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MASS MEDIA AND THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP CAMPAIGNS OF BUHARI- LED ADMINISTRATION BETWEEN 2015-2019

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ABSTRACT

The influence of the mass media in making sure that the public are well informed, educated and mobilized towards active participation in government action plans cannot be over emphasized, especially, several government initiated programs were successful due to the active involvement of the mass media. It is on this premise that this study investigated the role of the mass media in the Nigerian government entrepreneurship campaigns. The study x-rayed previous government campaigns with particular reference to the current Buhari led government entrepreneurship programs. The paper utilized secondary sources- library, archives, textbooks, journals and desk study-respectively. The study found out that the Nigerian mass media over the years remained one of the credible, reliable and consistent institutions known for public enlightenment role towards national programmes and policies. It also revealed that successes of government initiatives like the entrepreneurship campaign usually depend on the mass media responsibilities of education, entertainment and agenda-setting of the society. The study concluded that no matter how loud a government programme may be, there is need for the government to align with the mass media for their mobilization messages. The papers recommended that in a bid to reach the grassroots on the entrepreneurship campaign, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) must encourage the establishment of community and rural radio in the country, special strategies must be designed in this regards, government should be sincere to implement entrepreneurship initiative policies and government should step up actions on loans and adequately monitor the disbursement of fund to the would- be young entrepreneurs through the appropriate financial institutions.

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INTRODUCTION

Today, there are increasing worries over whether the mass media are living up to their responsibility to the society or not. In as much as virtually media scholars agree that the press can facilitate rapid national development, the mass media still have important role to play in propelling government policies and initiatives. Development and democracy cannot be successful without the media opening free public space where vital issues about people's lives could be aired and debated thereby giving room for opportunities to participate indecision making. This could be achieved if democracy is seen as governance by

dialogue and mass media are allowed to bring about this dialogue by providing the space for it through press freedom, accessibility and openness to full spectrum of citizenry's diverse views. However, in order to ensure full respect for government programmes or policies, mass media must assist people to make informed decisions and strengthen their massive involvement, mobilization and full scale participation. The level of employment in Nigeria engendered immediate attention of people in power to embark on entrepreneurial initiatives with the intention to douse the spate of joblessness that rears its gory head around the country as a result of successive governments' corruptionand mismanagement of the nation's resources. However, this scourge was addressed with appropriate entrepreneurial policies and investments by the

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Buhari led government. Entrepreneurship and innovation are the most fundamental and enduring engine of growth in a fast paced knowledge – driven global economy of the 21st century. Entrepreneurship is the soul of business. The more enterprising and innovative a person is the more motivated he is to be self reliant to improve the quality of life of his family, society and the economy at large (Akinboye, 2003). Entrepreneurship produces wealth and success while Entrepreneurs are catalyst for economic change and most, Researchers opined that entrepreneurs are highly creative individuals with complex cognitive operation, ability to be fluent, original and flexible in imagining new solutions to problems and hence create opportunities for profit or reward. The level of development of entrepreneurship with a particular reference to SME's firm in Nigeria is abysmally low. For Nigeria to develop a truly entrepreneur-driven economy, the nation needs to shift focus away from obsession for consumption of imported goods, to an exporter of finished goods and services. More importantly, emphasis must be directed away from the primary commodity based products with little or no added value in favour of knowledge- intensive, new products processes and services. Since the mass media are the fourth realm of the estate as well as the government partner in policy implementation, this paper seeks to analyze the role of the media in propagating entrepreneurship initiatives or campaigns by the Buhari-led administration.

Theoretical Framework

The Sociological Theories of Entrepreneurship: The sociological theory of entrepreneurship holds social cultures as the driving force of entrepreneurship. The entrepreneur becomes a role performer in conformity with the role expectations of the society, and such role expectations are based on religious beliefs, taboo and customs (Akinbami, 2013). Max Weber, widely reputed to be the father of bureaucracy, opined that religion is the major driver of entrepreneurship. Prominent components in Weber's theory are capitalism, adventurous spirit, protestant ethic and inducement of profit. The right mix of discipline and an adventurous free-spirit define the successful entrepreneur. The important elements of Weber's theory can be seen first in the spirit of capitalism. According to Akinbami (2013) capitalism is an economic system in which economic freedom and private enterprise are major players, hence the emergence of entrepreneurial culture. The adventurous spirit is driven by the free flow of impulse, followed by the protestant ethic. According to Max Weber the spirit of capitalism can be grown only when the mental attitude in the society is favourable to capitalism. The inducement of profit encourages the capitalist to venture to establish new enterprise.

Agenda-Setting Theory: The Agenda-setting theory which was propounded in 1973 by Maxwell McCombs and Donald L. Shaw assumed that the facts which people know about public issues tend to be those which the mass media presents to them. Moreover, the importance given to these issues by the media determine the interest of the public toward such information. Folarin (1998:68), states that "the mass media predetermines what issues are regarded as important at a given time in a given society," then, it is assumed that the media determines the agenda for general discussion. Though, they don't determine what we think about. Ugboajah (1987) posits that mass media defines public thinking and influence what people learn about their society. This indicates that the media are

responsible for raising vital issues for public discourse platform and successfully draw public attention to it. The media, however, exert a major influence on public opinion and bringing issues that are unobstructive to the public agenda. At the same time, the public also has a role in its interpretation of the media messages (McComb, 2005). According to Aina (2016), Agenda setting is useful in the context of Brand communication and Business communication as media are made to put business agenda on the front burner of public discourse. The media have actually positioned Entrepreneurship as burning issue over the decades and have actually put discussions on Entrepreneurship on the front burner in Nigeria with a view to encouraging young people to rise up to the challenge of becoming non-fixed income earners and employers of labour.

METHODOLOGY

The study utilised secondary sources such as textbooks, journals, Newspapers, Magazines, Library, Archives and deskstudy in its methods of data collection.

Conceptual review

Mass media and the social mobilization drive: Contemporary Nigeria is a media dependent society and the general interests of each section of the country's population is of concern to media practitioners who plan an extensive range of media contents for the conventional print and broadcast media as well as the trending internet websites. This impressive status of the media is orchestrated by the popularity of the print, broadcast and on-line services available to the people. Nigeria has a highly developed media economy and almost all these media outreach significantly contribute to the nation's balance sheet either directly or indirectly. Over the years, Nigerian media remained one credible social institutions known for its consistent sensitization roles towards encouraging the governed to embrace national policies and programmes believed to be capable of improving people's well being and standards. This focal goal is chronicled on the media traditional role of information, education, entertainment, cultural transmission and surveillance of the society (Ojete, 2008). Due to these media attributes, global recognition is increasing on a daily basis as far as media potency in effective attitudes creation, awareness for government evolving plans, programmes and being an umpire of change are concerned. Okporo (2003) contends that mass communication is highly effective in creating attitudes on newly evolved issues, hence its potency is indisputable in social mobilisation drives.

Umechukwu (2000), observed that no matter how laudable government programmes may be, meaningful success can hardly be possible without the mass media which are needed to inform, educate, mobilize and ensure citizenry participation. Since independence, efforts of various governments in implementing programmes, policies and plans to improve socio-economic situations of Nigerian citizens have been creditably promoted by the media. They have collaborated with successive governments in their mobilization drives and efforts. According to Jasson (1996), this collaboration has not always translated to wholesale endorsement of government programmes, rather the mobilization efforts of the media have always included a thorough evaluation of such programmes and the presentation of alternative views. According to the scholar, when government projects, programmes or planned

actions are well articulated, evaluated and interpreted by the media to mean good for the citizens, the results most times would be positive reactions from the people. In his affirmation of potency of the media, Baran (1999), opines that the media help define us, they shape our realities and perceptions about government programmes, initiatives and planned actions. In essence, alternative or opposing views by the media could lead to rejection of government policies, boycott of such initiatives or galvanize public agitations.

Brief Review of Some Previous Nigerian government-Mass media campaigns: In spite of several persecutions, harassments and assaults suffered in the hands of the successive regimes particularly the military administrations, Nigerian media never rested on their oars in mobilizing Nigerians to take parts in different government action plans and programmes. Jasson (1996), as cited in Ojeje (2008) observed that the mobilization roles of the mass media helped in the changing of notable internal structure in Nigeria such as change to decimal currency in 1971, right hand driving in 1972, and to the metric system in 1973. According to the scholars, these changes as credible and practicable as they seemed to be would not have achieved the recorded success without the media. Moreover, Operation Feed the Nation of Olusegun Obasanjo military government in 1978 was successful due to the mass media involvement in propagating the programme. The programme sought to improve local food production and thereby allowed employment opportunities for Nigerian youths in Agriculture. The media relentlessly encouraged citizens on various related action plans towards achieving the programmes objectives. In addition, the War Against Indiscipline (WAI) initiative by the Buhari-Idiagbon-led-military government also enjoyed the support of Nigerian mass media. The programme then was to inculcate discipline in Nigerians regarding their conducts at public places. Structural Adjustment Programme (SAP) initiated by Ibrahim Babangida's regime was another programme that earned credibility through Nigerian media due to the way the programme was subjected to critical scrutiny in order to ascertain its usefulness to the Nigerian citizens. The programme policies included currency devaluation, budget deficit cut, inflation reduction, privatization, wage adjustment among others. Jasson (1996) contented that Nigerian mass media were available as the people's parliament and platform for public discourse.

In July 1987, Mass Mobilization for Self Reliance, Social Justice and Economic Recovery (MAMSER) was inaugurated by the Babangida regime as part of the government's efforts to correct the socio-political and economic skew. According to Nwosu (1996), the Directorate had to depend on the media vibrancy to further the reach of MAMSER to educate, inform and mobilize Nigerians in all nooks and crannies of the country. Nigeria census was another key programme in which Nigerian mass media played laudable roles in spite of the inaccuracy of the count. Nigerian media played major mobilization roles in various head-counts since 1963 (Jasson, 1996). The media created awareness, motivated and educated citizenry on the merits of census thereby encouraging Nigerians to cooperate with census officials in the head count exercise for the fulfilment of the government action plans and initiatives. Ojeje (2008) noted that the media equally act as mouthpiece of both the government and the public. A major part of the recommendations of the report submitted by the political Bureau in 1987 was that the mass media should play a

vital role in the collection, dissemination and promotion of ideas in mobilizing opinions and enlightening the people on their rights, duties and obligations. It was this recognition of above functions that further energised the Nigerian media to champion massive social mobilization towards national programmes such as the census (Igben, 2006).

Nigerian Mass Media and the National Entrepreneurship Campaigns: Mass media are important sub system in any human society, they are the mirror through which the society assesses itself. Meanwhile, people have come to depend largely on the information obtained from the media to create image, form opinions and often for surveillance of their environment (Pate, 2000). The media drive every social systems that exist within a society for effectiveness and vibrancy, therefore, the mass media as a social institution influences and impact on the functioning of a variety of other institutions as well as processes such as political, economic, social and cultural. In addition, the mass media advances democratic values and promotes the aspirations of people for a free, disciplined and orderly society which provide opportunities for the brisk development of individuals, communities and nation at large (Okpoko, 2003). Thus, Mc Quail (2005) provides the following as the functions of the Mass media- information, education, entertainment, correlation, continuity and mobilization or campaigning for societal objectives in the sphere of politics, war, economic development, work and sometime religion.

Entrepreneurship awareness is taken serious than ever by the Buhari-led democratic government due to Nigeria's unemployment scourge which involved Nigerian youths as the largest segment of the population whose frustrations have consistently propelled them into criminal activities such as armed robbery, kidnapping, prostitution, rape, human trafficking, militancy, cultism, political thuggery, cyber crime, terrorism and ritual killing. According to the Nigerian Bureau of Statistics, the nation's unemployment rate was 12.1 per cent in the first quarters of 2016, up from 10.4 per cent in the fourth quarters of 2015, reaching the highest since December, 2001 (The Guardian, September 2, 2016). In order to forestall civil crisis that may arise from the scourge, the federal government embarked on the entrepreneurship campaigns to tackle the problem head-on before it consequences consumed the country. Affirming government determination on the entrepreneurship campaign, the minister of labour and employment, Chris Ngige, during the inauguration of a school-to-work training programme in Cross River Statesaid that "The federal government is not unaware of the high level of unemployment in Nigeria. As part of measures to address it, the government has designed programmes and schemes towards skills acquisition for graduates and non-graduates. This training programme is meant to equip the beneficiaries with employability -, skills that would make them self reliant" (The Guardian, September, 2016 pg16).

In order to make the campaign laudable and durable enough to fix the country's battered economy and provide employability soft landing for the jobless youths, the mass media embarked on mobilization efforts which created attitudes towards entrepreneurial drive of the government, cause a shift of citizen opinions from the pure conservatism and reinforce the new existing government action plans -Entrepreneurship- on the citizenry. Akpan(1986) states that in a free and democratic society, the mass media are the market place of the

government thoughts. They exist to service the information needs of the citizenry which they did by mirroring the importance of entrepreneurship initiatives on political, social and economic life of the people. As an institution and guardian of the public, the media thoroughly examined the entrepreneurial policies and programmes of the government and consequently moved to educate, motivate, and mobilize Nigerians into active participation in the programme process. Nevertheless, the mass media brought about expected foundation for this self reliance culture that is based on equity, truth, fairness, justice and respect for human right. These mentioned roles are to fulfill the 1999 constitution of the federal Republic of Nigeria especially in section 22 where it says that “the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people”. Assessing itself as the fourth realm of the estate, the Nigerian media evolved the following strategies for stabilizing entrepreneurship policies of the government: putting up the investigative and interpretative reporting styles; using features and documentary productions; public service jingles, showcasing of successful youthful entrepreneurs on radio, television and in newspapers, magazines; through soap opera drama productions among on television such as ‘young Boss’ which featured on NTAI on Sunday- 8.00 pm, Tuesday - 6.00 pm and Wednesday - 5.00 pm.

Concepts of Entrepreneurship: Historically, the concept of entrepreneurship is derived from the French verb “entreprendre” which means to ‘take up’ or ‘to do something’. Entrepreneurship can be conceptualized as a process through which individuals identify opportunities, allocate resources and create values. Value creation is often achieved through identification of needs and/or opportunities for change. Entrepreneurship is a process of using available capital in any form for business endeavour in any open and freemarketeconomy for the sole purpose of making profits. Aina and Salao (2008) define entrepreneurship as comprising any purposeful activity that initiates, maintains or develops a profit- oriented business interaction with internal situations of the business or with the economic, political and social circumstances surrounding the business. Aruwa (2006) defines entrepreneurship as the willingness and ability of an individual to seek for investment opportunities, to establish and run an enterprise successfully. Omolayo (2006) sees entrepreneurship as the process of bringing together creative and innovative ideas and coupling these with management-organisation skills in order to combine people and money resources to meet an identified need and create wealth. It is a process by which economic and commercial activities necessary for the improvement of the standard of living of the society are created by entrepreneurial individual, institutions, corporate organizations and governments. Entrepreneurship bridges the gap between science, technology, and the market. The market here is conceptualized as consumers or persons who have genuine need for goods and services offered by the entrepreneurs and are willing to pay for them. The responsibility of commercializing the inventions of the scientists lies within the realm of entrepreneurship. Therefore, entrepreneurship is the process of creating something of value (products or services), bringing it to the market place to satisfy an identified need or exploit business opportunity, building a venture around it by devoting necessary scarce resources, assuming the related risks (financial, psychic and social),

sustain a competitive advantage and having entrepreneurial capabilities. Entrepreneurship serves as a linchpin between the invention, innovation, and introduction of new products and services in the market place and also enables the entrepreneurs to act as engines of growth in the economy (Ketchen, 2003; Venkataraman, 1997 cited by Adesunkanmi, 2013).

Who is an entrepreneur?

The entrepreneur is generally viewed as a business leader and innovator of new ideas and business processes. Cantillion (1734) describes entrepreneurs as non-fixed income earners who pay known costs of production but earn uncertain incomes. Say (1803) sees an entrepreneur as an economic agent who unites all means of production- land of one, labour of another, and the capital of yet another and thus produces a product. By selling the product in the market he pays rent on land, wages to labour, interest on capital and the remains is his profit. Knight (1821) views the entrepreneur as an economic pioneer who initiates change or innovation by managing uncertainty and risk. Schumpeter (1934) sees entrepreneurship as a process of, ‘creative destruction’. McClelland (1961) describes an entrepreneur as a person with a high need for achievement (N-Ach), he is energetic and a moderate risk taker. Drucker (1964) views an entrepreneur as someone who searches for change, responds to it and exploits opportunities. Innovation is a specific tool of an entrepreneur hence an effective entrepreneur converts a source into a resource. Gartner (1985) describes an entrepreneur as a person who starts a new business where there was none before. Hatten (1997) describes an entrepreneur as a person who takes advantage of a business opportunity by assuming the financial, material and psychological risks of starting or running a company. Hisrich and Peter (2002) opine that the entrepreneur is a person who searches for change, responds to change, and exploits the change as an opportunity. Kuratko and Hodgetts, (2004) define entrepreneur as a person who develops a new idea and takes the risk of setting up an enterprise to produce a product or service which satisfies consumer needs.

Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Nigeria

The level of development of entrepreneurship, with particular reference to SME’s firm in Nigeria is abysmally low. For Nigeria to develop a truly entrepreneur-driven economy there is a need to shift focus away from obsession for consumption of imported good, to an exporter of finished goods and services. More importantly, emphasis must be directed away from the primary commodity-based products with little or no added value in favour of knowledge-intensive, new products, processes and services.

Need for Entrepreneurship in Nigeria: Entrepreneurship is one of the most important inputs in the economic development of a country. Entrepreneurs play crucial roles not only in the industrial sector of the economy but also in the development of agricultural, information communication and technology and allied services sector of the economy. In Nigeria, the entrepreneurs make significant contributions to the economy in the following ways:

Capital formation: Entrepreneurs promote capital formation by mopping up the idle savings of the society. Entrepreneurs make use of their own personal savings and the borrowed savings and /or resources of others for setting up their

business. Entrepreneurial activities lead to value creation which leads to industrial and economic development.

Large scale employment: One of the greatest challenges facing the emerging and under developed nations of the world is the provision of jobs and employment for the teeming population of the unemployed, most especially the youth. Entrepreneurs play a pivotal role in the creation of more jobs to provide employment for the rapidly increasing population so that each one can contribute to the gross domestic product. Entrepreneurship is a veritable way to fight the evil of unemployment. Entrepreneurs play a very crucial role in reducing poverty in the country which in turn aids in economic development of the nation that leads to economic growth and development.

Balanced regional development: Entrepreneurs are usually forced to set up industries in smaller towns far from big cities in view of the increasing competition in the cities. The growth of industries and businesses in the small towns lead to a large number of public benefits in these areas like transportation, health, education. Thereby entrepreneurs promote regional development.

Wealth creation: When entrepreneurs float businesses and produce goods and services, they create wealth. A high majority of jobs are created by the businesses started by entrepreneurially minded individuals, many of which go on to become big businesses.

Increase in national income: Entrepreneurs always keep their eyes open for opportunities. They explore and utilize opportunities, make effective use of resources, mobilize capital and skills, raise new goods and services and develop markets for growth of the economy. The goods and services produced are for consumption within the country and to meet the demand of exports. Thus the national income is increased and increase in national income is certainly a sign of economic growth.

Reduction in concentration of economic power: Industrial and business activity often culminates in the generation of economic power. Industrial development normally leads to the concentration of economic power in the hands of few individuals which results in the growth of monopolies. To reduce the concentration of wealth in few hands, therefore, there is need to develop a large number of entrepreneurs, who will help in dispersing the economic power among the population better.

Improvement in living standard: Improvement in the standard of living of the people is a function of the level of economic development of the country. Entrepreneurship plays a key role in increasing the standard of living of the people by introducing the newest innovations in the manufacture of goods and services at lower price. This allows the people to get better quality goods at lower costs which results in the betterment of their standard of living.

Tax: The businesses floated by entrepreneurs generate tax revenue to local, state and federal government. The revenue generated through taxes is used to provide social and infrastructural amenities for the society, thus raising the standard of living of the citizenry and the nation.

Technology: Entrepreneurs through their ingenuity bring new technology into the markets. Steve jobs co-founder of Apple computers invented iPod and Mackintosh. Bill gates founded Microsoft and invented Microsoft windows which in turn lead to invention of thousands of software that have revolutionised the way we work in the office.

Challenges and Barriers to Entrepreneurship and Innovation in Nigeria: The foremost barrier to the development of an innovation-driven economy in Nigeria is the level of knowledge of entrepreneurship and innovation among the vast majority of Nigerians- the educated ones inclusive. Creativity, innovation and entrepreneurship are not taught in any of our primary and secondary schools nationwide. Yet, research studies have indicated that Nigerians are at their creative best during the current phase of the nation's life cycle. Next to knowledge, is the sorry state of infrastructural development. Power, roads, railways, waterways, airways system are either epileptic or in a state of total disrepair. Closely related to the above is the level of development of information communication and technology (ICT) infrastructural development in Nigeria. Lack of capital, a major factor of production, is a major source of heartache for entrepreneur and innovators in Nigeria. For majority of Nigerian entrepreneur, it is far easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle than for a budding entrepreneur to access loans from our conservative banks. Generally there is a low perception of science and technology education and career development among the nation's policy formulators and youth. Colonial mentality, high cost of production, endemic bribery and corruption among government officials, excessive taxation are other crucial factors militating against the advancement of entrepreneurship in the country. Also, of significant importance, is the low level of private sector research and development (R&D) expenditure and low impact of public sector investment on research, science and technology. Related to the above is the low level of collaboration between the universities/research agencies and the Nigerian entrepreneur and innovators.

Conclusion

Today, the rhetoric of democracy rings loud globally and the mass media are essential to the realization of democratic vision. The most important thing is to develop and empower the media. There is no doubt that the mass media are in debacle due to the present economic contest that created a big dilemma and challenges for their expected performance. To meet the challenges, the media are expected to maintain high standard in their performance, this could be achieved through adherence to professional ideals such as objectivity, truth, balance, neutrality and non-biased in contents and presentation. In spite of these problems, the mass media stand as machinery of representation and foster of symbolic arena for citizenry's comprehensive understanding of the government's entrepreneurship campaigns. They achieved these through being more national, seeking to enlighten organized and unorganized groups on the merits of entrepreneurship to the nation's development. They determine how the initiatives would work out for the benefits of the general public irrespective of region, class and tribe. However, to be more representative, the media embarked on greater coverage of diversity of opinions from many positions in different national and societal hierarchies. Also, more emphasis were made on service news providing relevant information on action plans of

government for general public consumption. It is therefore, the major responsibility of the mass media to provide meaningful aid, adequate information for the citizens to participate effectively in the entrepreneurship process.

Recommendations

- In a bid to reach the grass root on the entrepreneurship campaign, the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) must encourage the establishment of community and rural radio in the country, special strategies must be designed in this regards.
- Government should be sincere to implement entrepreneurship initiative policies.
- Government should step up actions on loans and adequately monitor the disbursement of fund to the would- be young entrepreneurs through the appropriate financial institutions.

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