ANALYSIS OF MEDIA POLICIES IN NIGERIA AND GHANA

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Abstract

This paper underscores the importance of national communication policy in any nation. It examines the national mass communication policies in Nigeria and Ghana looking at the issue of ownership, content and funding and how it can be used to achieve development objectives of the Nations. It argues that national communication policies should be implemented to the letter especially in Nigeria. The paper recommends that a national communication policy should be formulated in accordance with the development priorities of the country.

KEY WORDS: Communication Policy, Media Policy, Development, Media, Nigeria, Ghana

INTRODUCTION

Gadzekpo (1997 p. 34) asserts that there is a correlation between communication and development needs. Citing Schramm (1964) he posits that there is a link between adequate flow of information and social change and development. In most African and developing countries, the importance of communication cannot be detached from independence in that the media was used as a tool of liberation from colonial masters. To harness the different media outlets in any country, there is need for a policy to guide the operations so that they can work towards a common goal. This underscores the importance of a national communication policy.

The basic purpose of a national communication policy according to Nnaemeka (1989 p.3) is using the mass media to achieve accelerated growth and transformation of the society, in different spheres and at different levels of national life. He further states that a deliberate and coherent mass communication policy is important for the media to play a distinguished role in the establishment and furtherance of a desirable new social order in post-Colonial Nigeria.

Anagnostou, Smith and Psychogiopoulou (2010) citing Des Freedman's formulation of media policy refers to it as the "formal as well as informal strategies, underpinned by specific interests, values and goals that shape the emergence of mechanisms designed to structure the direction of and behaviour in particularly media environments".

According to Lee (1976 p.33) UNESCO defines communication policy as "sets of principles and norms established to guide the behaviour of communication systems."

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