. Do your news stories seek to protect government interest at all times?
7. Will you say your media organization is credible?
8. Are you satisfied with your job?
9. How has the problem above affected you in person?
10. How do you think funding related issues can be a tackle in your media organisation?