

PROBLEMS CONFRONTING GOVERNMENT OWNED MEDIA IN RIVERS STATE, NIGERIA

Friday Karttey Olube

Department of Mass Communication,
Rivers State University of Science and Technology,
Port Harcourt, NIGERIA.

okendu2014@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

The study aimed at identifying the problems confronting government owned media; A case study of Rivers Broadcasting corporation. This was necessitated by the current trend or poor performance in the government owned media. To identify these difficulties, two main sources of data were applied. The person-to-person survey was conducted for the administration of questionnaire. The person-to-person survey or interview was used to obtain verbal information while the questionnaires were used to obtain written responses. The findings of the study conforms to the problems of government owned media which are economically, politically, managerially and technological factors, which poses the difficulties experienced in government owned media. This study in view of the findings, recommended that government should strive harder to disassociate itself from the day to day running of the media, they should also fund the media adequately and regularly monitor the activities of management.

Keywords: Government media, management staffs, development

INTRODUCTION

The media is an energetic instrument for change and reconstruction as well as reformation, hence without information no society can function effectively. Nigeria as a developing nation needs a well structured and effective media to reshape and reconstruct its ideologies, living patterns and perception of events around us and act as checks and balances on the activities of the ruling class. Therefore, to achieve this, there is every need to restructure the media so as to improve its performance.

The media is a very important instrument in social reforms, and in the reconstruction of ideas and perceptions of events in the society. It is also regarded as the life-wire of the society which in the political arena, the media is seem as a very important tool to democratic government and a bane autocratic despots anywhere in the world. The media therefore constitute the channel through which information, ideal and news are disseminated to the general public. These channels include the newspaper, magazine, television, radio, posters, periodical etc. The media as a channel of mass communications is a well organized system of collecting and sending out information to the general public, this is most common with the broadcasting (radio), where its entire function is centred on the transmission of news, ideas and services. Radio as channels of communication play tremendous role in reforming, educating, enlightening, and entertaining as well as setting agenda for the people, with a severe limitation to the literate class of the society. Most activities and life-styles on exhibits today are shaped and fashioned by the mass media, through its diver's functions, some of which are to inform, educate, entertain, Lasswell (1964) and advertisement Wright (1973). Thought in performing these functions several factors affects its effectiveness. These factors may arise from distractions in the channels to the inability of the sender to effectively communicate to the intended listeners to established contact as well as paying serious

attention to the message being disseminated. Indeed, it is generally accepted that people live in a modern world of communication where one cannot exist without sharing ideas and information for the benefit of the society, be it traditional motion or modern. The current trends of social and political awareness throughout the globe and especially in Nigeria; the radio has become a vital instrument conveying the elements for reconstruction. For instance, during the struggle for Nigeria's independence, the mass media especially, that of radio was the organ through which the nationalist dreams and aspirations were actualized. This is apparent to the fact that, Nigeria did not achieve independence through the barrels of the gun compared to most African countries viz. Angola, Mozambique, Algeria etc. Again, during the third republic, the broadcasting media (radio) covered and reported detailed information regarding the political status of the country. It strived and effectively shaped the attitude and perception of Nigeria toward the issue at stake. Though in Nigeria most of the strong broadcasting media are owned and controlled by the government. With the control of most media by the government for instance, the radio, television, ministry of information, news Agency of Nigeria, voice of Nigeria. The government could at any point in time close down any media firm that proves stubborn, thereby disallowing the free expression of ideas and information. There are some private firms owned and operated by individuals seeking favour from the government, therefore introduced what is called self censorship, hindering freedom of expression as observed by one of the staff of radio Rivers, Emmanuel Bob-Hart. According to him "freedom of speech is no doubt the very foundation of every democratic society. For without free discussion, particularly political issues, on public education or enlightenments which are essential for the proper functioning and execution of the processes of responsible government cannot be possible". With some measure of control in the media by the government, the aim of achieving objective reporting as a base of every democratic society is defeated, in most government owned and controlled media in our society. It is also noticed that there is virtually poor performance in their general services in respect to news coverage, editorial policy etc. Infact, it is quite true that in recent times, government controlled media have sold out their place to the privately owned media because what end up in the government media are more or less pieces or propaganda presenting entirely only government views, where as the ills of that same government are censored out in the report. Most listeners, therefore, want to get the truth and where such does not exist in the government media; they turn to the private media which seem to be fairly unbiased. Therefore, an extensive study to review this current trend in government owned media by way of identifying those factors militating against its effective performance call for this research study. As a result, the various problems encounter by the media, especially those owned by the government, why they seem to be performing below standard in the present circumstance. This is why this project is being undertaken. Also the alarming rate at which government owned media are depreciating and becoming ineffective in their professional obligations, has indeed created concern in the minds of communication practitioners, scholars of mass communication and the society.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The media is a dynamic instrument for change and reconstruction as well as reformation hence without information no society can function effectively. Nigeria being a developing nation needs a well-structured and effective media to reshape and reconstruct its ideologies, living patterns and perception of events around us and act as checks and balances on the activities of the ruling class. To achieve the above, therefore there is every need to restructure the media so as to improve its performance. The inability of the government –owned media, like Radio Rivers Broadcasting Corporation to function effectively, its effect on the quality of

service delivery, news coverage, staff welfare, and organizational setup, needs to be investigated.

This study, therefore, will attempt to identify those problems that are common in government-owned media. It will look into how subjective reporting of events and how self censorship policy affects quality of service delivery.

This raise the questions of whether the employment of unqualified and in experienced staffs, lack of adequate equipment and poor maintenance due to lack of funds, could be responsible for the serious problems experienced by this media houses. This study, therefore will attempt to establish the impact of these problem on performance of the media houses.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

This study is designed to identify and address problems associated with government-owned broadcasting/media organization. Map out strategies through which these problems could be tackled in order to improve its performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

For the purpose of thorough investigation, the following research questions are asked:

1. What are the problems peculiar to the government owned media in Nigeria?
2. What are the effects of the problems on management staffs and the public?
3. What are the solutions of these problems?

HYPOTHESES: THEORETICAL FRAME WORK

This study follows the development of media theory as propounded by Me Quile (1987). This media theory was put forward as a means of paying for the unbalances in the development and information flow of the Third World countries and a solution to the technological problems that make the development of mass communication system difficult. One of such problems is the absence of communication infrastructure, the professional skills, the production and cultural resources and the available audience.

Development of media theory, therefore aimed at achieving.

1. The need for media to accomplish positive development effort in conformity with nationally established policy.
2. Freedom of the media geared towards, the development needs of the society.
3. Direct control and intervention of the state, justified in the interest of development of the state.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

There is a considerable need to point out possible problems that have bedevilled the government owned media and indeed the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation which has resulted in its poor performance in the recent times. Considering the value of the media in the social-political life of the people as compared to other agents of mass communication, it is most pertinent to study the problems confronting it. Furthermore, vibrant privately owned media establishments in the country not only pose great challenge to government owned media but seem to be winning.

The government owned media must be reshaped to stand the test of time, as the study intends to proffer solution to the envisaged problems. At the end of this study, the various factors hindering the smooth and effective performance of the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation

(Radio Rivers) especially in the socio-political atmosphere as well as managerial and technological set up will be identified. It is also expected that, this study will among other things produce results that will serve as useful to the Rivers State Government and indeed other government media on how best they could realize maximum benefits through effective restructuring and funding of the Radio Broadcasting station.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

This research study is aimed at finding solution to the problems encountered by Government owned media houses, using the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation as case study.

Hardly any research will ever be carried out without one form of problem or the other. This research study is not an exception. A lot of constraints are expected during the course of this study, among the constrains is the short period of time under which the study is to be conducted and finance.

Definition of Terms

For the purpose of this research work, the following terms will be defined to make them clear to users and readers of this project:

Government media

These are all channels of mass communication owned and controlled by the government. For this study, government media is taken as the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation known as Radio Rivers 99.1Fm stereo.

Technological problems

Those difficulties arising as a result of lack of technological facilities and skills.

Political Problems or interference

Difficulties arising as a result of government decision, policies and political interference in the operation and management of the Broadcasting station.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This chapter deals with review of related literatures on the topic under investigation, problems and prospects of government owned media, (a case study of Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation, Radio Rivers 99.1 Fm). Consequently the topic or the concept of the study shall also be reviewed under the following sub-headings:

The History of Early Radio

The Father of radio Guglielmo Marconi, Son of a wealthy Italian businessman and his Irish wife, had taken to reading scientific reports about the sending of signals through the air without wires, but unlike the early pioneers whom he studied, for example, James clerk Maxwell and' Heinrich hertz, the young Marconi was interested not in the theory of sending signals through the air but in actually doing it. His improvements over early experimental designs allowed him to send and receive telegraph code over distance as great as two (2) miles by 1896. His native Italy was not interested in his invention, so he used his mother's contacts in Great Britain to fine support and financing there. England, with a global empire and the world's largest navy and merchant fleets, was naturally interested in long distance wireless communication, with the financial and technical help of the British, Marconi successfully transmitted across the English Channel in 1899 and across the Atlantic in 1901. Wireless was now a reality. Marconi was satisfied with his advance, but other scientist saw the transmission of voices by wireless as the next hurdle, a challenge that was soon

surmounted. In 1903, a Reginald Fessenden, a 'Canadian invented the liquid barretter, the first audio device permitting reception of wireless voices. His 1906 Christmas Eve broadcasting from Brant Rock, a small new England coastal village, was the first public broadcast of voices and music. 1-us listeners were ships at sea and a few newspaper offices equipped to receive the transmission. Later that same year American lee Deforest invented the audion tube, a vacuum tube that improved and amplified wireless signals. Now the reliable transmission of clear voices and music was a reality, but Deforest's second important contribution was that he saw radio as a means of broadcasting. The early pioneers, Marconi included, had viewed radio as a device, for point to point communication. But in the 1907 prospectus for his radio company Deforest wrote, "It will be possible to distribute grand opera house by a radio television station on the roof to almost any dwelling in Greater New York vicinity. The same applies to large cities, church, music, lectures etc, can be spread abroad by the radio telephone". Some countless broadcasters went on the air, some broadcasters were giant corporations, looking to dominate the medium for profit; some were hobbyists and hams, playing with the medium for the sheer joy of it. There were so many station that voc reigned, yet the promised to mature until world war 1:

The Coming of Broadcasting

The idea of broadcasting that is, transmitting voices and music at great distances to a large number of people predated the development of radio. Alexander Graham Bill's telephone company had a subscription music services in major cities in the late 1 800s delivering music to homes and business by telephone wires. A front-page story in an 1877 edition of the New York daily graphs suggested the possibilities of broadcasting to its readers. The introduction of broadcasting to a mass audience was delayed in the first two decades of the 20th century by patent fight and law suit. Deforest and fessenden were both destroyed financially by the conflict. Yet when word war 1 ended, an enthusiastic audience awaited what had become, a much improved medium. In a series of developments that would be duplicated for television at the time of world wan 1, radio was transformed from an exciting technological idea into an entertainment and commercial giant. To aid the war effort, the government took over the patents relating to radio and continued to improve radio for military use. Thus, refinement and development of the technical aspect of radio continued throughout the war. On September 30, 1920, a Westing house executive, impressed with press accounts of the number of listeners who were picking up broadcasts from the garage radio station of company engineer frank Conrad, asked him to move his operation to the westing house factory and expand its power. Conrad did so, and on October 27, 1920, experimental station 8xk in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania received a license from the department of commerce to broadcast. On November 2nd this station, KDKA, made the first commercial radio broadcast, announcing the results of the presidential election that sent Warren G Harding to the white house.

The Establishment of the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation, Radio Rivers 99.1 Fm

Rivers State was one of the twelve states created in May, 1967 out of the then three former regional administrative structures as a fulfilment of the dreams and aspiration of the people. There was also a desire for the people to be kept duly informed of government activities, coupled with the events of the civil war which lasted for three (3) years. Consequently, the establishment of Rivers State broadcasting corporation came into existence through an Edit No.8 of September, 1973 under the leadership of Commander Alfred Diete-Speff (rtd). The primary purpose of the Radio station was to establish a means that will inform the people about the achievements and the activities of the government as well as creating social,

political and cultural awareness between and among the people of the state and the generality of Nigerians.

Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation like every other corporation has Board of Directors that oversees its affairs, the Board members were directly appointed by the governor of the state.

The power of the governor was stipulated in section 4 of the Edit that established the corporation. This section states that membership of the Board shall not be more than ten (10), comprising a chairman, a deputy chairman, an information officer of the ministry of information, a principal officer of the state ministry of justice, a general manager and Five other members. The board is vested with the power of making decisions, formulate policies and programmes for the corporation in line with laid down guideline of the Edit establishing the corporation.

Radio and Its Audiences

Radio has more than survived; it has prospered by changing e nature of its relationship with its audiences. The easiest way to understand this is to see pre-television radio as television is today, nationally oriented, broadcasting an array of recognizable entertainment program formats, populated by well-known stars and personalities and consumed primarily in the homes, typically with people setting round the set.

Post-television radio is local, fragmented, specialized, personal and mobile, whereas pretelevision radio was characterized by the big national networks; today's radio is dominated by formats, a particular sound characteristic of a local station. Who are the people, who make up radio's audience? in an average, 120 million people, 95% of all Nigerian, from 12years and above will listen to radio. Between the weekday hours of 6:00 and 10:00am, 81% of all 12years old and above will tune in. The majority of Nigerians, 60% get their first news of the day from the radio and the large majority of all listening, 83% occurs at homes.

Radio's audience, though is not growing. infact, it is declining. The annual MTV networks / Viacom study of media, entertainment and leisure time released in June, 2000 showed a sharp decline of radio listening among teens and young adults. Radio industry data also indicate a steady decline in listenership. The primary factor responsible for this loss of audience according to the radio industry the availability of home and foreign movies, online music, listener's dissatisfaction with unimaginative programming and hyper commercialization.

Radio as an Advertisement Medium

Advertisers enjoy the specialization of radio because it gives them access to homogeneous groups of listeners to who products can be pitched. Since the entrenchment of specialized formats, there has not been a year in which annual billings -naira earned from the sale of airtime. Advertiser buys local time, national spots and network time. The cost of time is based on the rating. Radio becomes an attractive advertising medium for reason other than its delivery of a homogeneous audience. Radio advertisement is inexpensive to produce, and therefore can be changed, updated and spcialized to meet specific audience demands.

Advertisement can also be specialized to different times of the day. For instance, a fast food restaurant may have one version of its commercial for the morning audience, in which its breakfast menu is touted, and a different version for the evening audience driving home, dreading the thought of cooking dinner. Radio' time is not expensive to buy especially when compared to television. An audience loyal to a specific format station is presumably loyal to those who advertise on it.

Problems of Government-Owned Media

The media (radio) is a very important instrument for change and reconstruction as well as reformation, hence, without adequate information no society can function effectively. Nigeria as a developing nation needs a well structured and effective radio broadcasting system to reshape and reconstructs its ideologies, living patterns and perception of events around as an act as checks and balance on the activities of the ruling class. Therefore to achieve this, there is every need to identify the problems that effects the performance of government owned media.

The deputy director of administration (2007), in his view posit that, despite the efforts put in the Rivers State Broadcasting corporation to be on a sound footing, external detractors had continued to 'play foul' against the best intensions of the corporation. He wondered why some top government officials should continue to interfere with the commandments of the edit that empowered the Broadcasting Corporation to say the truth without or favour. He further explained that, inspite of all efforts and splendid motive to ensure that the establishment becomes beneficial to the government and people of the state; there have been certain elements who have stoutly become opposed to the goodwill of the board. According to Bon Woke (2007), for any editorial vision of any Broadcasting firm to perform its duties effectively, it must be free from administrative 'Red-tapism' and external influence. The malpractices of the corporation ranges from smuggling out of news tape by members of staff in the corporation to the wealthy in society who fell threatened with the content. He also opined that, if there will be efficiency in the conduct of the corporation's business in the State, then government should privatize or turn the corporation into limited liability company.

Another problem facing government-owned media according to Woke (2007) is their inability to venture into other business and activities which they can fall back on when their broadcast do not make profits. He pointed out that, if the broadcasting organization is to service, it will need to delude into other profitable ventures. He also observed that it was necessary for the state owned media to work harder to generate its own income from other sources other than depending on government source. Woke, in his view stated that, government had never at any point in time allowed the media she owns and control to map out ways to enhance profitability and reliability in the broadcasting industry, stressing that they have seriously embarked on high censorship policy. Government gives instruction to its media on which news item to carry and the advert to be used along with them.

Another problem encountered by the government owned media is the derail of advertisement which serves as a major source of revenue to the media. It is hardly or difficult to see any government owned Broadcasting Corporation especially radio 99.1 Fm allotting much air time to advertisement. This has led to the inability of government owned broadcasting firms to pay staff salaries, maintenance of existing facilities, even acquiring new ones. This has observed by Woke, that the Federal government issues a directive that only its broadcasting firms should be used for advertisement, with effect from the date it was taped; All advertisement by ministries and other public institutions should be limited to a maximum of two national dailies and gazette:

Another problem encountered by government owned media that affects its performance, is poor and unattractive condition of service. The broadcasting commission had directed all ministries of information in the country to make every possible effort to induce attractive service condition to motivate workers to stay in the service through accelerated promotion, regular payment of salaries and allowances, etc. Roy expressed regret that field information officers in the ministry of information had been exposed to very unattractive service conditions for too long. This had led to the exodus of the ministry's trained broadcasters to

other media houses. In order to improve upon the performance, Yenik advised that, the ministry's promotion Board should allow ability to out strip long years of service in its decision, affecting issues on promotion and in service training courses in the ministry. A part from this, government owned media are also confronted with the problem of finance. This is true, based on a statement made by Professor Godwin Oderugwe in a press interview with Cyril Stober on NTA National News in 1999. According to them, the broadcasting corporation owned by different states government is facing financial crises. They noted that before this situation arises, something must be wrong with the broadcasting management or how else can one explain the difficult time the broadcasting firm was passing through. They also condemned the editorial policy of the corporation which according to them, is incompatible with the role government wants it to play.

In 2007, Deputy Director Administration recounted how one broadcasting corporation was in a dilemma over whom to finance and sponsor it. There was no board chairman and directors to budget on which to operate, no one to be responsible to. Under such uncertain situation salaries of workers were very difficult to be paid. In spite of the prevailing circumstance, there was yet another serious problem facing government owned media, shortage of staff. Wiwa stated, we are so over stretched with a difficult future. Since there was no solid arrangement to convert the former NBC station into the FRCN, there is acute and inadequate staff strength. Consequently, as a result of excessive control of the government over its media, the available staffs has relented to put in their best to improve the establishment knowing quite well that after revamping the corporation the resultant effect of losing their job is very imminent. Termination of staffs appointment by government is another problem faced in government owned media. In the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation, one its news editor was sacked, for allegedly reading a news commentary that was unfavourable to the whims of the Rivers State Government. Wiwa also noted that in 1959, an editor of a government owned Radio in Kaduna State Mr. Charles was asked to resign or face dismissal for criticizing the amount to be spending to build Kaduna State House, where the primer was to use as his official residence. Mr. Charles Criticism on the government was seen by the executive arm of the government as bitter and unacceptable from a government financed broadcasting station. Since then, the news editors of government owned broadcasting corporations have become political news editors or the party in power. Amehule (2007), in his view observed that, government owned Medias has the problem of fund embezzlement.

He noted that, the Federal government sacked the management of its broadcasting corporation as a step to resuscitate the firm which according to him suspended activities for some time due to embezzlement of fund meant for the corporation. Amehule, also observed that, the problems facing broadcasting corporation especially those owned and controlled by the government both at the state and federal levels was those of Bad management and loss of credibility. He argued that no one should blame the Listerine's for abandoning government owned broadcasting media when all (they) get for their hard-earned money are some information's that had better be in some ministry's notice board. It has been shown that the media owned by the government tend to become mere government megaphones and correlating parts of that environment and transmitting culture, which he says are the basic tacks of the media or providing entertainment. According to him the media was turned into indispensable tools for retaining power by those controlling them. He also explained how, the media was used in the communist countries as mere government mouth piece. In the same vein, he has given a vivid account of how authoritarian British Monarchs countered the media into a self-souring instrument during the 6th and 17th centuries. According to Amehule, "media in Africa have turned into slavish and almost sycophantic government megaphone. He also contended that the African broadcasting corporations which were in the vanguard of

the nationalist struggle for independence, now have relatively less freedom to say anything and has almost been engulfed by the government leading to poor performance and noncompliance to the ethics of the profession. This directive on events being broadcasted is necessitated by some obnoxious decrees and laws. For instance, it is noted that even when there were problems and effort are made to correct the mistakes, it did not help matters much with the media as is further gave excessive power to the minister of information to give specific or general directives for operation and also to influence all appointments of the corporation. Wiwa, in expressing his views said; The British and the American ownership and control of the media and indeed their system which we cherish and copy allow for liberal ownership of the electronic media, no doubt the monopoly enjoyed by government electronic media in this country is dangerously affecting their standards and extension, standards of such professionalism, decentralization of such ownership will not only create an employment for growing broadcasting, it will also generate health revelry which will in turn lead to improved performance. With the chains of restraint unleashed by the government on the media especially in the developing countries were unenlightened minds, rules and the ruled also are on the mere, the media will suffer. Tony Ochiaha of the ministry of information in 1998 noted that; the public information services should also be adequately equipped to project good and fine images of the country to the outside world. It has also been assured that the interest of the nation is what the government does, and the media have had difficult time raising questions about government actions, at the same time appearing to be working against the national and the state interest.

Ochiaha (1998) has also noted that, those who know the ownership structure of the media by the government cannot be sure that, the points of views of ministry politicians will receive fair attention in government owned, financed and sponsored media.

Another factor, that act as a problem facing government owned media is the employment of non- professionals into the corporation this is a true fact, because in most of government owned corporation especially Rivers State broadcasting corporation, non-professionals in the field were employed. Government official influence the employment process by allowing non-professional into the system, there by resulting to ineffective and inefficient performance.

SUMMARY

In reporting and interpreting the environment from an African orientation, the media must insist on autonomy based on integrity. This is a very delicate matter because within the media establishment and outside, there is forces whose action tends to contradict or erode the ideas of autonomy. This should be a situation where the media based on its own decision as to what is best under the given circumstances engaged in action of a particular kind. The Nigerian media must be allowed by whatever government that controls it to make autonomous choices in matters within their professional competence. The state government exerted a kind of political pressure on its owned media to disseminate what it preferred and not what the people wanted to know. The executive power on the media are common in this part of the world, for instance, the radio stations were subjected to many pressures from the government as well as miniaturist. As a result of this factor each radio station in every state becomes the government's house organ.

The major characteristic was to dishing out broadcast as dictated by the leaders of the ruling party. In some cases, the radio was tagged, government mouth pieces. The government in power uses the media it controls to disunite the masses rather than using this medium of mass appeal to build up a lasting unity among their people.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of this chapter is to present sequentially, the procedures used in collecting, and analyzing and interpreting information for the study. The methods involved in this chapter are the research design, research population, sample/sampling technique, instrument for data collection, validity of the instrument, method of data collection and data analysis technique.

Design of the Study

For the purpose of this research study, a survey research design was used to examine the problems and prospects of management of public corporation, (a case study of Rivers State broadcasting corporation). In the course of carrying out the person to person survey, interviews were conducted. During the interview, care was taken to ask simple, short and non-threatening questions that were easy to understand and would elicit co-operation from interviewees. Before the interview proper, the researcher first and foremost introduced himself by way of making himself familiar to the respondent through what is called ice-breaking technique, where the researcher acquaint himself with the situation which pave way for a relaxed atmosphere.

Population of the Study

The population of this study is made up to two hundred and fifty (250) employees in the corporation, out of which fifty (50) employees are serious staffs, 80 employees were junior staff while 120 employees were labourers, security officers, drivers etc.

Sample/Sampling Techniques

A sample of 50 employees was selected out of the 250 employees that made up the population of the study. The random sampling technique was adopted in selecting this sample size. Thus all the employees in the corporation were given equal chances of being selected.

SOURCES of DATA COLLECTION

In carrying out this study, data were basically collected from two main sources namely, primary and secondary source.

Primary sources of data collection

Primary data were obtained through the formulation, structuring and administration of questionnaire within the sample location. This exercise provided the opportunity for easy gathering of information. Another primary source of data is through interviews. Interviews were conducted with key officers within the sample location.

Secondary source

In this source data was obtained from materials, which have been preciously documented, such documents were obtained from the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation, research works of other scholars and from library.

INSTRUMENTATION

Close ended/structured questionnaire was designed for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into two sections; section one deal with the background information about the respondents, namely; status, sex, age, education qualification, working experiences, and department. Section two deals with the stating of the actual questions concerning the problems of government owned media. Questions 1-4 respondents were ask to tick or mark in

the bracket while in question 5 respondents are to state what they think are the problems faced by government-owned media.

Validation of the Instrument

Validity of the instrument will be on the facial value of the questionnaire. It will be scrutinized and evaluated by the project supervisor before administration.

Administration of the Instrument

The questionnaire was collected and administered by the researcher to the various departments in the corporation and the populace. Retrieved within three to four days of administration.

Data Analysis Technique

The simple percentage approach was used in analyzing the data; items in the questionnaires relating to each research question were grouped together and their percentage found therefore, to find the simple percentage, the following formula would be used by placing to total number of persons who respond positively or negatively (yes or no), over the total number of person who responded to a particular question and multiply by 100.

The above explanation can be equated thus:

TR = Total number of respondents
Y = Positive responses (yes) N = Negative responses (no)
N = Value of percentage

The positive responses in the questionnaire is the strongly agree and agree, which the negative responses represents, strongly disagree and disagree.

Positive Value of Percentage

$$Y = \frac{Y}{TR} \times 100 / 1$$

Negative value of percentage

$$N = \frac{N}{TR} \times 100 / 1$$

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS, AND DISCUSSION FINDINGS

This chapter will focus on the analysis of the data. The analysis focused on the two sections of the questionnaire, section one deals with respondents' background information while section two dealt with response from respondents on the different questions.

Demographic Data

Background information of respondents as outlined in section one of the questionnaires include, age, sex, qualification, department, working experience and status.

Table 4.0 Age Distribution

<i>Age</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
21-27	15	30%
28-34	10	20%
35-40	10	20%
41-47	7	14%
48-54	8	16%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

Fifteen respondents representing 50% were between the ages of 21 to 27, ten respondents representing 20% were between the ages of 28 to 34, another ten respondents represent 20% were between the ages of 35 to 40, seven respondents representing 14% were between the ages of 41 to 47, while eight respondents representing 16% were between the ages of 48 to 54

Table 4.1 Sex Distribution

<i>Sex</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	32	64%
Female	18	6%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

Out of the fifty questionnaires distributed and retrieved successful, 32 respondents were male while 18 respondents were female.

Table 4.2 Educational Qualification

<i>Educational</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
W.A.S.C	8	16
Diploma	12	24
B.Sc	17	34%
M.Sc	9	18%
Ph.D	4	8%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

Of the fifty (50) successfully retrieved questionnaires, it was observed that eight (8) respondents have the West African schools certificate, representing 16%, 17 respondents representing 34% were B.Sc holders, 12 respondents out of the fifty respondents were diploma degree holders representing 24%, 9 of the respondents were master (M.Sc) holders while 4 respondents were Ph.D holders representing 8%.

Table 4.3 Departmental Distribution

<i>Department</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Editorial	19	35%
Programs	18	36%
New & Current Affairs	13	26%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

Nineteen (19) respondents representing 35% works in the editorial department; eighteen in the programs department while thirteen works in the news and current affairs department of the establishment.

Table 4.4 Working Experience Distribution

<i>Experience</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
5-10 Years	27	54%
10-15 Years	12	24%
15-20 Years	6	12%
20-25 Years	4	8%
25-30 Years	1	2%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

In the area of work experience twenty seven (27) respondents representing 54% of the total response worked between the periods of five to ten years (5-10). Twelve respondents representing 24% worked between the periods of 10-15 years; while six of the respondents representing 12% worked between the periods of 15-20 years. Four of the total respondents representing 8% worked between the period of 20 -25 years.

Table 4.5 Status Distribution

<i>Status</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Reporters	15	30%
Editors	10	20%
Management Staffs	20	40%
Commercials	5	10%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

The analysis above showed that, of the fifty (50) successfully retrieved questionnaires, fifteen representing 30% are reporters, ten representing 20% are editors, twenty representing 40% are management staffs while five representing 10% works in the commercial department of the establishment.

The analysis of the problems of government owned media, which respondents had tested, yielded the following results and findings.

Research Question One

Which among the followings, do you think is a problem of the government owned media? Respondents were asked to choose from among the under listed options.

Table 4.6 Research Question One

<i>Option</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Misappropriation Of Fund	8	16%
Shortage Of Staff	7	14%
Employment Of Non-Professionals	10	20%
No Adequate Staff Promotion	5	10%
Management Are Not Given Freehand To Run The Media	20	40%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

The above table showed that eight respondents representing 16% responded that the government owned media has a problem of misappropriation of fund; seven respondents of the totals respondents, says government owned media has the problem of shortage of staff, ten respondents representing 20% responded that government owned media has the problem of employment of non- professionals, while five respondents responded, that the problem of government owned media was lack of adequate staff promoting; twenty of the respondents representing 40% agreed that the problem of government owned media was that management was not given the freehand to run the media establishment.

Research Question Two

Which also among the following do you think is not a problem of government owned media?

Table 4.7 Research Question Two

<i>Option</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Lack Of Adequate Funding	28	56%
Poor Salary Scale	6	12%
Lack Of Advertisement In Government Owned Media	12	24%
Utilization Of The Corporation Fund.	4	8%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

The above table showed that twenty eight respondents representing 56% responded that the media has a problem of lack of adequate funding, six respondents representing 12% responded that the media has a problem of poor salary scale, while twelve respondents says the media has lack of advertisement as a problem; four of the respondents representing 8% responded that the media has a problem of improper management and utilization of corporation fund.

Research Question Three

What are the solutions to these problems?

Table 4.8 Research Question Three

<i>Option</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Is Tegument Change Of Government A Problem Of Government Owned Media?	24	48%
Is Government Interference In The Day Today Running Of The Media A Problem	16	32%
Art Obnoxious Government Laws And Policies A Problem Of The Media	10	20
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

The table above showed that twenty four respondents representing 48% responded that frequent change of government was a problem of government owned media, sixteen respondents representing 32% responded that government interference in the day to day running of the media was a problem of the government owned media, while ten respondents responded that government laws and policies was a problem of government owned media.

Research Question Four

Respondents were asked thus: Do you agree that the following items are problems of government owned media?

Table 4.9 Research Question Four

<i>Option</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Lack Of Adequate Facilities	26	52%
Lack Of Proper Maintenance Of Facilities	18	36%
Use Of Out Dated Machines	6	12%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

Responding to this option, the above table showed that twenty six respondents representing 52% responded that the government owned media has the problem of lack of adequate facilities, eighteen respondents representing 36% responded that the media has the problem of lack of proper maintenance of facilities, while six respondents representing 12% responded that the use of out dated machines was a problem of the government owned media.

Research Question Five

The last question was an open ended question, where respondents generates their own as were with respect to the various problem encountered by government owned media. The question states thus: in your own view what do you think are the other problem of government owned media?

Table 4.10 Research Question Five

<i>Option</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Economic, Managerial And Political Factors	27	54%
Technical, Managerial And Financial	18	36%
No Answer	5	10%
<i>Total</i>	50	100%

The table above shows that twenty seven respondents representing 54% listed economic, managerial and political factors as some of the problems of government owned media, eighteen respondents representing 36% sees technical, managerial and financial factors as a problem while five respondents did not provide any answer to the question.

SUMMARY

Consequently, of the individuals interviews and the responses got from the questionnaires, the problems of government owned media as enumerated, include political, economic, managerial, technical as well as worker's attitude to work as some of the problems encountered. The results of the findings are base on response obtained from staff of the broadcasting corporation in Port Harcourt. In view of the findings, this study therefore strongly highlights.

- a. Managerial
- b. Economic
- c. Political and
- d. Technological factors as problems encountered by government owned media.

On the managerial problems of government owned media, these findings agreed with those of Ameahule (2007) when he said, that "the problem of government owned media was as a result of managerial factors". Ameahule stated, that "The problems of the Broadcasting, especially those owned and controlled by the government both at the state and federal levels were those of bad management and loss of credibility". Similarly, Ameahule (2007) observed that the federal government sacked the management of its broadcasting firm as a first step to resuscitate the firm, in view of fund embezzlement levelled against the management.

As regards the second problems, this finding confirm with that of Bon Woke (2007) which stated respectively that political factors was one of the problems of government owned media. He also noted that despite genuine efforts to put the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation into proper function continued to play foul against the best intension of the corporation as well as staff of the broadcasting corporation was sacked by the state government because he was alleged to have reported a news story that was unfavourable to the whims of the state government. This finding also agree with those of Wiwe and Woke which collectively stated that one of the problems of government owned media was as a result of economic factors. This study therefore, supported the hypothesis that the problems of government owned media was due to managerial, economic, political and technological factors.

CONCLUSION

The present state of government owned media in Nigeria is deplorable and needs urgent attention by the government to improve upon its performance and credibility. From the finding, it was observed that government owned media are currently in a very poor state economically, managerially etc. Although, government has tried on its own way to upgrade and improve the performance of the media by tacking most of the named problems, all its efforts has not helped the situation. What is expected of the government is to define clearly those ways through which these problems can be efficiently and effectively tackled. This should be done by properly making budgetary allocation to the media to solve most of the difficulties experienced. Adequate technological facilities should be provided to enhance high performance and credibility.

RECOMMENDATION

The following recommendations are suggested. It is believed that if these recommendations are carefully implemented, the problems of government owned media would be solved in no distant time and as such would help to improve upon its performance especially those having and sharing similar characteristics with the Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation.

1. Government should review any existing laws and decrees that threaten the continued existence and stability as well as viability of the media, most especially those media it owned.
2. Modern technological know-how should be introduced into the Broadcasting Corporation.
3. Government owned media should be encouraged to embark on more venture to enable such media yield revenue that the corporation can rely on in times of difficulties.
4. Government should give free-hand to management of the corporation to manage the affairs of the corporation.
5. Funds should be adequately disbursed to the corporation and as at when due.

SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDY

In view of the limitation of this study, further study should be made into the areas of finding solutions to the different problems outlined in this study, it is ideal that since, the problems has been identified, ways of solving them should be made known so as to actualize the objective of the different government owned media in the country and that of Rivers State Broadcasting Corporation in particular.

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