

¹ The Role of a Free Press in Good Governance a Papper Presented

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⁵ *Received: 15 December 2013 Accepted: 3 January 2014 Published: 15 January 2014*

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⁷ **Abstract**

⁸ Introduction-It gives me joy and I am humbled to be given this rare privilege to be chosen
⁹ amongst other most suitable and very much qualified persons and/or personalities to give this
¹⁰ prestigious lecture by one of the most respected and valued professional/prestigious trade
¹¹ unions in the world (NUJ) Bayelsa Chapter. This is more so, when you consider the critical
¹² place the media or put differently the press plays in the society. It is in this context that, the
¹³ topic of our discourse or paper is apt, particularly when considered from the perspective of the
¹⁴ broad theme of this years' World Press Freedom Day (Media Freedom for Better Future:
¹⁵ Shaping the Post 2015 Development Agenda).To what extent does free and independent media
¹⁶ contribute to good governance and what are the consequences for human development? What
¹⁷ is the role of the free press in strengthening good governance, democracy and human
¹⁸ development?

¹⁹

²⁰ *Index terms—*

²¹ **1 Introduction**

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²³ very much qualified persons and/or personalities to give this prestigious lecture by one of the most respected and
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²⁹ To what extent does free and independent media contribute to good governance and what are the consequences
³⁰ for human development? What is the role of the free press in strengthening good governance, democracy and
³¹ human development?

³² This lecture shall attempt to explore these issues with a view to provide some clear cut answers. In order
³³ to provide the answer to these questions, we shall define and discuss the following concepts: Media/Free-Press,
³⁴ Good Governance and Human Development.

³⁵ Apart from this introduction, the rest part of this paper is structured into five sections. Section one deals with
³⁶ the meaning of media; section two discusses the role of free press in good governance and human development;
³⁷ section three highlights the concept of good governance; section four on its part analyzed the role of free
³⁸ press in strengthening good governance and human development; while section five concludes the paper, it
³⁹ also incorporates the bibliography.

⁴⁰ **2 a) The Meaning of the Media**

⁴¹ The media or mass media is a basic source of news and entertainment. They are also means of carrying messages
⁴² which could build communities into nations. They are sources of information. The media falls into three basic

3 VIVIAN JOHN POSITS THAT:

43 categories: print, electronics and photographs. This categorization differentiates the technology that produces
44 them. John, (2001).

45 The primary print media sources are books, magazines, newspapers, electronic media sources are basically
46 television, radio, sound recordings and the We are influenced by the media, radio, television, internet, magazine,
47 news paper, film, etc. Radio and television play a role in the communication lives of almost every person. When
48 you consider that the typical person spends four hour and fifteen minutes a day in front of a television set,
49 you can appreciate the potential influence the media can have. Add to this, the popularity of the internet as a
50 communication tool, and your awareness of the influence should increase even more. Wolvin, (1998).

51 The above excerpt demonstrates that the media has an influential potential in sharpening the way and manner
52 of the thinking process and thought patterns of individual and groups. The media is capable of correcting certain
53 beliefs and impressions the people hold in some matters. The media is an effective tool in modifying behaviour.

54 This era is assumed a media literate dispensation. It stands that people have developed the capacity to access
55 information through the media, which essentially comprise the print, electronics, specifically the internet and
56 general computer knowledge. Hybels, ??2001).

57 The expansion of the media channels or courses as well as its input in fashioning the decision making process
58 caught the interest of social scientist in 20 th century such as Harold Laswell, who is cited in ??Miller 2006; 258)
59 said thus:

60 But when all allowances have been made and all extravagant estimates pared to the bone, the fact remains
61 that propaganda is one of the most powerful instrumentalities in the modern world? in the great society it is no
62 longer possible to fuse the waywardness of individuals in the furnace of the war dance; a newer and more subtler
63 instrument must weld thousand and even millions of human beings into one amalgamated mass of hate and will
64 and hope?. The name of this new hammer and anvil of social solidarity is propaganda . Miller, (2001).

65 Scholars have devised several theories and models in the study of the media. The theorists call the influence
66 of the media in shaping the thoughts, opinions, attitudes and the general behaviour in the direction they prefer
67 as the "magic bullet theory".

68 Auguste Comte, Herbet Spencer and Emile Durkheim in their investigation commended that those who are
69 predisposed to the influence of the mass media propaganda in society have the following peculiarities; they are
70 psychological isolated, impersonal and relatively farther from informal social obligations.

71 There are several other theories that explain the effect and outcome of the media. They put in to the right
72 perspectives the media in relation to the behaviour of man. They are essentially, social cognitive theory, uses and
73 gratification, media system dependency, etc. the social cognitive theory gives the relationship between behaviour
74 and the media presentation, some instances are media violence and crime among youths, media performance and
75 indecent dressing in society. Some persons access the media because of the gratifying programmes. An example
76 is the use and gratification, in the nationwide NTA show "who want to be a millionaire". The media, "system
77 dependency theory" is a tripartite framework where the media audience and society depend on each other to
78 actualize their objective.

79 Another analytical categorization of the media are the models, which include, hot-cool model, entertainment-
80 information model, elitist populist model and the pull-push model. The hot-cool media is made of the print
81 which makes up the "hot" of the model. This is because one requires high concentration to make meaning out
82 of the model. The "cool" generally consist of radio, movies and television programmes which are often presented
83 with light music at the background.

84 The second model is the entertainmentinformation. It tells that the media is for the purpose of entertainment
85 and information. The elitist-populist model explains the socio cultural tensions that have arisen in society which
86 broad segments of the population what they want. These class interests are visible in virtually every sphere of
87 human social existence. It ranges from music, books, clothing's romance etc.

88 3 Vivian John posits that:

89 At one end of the continuum is serious media content that appeals to people who can be called elitists because
90 they believe that the mass media have a responsibility to contribute to a better society and a retirement of the
91 culture, regardless of whether the media attract large audiences. At the other end of the continuum are populist,
92 who are entirely oriented to the market place populists believe that the media are at their best when they give
93 people what they want.

94 The mass media have historical significance in shaping socio-cultural values and any media committed to this
95 cause has the likeliness to ignore the largest possible audience.

96 The pull-push model describes the media as both passive and active. Certain media programmes or items
97 could be very inviting, therefore activates your interest in the media, e.g. "Super Stories" on NTA. "Second
98 Chance" or "Focus Nigeria" in AIT and "Sunrise Daily" in channels TV. The pull could either make the audience
99 turn their interest to or away from the media. Some programmes that are highly treasured by some audience
100 are rather offensive to others. "African Magic" in cable television appeal to some audience, especially women,
101 however sports channels seem more delightful to others especially men and youths.

102 Accordingly Vivian posits the following:

103 People form opinion from the information and interpretations to which they are exposed, which means that even
104 news coverage has an element of persuasion. The media attempts to persuade, however are usually in editorials

105 and commentaries whose persuasive purpose are obvious. Most news media separate materials designed to
106 persuade from news. News papers package their opinion articles in an editorial section commentary on television
107 is introduced as opinion.

108 The media in a globalized world is to the peril of some societies and economic advantage of others. The
109 media of the developed societies have exerted so much influence on the less developed countries of the world in
110 the areas of culture integration, technology, values, commerce, etc. this obviously has truncated the national
111 consciousness and development in the developing countries (Third world). What is then the role of free press in
112 good governance, this is the subject of our discourse in the next section.

113 **4 b) The Role of Free Press in Good Governance and**

114 Human Development There exists a long tradition of liberal theorists from Milton through Locke and Madison
115 to John Stuart Mill have argued that the existence of a unfettered and independent press within each nation is
116 essential in the process of democratization by contributing towards the right of freedom of expression, thought
117 and conscience, strengthening the responsiveness and accountability of governments to all citizens, and providing
118 a pluralist platform and channel of political expression for a multiplicity of groups and interests. Shah, (1996);
119 Amartya, (1999); Mc Quail, (2001) The guarantee of freedom of expression and information is recognized as a basic
120 human right in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the UN in 1948, the European Convention
121 on Human Rights, the American Convention on Human Rights, and the African Charter on Human and Peoples'
122 Rights. The positive relationship between the growth of the free press and the process of democratization is
123 thought to be reciprocal (Figure 1 displayed an analytical frame work).

124 The core claim is that, in the first stage, the initial transition from autocracy opens up the state control of the media
125 to private ownership, diffuses access, and reduces official censorship and government control of information.
126 The public thereby receives greater exposure to a wider variety of cultural products and ideas through access
127 to multiple radio and TV channels, as well as the diffusion of new technologies such as the Internet and mobile
128 telephones. Once media liberalization has commenced, in the second stage democratic consolidation and human
129 development are strengthened where journalists in independent newspapers, radio and television stations facilitate
130 greater transparency and accountability in governance, by serving in their watchdog roles, as well as providing
131 a civic forum for multiple voices in public debate, and highlighting social problems to inform the policy agenda.
132 (Hyden; Leslie and Ogundimu, [eds] 2002).

133 Through this process, many observers emphasize that a free press is not just valuable for democracy, a matter
134 widely acknowledged, but the final claim is that this process is also vital for human development. This perspective
135 is exemplified by Amartya Sen's argument that political freedoms are linked to improved economic development
136 outcomes and good governance in low-income countries by encouraging responsiveness to public concerns. The
137 free press, Sen suggests, enhances the voice of poor people and generates more informed choices about economic
138 needs. Amartya, (1999, pp. 629-640). James D. Wolfensohn has earlier echoed these sentiments when he was
139 the president of the World Bank: "A free press is not a luxury. A free press is at the absolute core of equitable
140 development, because if you cannot enfranchise poor people, if they do not have a right to expression, if there
141 is no searchlight on corruption and inequitable practices, you cannot build the public consensus needed to bring
142 about change." Wolfeson, (1999, A39). Democratic consolidation and good governance strengthened through the
143 media's role as watch-dog, civic forum, and agendasetter

144 Stage III:

145 **5 Improvements in human development**

146 More liberal media landscapes are therefore widely regarded as strengthening democratization and good
147 governance directly, as well as human development indirectly. These claims are commonly heard among popular
148 commentators, donor agencies, and the international community. But what systematic evidence supports these
149 contentions? Despite historical case-studies focusing on the role of the press in specific countries and regions,
150 it is somewhat surprising that relatively little comparative research has explored the systematic linkages in
151 this process. Much existing research has also focused on assessing the impact of media access, such as the
152 diffusion of newspaper readership or television viewership, rather than press freedom. Beyond paying lip service
153 to the importance of political rights and civil liberties, work on democratic institutions has tended to emphasize
154 constitutional arrangements, including the impact of electoral and party systems, federal or unitary states, and
155 parliamentary or presidential executives, while neglecting to analyze comparable evidence for the role of the news
156 media as part of the democratization process. Lijphart, (1999). Accordingly, Mahatma Gandhi posits that:

157 One of the objects of a newspaper is to understand the popular feeling and give expression to it, another
158 is to arouse among the people certain desirable sentiments; the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects.
159 ??adav, (2001: 1-4) The above quote explains the importance of media or press in upholding freedom, and in
160 expanding education and social reforms and change. Media can inform people giving them the voice to be heard
161 and heeded to. Democracy requires that people should have the right to know the activities of the government,
162 especially the decision of the government that affects their life, liberty and property. Information is important
163 for people to make choices regarding their participation in the State, the market and the civil society. Sufficient
164 information helps people to decide rationally and take the right course of action beneficial to them. Media-both

5 IMPROVEMENTS IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

165 print and electronic-thus helps people to know what is happening around the world, socialize them with the
166 values of pluralism and equip them with the elements of modernity. By publicizing information the media also
167 make public services more responsive to the people. These in my opinion and those who share the same view
168 with me should be the focus of the media or press in shaping the post 2015 development agenda both in Nigeria
169 and across the world.

170 A responsible press or media equally helps in socialization of people into citizenship, democratization of
171 the State and political society, institutionalization of civic culture through unfettered flow of information, and
172 rationalized use of power in social relations. In a nascent democracy like Nepal, media can also help voters
173 with the contents of civic and political education and strengthen the culture of democracy. This is the reason
174 political scientist Karl Deutsch has called that the system of communication proves a "nerve of the polity," and
175 any breakdown of the nerve may cause dysfunctional impact in the performance of the polity causing governance
176 decay. The Nigerian press is indeed very vibrant and has contributed immensely in the socialization process of
177 the society, i.e. the June 12 Era, etc.

178 Realizing this the Article 16 of the Constitution of Nepal 1990 says:; every citizen shall have the right to demand
179 and receive information on any matter of public importance". This implies that the right to information has
180 become a human and constitutional right of the Nepalese people. The denial of this right can be contested under
181 Article 23 of the constitution. The Supreme Court of Nepal under Article 88(2) holds tremendous power to enforce
182 this right. This suggests that free access to information on matters of public importance has become a core of the
183 governing process. In fact, the key element of good governance postulates three essential features: legitimacy;
184 accountability and transparency-the last element being the core basis of media culture. This article deals with
185 three sections: The first section deals with the elements of good governance. The second section elaborates the
186 right to information as a key to good governance in Nepal. The third one deals with the precondition for media
187 freedom and media culture in Nepal. The last section draws a brief conclusion presenting a synthesis of the whole
188 analysis.

189 Right to information as a key to good governance in Nepal as it is much more important in Nigeria today:
190 Governance is conceived as the capacity of the state, the market and the civil society, media included, "to
191 sustain itself under the constitutional setting" in order to move "towards avowed goals, reduce the inherent
192 cleavages among social, cultural, ecological and political systems and communities, concert sound policies,
193 mobilize resources and maintain the sufficient level of legitimacy, transparency, credibility and accountability
194 before the public". A governance that steers in normative order to achieve its goals-law and order, human
195 and national security, voice and participation and the promotion of public goods is called good governance. The
196 World Bank defines: "Good governance is epitomized by predictable and enlightened policy making; a bureaucracy
197 imbued with a professional ethos; an executive arm of government accountable for its actions; a strong civil society
198 participating in public affairs; and all behaving under the rule of law". "Transparency guarantees, including the
199 right to disclosure, can thus be an important category of instrumental freedom, limiting the powers of the State
200 by providing the citizens the fundamental and human rights. Article 12 of the constitution guarantees the right to
201 freedom. These freedoms include: ? Personal liberty under law of the land and abolition of capital punishment;
202 ? Freedom of opinion and expression; ? Peaceful assembly; ? Freedom to form unions and organizations; ?
203 Freedom to move and reside in any part of the country and ? Freedom to practice any occupation, profession,
204 trade and industry. But these freedoms do not limit the sovereignty of the State to legislate and act if they lead
205 to chaos and anarchy and undermine:

206 ? The sovereignty and integrity of the Kingdom of Nepal; ? Jeopardize social cohesion or harmony among
207 the people; ? Facilitate into an act of sedition, defamation, contempt of court, instigation of offense, and ? Act
208 contrary to decent public behavior or morality.

209 The State can formulate laws and acts to constitutionalize the behavior of citizen and help them in conforming
210 to the ideals of constitutional patriotism implying a kind of balance between the public order and individual
211 freedom. Similarly, Article 13 provides provisions for press and publication right so as to make the functioning
212 of governance as transparent as possible. This is the way to bring the institutions of governance closer to the
213 people and allowing them to make choices on public and political matters. Article 13-1 clearly stipulates that "no
214 news item, article or other reading material shall be censored". Similarly, clause 2 and 3 provide that "no press
215 should be closed or seized for printing any news item, article or other reading materials", and "the registration
216 of a newspaper or periodical shall not be canceled merely for publishing any news item, article or other reading
217 material."

218 These provisions suggest that there is freedom to the press and publication. But again they are subjected
219 to the vision, spirit and principles of the constitution. The arrangement tries to set equilibrium between the
220 sovereignty of the people to enjoy their press and public right and the sovereignty of the state to make laws so
221 that citizens do not violate the sovereignty and integrity of Nepal, create disharmony in the society and disobey
222 the laws of the land. This suggests that rights are tied with duties and accountabilities.

223 Freedom of citizens, a free and responsible press, an independent judiciary and government's data information
224 are the system which can be perceived to be the key to the enhancement of right to information and make the
225 institutions of governance transparent and accountable. The right to information, guaranteed rights and press
226 and publication right are three vital means for establishing "open society" visualized by the Nepalese constitution.
227 An information Act must be brought out as soon as possible both to help in the way of freedom of information,

228 enforce the accountability of information as well as to endow substance and quality in democratic debates so
229 that citizens can monitor the day to day functioning of public institutions and actors. The right to information
230 is closely tied to the accountability mechanism, for monitoring every action of government which leads to good
231 governance, places the dominant actors of governance-the state, the market and civil society in balance, and
232 monitors their performance as per the boundaries for action defined for them. Media thus perform vital tasks
233 of informing, socializing, communicating and articulating the power of the public and preparing them for social
234 transformation and good governance. It is our belief and conviction that the freedom of information (FOI) bill
235 which was recently passed by the National Assembly and signed into law by the President of the Federal Republic
236 of Nigeria shall bridge the gap in this situation, so far there are still indications that this in reality is not the
237 case.

238 **6 c) The Concept of Good Governance**

239 The increasing priority accorded the concept of Good Governance in international discourses, on politics and
240 development across the globe has resulted in constant definitions and redefinitions as to what really constitutes
241 Good Governance Doornbos, (2003); Suchitra, (2004); Gisselquist, (2012). In perusing various literatures on
242 the Good Governance concept, one could identify three strands of argument: The first strand is proponents of
243 the Good Governance agenda that sees it as a worthy goal and a means through which to impact economic
244 growth and development. Their argument is aptly captured thus: Those in poorly governed countries, it is
245 argued, corrupt bureaucrats and politicians baldly hinder development efforts by stealing aid contributions or
246 misdirecting them into unproductive activities. Less obvious but equally pernicious, governments that are not
247 accountable to their citizens and with inefficient bureaucracies and weak institutions are unwilling or unable to
248 formulate and implement pro-growth and pro-poor policies Gisselquist, (2012, p.1).

249 The second strand on the other hand is the opponents who raise strong challenges and argue the following
250 points:

251 i ??011) have argued that good governance is a poorly defined concept and that future research should rather
252 focus on the disaggregated components of good governance. This in part informs the structure of the discourse
253 of this work. A critical consideration of the conceived differences surrounding the concept goes to point out
254 the increased significance attached to the concept in recent times and also underscores the utility of the good
255 governance components in development index across the nations and in the aggregate well being of democratic
256 governance of a country. But whether or not Nigeria falls into the category of good and better governance
257 deserved to be explored. However, it is my candid opinion that Nigeria as it is currently requires a lot more to
258 get there.

259 Despite the contentions surrounding the concept, Good Governance has assumed an entrenched position as
260 an indicator for measuring the development progress of any nation as well as a central factor for development.
261 As Oburota (2003) argued "Politically, people may disagree about the best means of achieving good governance,
262 but they quite agreed that Good Governance is absolutely imperative for social and economic progress". That is
263 why many nations are striving to be seen to offer good governance to its citizenry. All these provoke the question
264 what then is Good Governance? To adjudge governance as good or bad we have to first of all define the concept
265 of governance itself. Governance has been variously defined as "the management of society by the people"
266 Albrow, (2001, p.151), and "the exercise of authority or control to manage a country's affairs and resources"
267 Schneider, (1999, p. 7). See also ??baba The exercise of economic, political and administrative authority to
268 manage a country's affairs at all levels. It comprises of the mechanisms, processes and institutions, through
269 which citizens and groups articulate their interests, exercise their legal rights, meet their obligations and mediate
270 their differences. -UNDP.

271 Governance within the context of this paper refers primarily to government in domestic politics and is simply
272 defined as the manner in which power is exercised by governments in the management and distribution of a
273 country's social and economic resources.

274 This suggests that governance can be good or bad depending on the method of the management of a country's
275 resources. So what is Good Governance? We are going to first take the definition of the concept by World
276 Bank, as the chief engineer of the Good Governance agenda. How does World Bank define this concept believed
277 to be capable of engendering sustainable development and democracy in countries such as Nigeria? To the
278 World Bank, Good Governance consists of a public service that is efficient, a judicial system that is reliable,
279 and an administration that is accountable to the public ??1989,60). Accordingly, the key components of Good
280 Governance include effectiveness and efficiency in public sector management, accountability and responsiveness
281 of public officials to citizenry, rule of law and public access to information and transparency (World Bank, 1989
282 ??ank, , 1992, viii), viii). Other International Monetary Agents defined the concept in similar way as World Bank
283 did (See the definitions of ADB, 2008; EBRD, 2010; IADB, 2010). These definitions from the monetary agencies
284 adopted the economic and management focused approach, whereas Multilateral Donor Agencies such as the
285 UNDP (OECD, UNN, UNESCO) and others adopted political issues approach in their definitions. The definitions
286 of these Donor Agencies are expertly captured in this United Nations Development Programme's (UNDP, 2002)
287 definition of Good Governance as striving for: Rule of law, transparency, participation, equity, effectiveness
288 and efficiency, accountability, and strategic vision in the exercise of political, economic, and administrative
289 authority.(UNDP, 2002, p.2). See also ??unu, (2013, Pp. 178 -184).

7 D) THE ROLE OF FREE PRESS IN STRENGTHENING GOOD GOVERNANCE AND HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

290 This definition more than the previous definitions captured what has become identified by scholars as
291 the elements or components of Good Governance .These components of Good Governance are; participation,
292 consensus oriented, rule of law, transparency, accountability, responsiveness, efficiency and effectiveness. These
293 elements are also eloquently captured in this definition of the concept by Organization for Economic Co-
294 operation and Development (OECD). According to OECD, Good Governance has eight major characteristics. It
295 is participatory, consensus oriented, accountable, transparent, responsive, effective and efficient, equitable and
296 inclusive and follows the rule of law. It assures that corruption is minimized, the views of minorities are taken
297 into account and that the voices of the most vulnerable in society are heard in decisionmaking ??OECD, 2000).
298 All these attributes are instruments of effective governance in the sense that they provide necessary anchor for
299 the act of governance.

300 The Nigerian constitution in Section16 (2) acknowledged that the essence of the Nigerian state is to promote
301 the common good. The implication of this is clearly explained by Eboh (2003) this way; "The common good
302 stands in opposition to the good of rulers or of a ruling group. It implies that every individual, no matter how
303 high or low, has a duty to share in promoting the welfare of the community as well as a right to benefit from
304 that welfare". Common implies that the "good" is all inclusive. In essence, the common good cannot exclude or
305 exempt any section of the population. If any section of the population is in fact excluded from participating in
306 the life of the community, even at a minimal level, then that is a contradiction to the concept of the common
307 good, Eboh, (2003).

308 The above explanations capture the view of Ogundiya (2010) in his analysis of Good Governance as he
309 maintains that Governance is good provided it is able to achieve the desired end of the state defined in terms
310 of justice, equity, protection of life and property, enhanced participation, preservation of the rule of law and
311 improved living standard of the population. Similarly, Nigeria's Vision 2020 document defined Good Governance
312 as a means of accountability in all its ramifications. It also means the rule of law and an unfettered judiciary;
313 that is freedom of expression and choice in political association. Good governance means transparency, equity
314 and honesty in public office.

315 What is deducible from this plethora of definitions is that Good Governance, as a concept, is applicable to all
316 sections of society such as the government, legislature, judiciary, media/press, private sector, corporate sector,
317 trade unions (NUJ) and of course non-government organizations (NGOs). The implication here is that, it is
318 only when all these and other various sections of society conduct their affairs in a socially responsible manner
319 that the objective of achieving larger good of the largest number of people in society can be achieved, Madhav,
320 (2007). See also ??kolo, & Inokoba, (2014). In this regards the free and unfettered press becomes increasingly
321 and absolutely pivotal.

322 Remarkably, it is only when we appraise the manner in which the affairs of a country are run that we
323 can discern which government is good or bad or which has been a success or failure. Failure of governance
324 implies that those in political control have not properly managed the economy and other social institutions.
325 According to World Bank (1992) bad governance has many features, among which are: failure to make a
326 clear separation between what is public and what is private, hence a tendency to divert public resources for
327 private gain; failure to establish a predictable framework for law and government behaviour in a manner that
328 is conducive to development, or arbitrariness in the application of rules and laws; excessive rules, regulations,
329 licensing requirements, etc, which impede the functioning of markets and encourage rent-seeking; priorities that
330 are inconsistent with development, thus, resulting in a misallocation of resources and excessively narrow base for,
331 or non-transparencies, decisionmaking.

332 However, looking at the rate of unemployment, diversion of resources by public officials, escalating rate of
333 corruption (Nigeria continues to be reported among the most corrupt countries of the world), tribal cum ethnic
334 clashes, abuse of office by public officials, looting of public finances, kidnapping, increased rate of cybercrimes
335 and other types of crimes there is every reason to believe that Good Governance is still a mirage as far as the
336 Nigerian polity is concerned. Ogundiya (2010) expressed similar views as he emphasizes that, the problem of
337 Nigerian development is both a symptom and consequence of the absence of Good Governance. Since Good
338 Governance implies the exercise of power in a responsible and responsive manner that will ensure greater good,
339 how can the media contribute, and why is the media seen as a critical sector in this regard? See Okolo, (2014,
340 Pp. 91 -99).

341 7 d) The Role of Free Press in Strengthening Good Governance 342 and Human Development

343 The important role free press or media plays in fostering an environment of good governance needs hardly be
344 emphasized. As the watchdog and interpreter of public issues and events, the media has a special role in every
345 society. In our information-based society the media has a disproportionately visible and influential role.

346 Democracy cannot exist in the absence of a free press. This is because democracy is based on popular will
347 and popular opinion depends on the public's awareness and knowledge. It is the mass media that brings up,
348 promotes and propagates public awareness.

349 The main responsibility of the press is to provide comprehensive, analytical and factual news and opinion to

350 the people on everyday issues and events of popular concern. To fulfill its duty and responsibility, the press must
351 work according to the fundamental principles of professional ethics, as well as norms and values of journalism.

352 **8 ? Press freedom**

353 Democracy can neither be sustainable nor strong without a free press. On the other hand, press freedom will not
354 be possible without democracy. Therefore, the mass media and journalists must be committed to democracy.
355 For this, the press must be

356 **9 ? Right to information and freedom of expression**

357 The press must remain ever vigilant to protect and enforce people's freedom of thought and expression and
358 citizens' right to all information relating to the various aspects of their life and future. The fact that access to
359 information is a citizen's right must be taken to heart, and information must be presented in a simple and palatable
360 manner. Right to information is inherent in democratic functioning and a pre-condition for good governance and
361 the realization of all other human rights, including education and health care. The main objectives should be
362 the promotion of transparency and accountability in governance so as to minimize corruption and inefficiency in
363 public office and to ensure the public's participation in governance and decision making.

364 **10 ? Accuracy and objectivity**

365 Media must be credible and trustworthy. Trust is the most valuable asset for any media. Once lost, it cannot
366 be earned back. It is for this reason that all media must uphold their principles to provide accurate and factual
367 news and other programmes.

368 **11 ? Impartiality and diversity of opinion**

369 It is not enough that news presented by the media is factual. It must also be impartial, covering a diversity
370 of opinions. Both sides of the argument must get due consideration. Voices and opinions of all the groups,
371 ethnicities, languages, political and religious beliefs within the society must be included.

372 **12 ? Fairness**

373 Broadcasters must not harbour any prejudices for or against any individual that is mentioned in the news item.
374 Hidden recording can be carried out without permission only if there is adequate basis in the public interest to
375 do so.

376 **13 ? Violence, crime and anti-social behaviour**

377 Broadcast organizations must protect the society from crime, criminals and criminal activities. Any material that
378 promotes violence and ethnic, religious, linguistic and other kinds of hatred must not be broadcast. Programmes
379 that glorify violence and crime, or turning criminals into heroes, must not be allowed. However, programmes
380 that clearly spell out the consequences of violence and provide moral education should be encouraged. News and
381 other programmes that promote ethnic, religious, regional and cultural goodwill in the society should also be
382 encouraged.

383 **14 ? Protection of the underprivileged**

384 Issues, opinions and expressions regarding women, minority communities, neglected groups, elderly people,
385 disabled and backward classes must be given the opportunity to be aired. To guarantee the rights and interests
386 of the marginalized and underprivileged communities, content should be rights-oriented.

387 **15 ? Political impartiality**

388 Broadcasters must understand the difference between politics in general and party politics. Media should not be
389 a vehicle, or used as an advocate for any political party or ideology. Public and political issues should be clearly
390 understood, analyzed and presented in an impartial manner.

391 **16 ? Elections**

392 During elections / political campaigns, equal time slots or opportunity must be allocated to each of the legitimate
393 political parties and candidates. In the course of elections, messages that encourage goodwill and harmony among
394 all the ethnic groups, religions, genders, cultures, languages, regions and communities should be broadcast.

395 Media plays the role of watch-dog in reporting corruption, complacency and negligence. In a changing,
396 competitive landscape, compliance to good governance has never been taken so seriously, as people demand more
397 transparency from both the government and private sectors. Responsible practices from government, universal
398 principles on human rights and the fight against corruption have assumed great importance. A flourishing media
399 sector enables people to make informed decisions, becoming more effective participants in society's development.

400 In a developing country like Nepal, the relatively low level of literacy, the variations in topography and limited
401 access to electricity all make radio the most suitable medium to satisfy the information needs of the masses. A
402 robust, independent and pluralistic media environment is crucial for good governance and the overall development
403 of the country. Freedom of expression, free flow of information and fair reporting without government and
404 commercial influences are accelerators of development.

405 The rapid growth of private independent radio and TV broadcasters and the changing role of the state
406 broadcasters are creating a more congenial atmosphere for the effective functioning of the media as a major
407 player in good governance. Nepal has gone through phases of armed conflict, struggle for democracy, abolition
408 of the monarchy and the tumultuous events leading to the declaration of a Federal Democratic Republic, and
409 the media has been a vital player at every juncture. The issue of good governance assumes the highest priority
410 in an atmosphere of chaos, instability, insecurity and lack of accountability. These are also characteristics of the
411 absence of a legitimate, democratically elected government. During times of political upheaval when attempts
412 were made to stifle press freedom, the media has stood up and played the role of watch-dog and ombudsman,
413 upholding "public interest" above everything else.

414 The roles of the media, including the social media, in promoting Good Governance are being recognized by
415 the governments and policy-makers in various countries. In the UK, a "Survey of Policy Opinion on Governance
416 and the Media" published by BBC (2009) reveals that although the emphasis on Good Governance in the
417 development agenda is questionable, "there seems to be increasing recognition of the media's role in governance
418 in the development community. There are also some indicators that media are being more recognized by the
419 policy-makers as having a central role in development." The role of the media in promoting Good Governance is
420 obvious. All aspects of Good Governance are facilitated by the existence of a strong, pluralistic and independent
421 media within the society (UNESCO, 2005). Fortunately, the Nigerian press/media terrain to a large extent could
422 be adjudged to qualify.

423 The significance of the press/media in how well or not governance can be executed in the society is best
424 captured in this more than a century argument by Joseph Pulitzer, in 1904. Pulitzer summarized his views
425 thus: Our Republic and its press will rise or fall together. An able, disinterested, public-spirited press, with
426 trained intelligence to know the right and courage to do it, can preserve that public virtue without which popular
427 government is a sham and a mockery. A cynical, mercenary, demagogic press will produce in time a people as
428 base as itself. The power to mould the future of the Republic will be in the hands of the journalists of future
429 generations ??1904).

430 What Pulitzer was essentially saying here is that the press/media can make or break a society by the way and
431 manner it functions. In our information-based society the media has a disproportionately visible and influential
432 role in fostering an environment where Good Governance will flourish. As the watchdog, agenda setter of public
433 discourses and interpreter of public issues and events, the media have a special role in governance.

434 The main responsibility of the press/media as is widely acknowledged is to provide comprehensive, analytical
435 and factual news and opinion to the people on everyday issues and events of popular concern. Indeed this is
436 the critical link between the functioning of the media and Good Governance. The press/media are the only
437 institution with the capacity to allow and facilitate regular checks and assessment by the population of the
438 activities of government and assist in bringing public concern and voices into the open by providing a platform
439 for public discussion. In fact the nature and character of the media greatly impacts on the governance process in
440 any society. For it is only when the media report, monitor, investigate and criticize the public administration's
441 policies and actions as well as inform and educate the citizens can good governance be enthroned. We are now
442 going to examine the concrete ways the media can contribute to good governance within the ambit of the eight
443 elements of good governance identified earlier in this paper.

444 17 Figure 2 : Elements Of Good Governance And Media's Role

445 As was discussed earlier, there are eight commonly identified elements of Good Governance; it is within these
446 elements and others that I shall now interrogate the relationship between press/media and Good Governance as
447 displayed in Figure ??.

448 18 ? Transparency

449 Transparency is often regarded as the openness of institutions, that is, the degree to which outsiders can monitor
450 and evaluate the actions of insiders. The purpose of transparency is to allow citizens, to hold institutions,
451 governments and markets accountable for their policies and performances. Transparency is also defined as
452 official business conducted in such a way that substantive and procedural information is available to and broadly
453 understandable by, people and groups in society, Source: UNESCO, 2005 Adapted and modified by ??kolo, 20014
454 (see also ??unu I. 2013, pp. 185) active role in promoting transparency in governance. By reporting on issues
455 with adequate research and objectivity, radio ensures that citizens are well informed and that their right to
456 information is protected.

457 19 GOOD GOVERNANCE

458 Accountable

459 20 ? Participation

460 The issue of inclusiveness has featured in many debates and discussions. One of the causes of the Maoist
461 insurgency was inadequate representation of the marginalized groups in the decision making process. Radio
462 can ensure the greater participation of marginalized groups, ethnic communities, language minorities and the
463 underprivileged. Nepal has witnessed the greater participation of such groups through a process of empowerment
464 brought about by responsible media.

465 Participation as an element of Good Governance implies the wide involvement of ordinary citizens in decision
466 making and governance. According to UNESCO (2005) document, participation is a crucial element for Good
467 Governance in two ways: Participation by citizens in decision making process allows greater transparency and
468 can help ensure that political decisions are adapted to the needs of the people and affected by them. Second,
469 participation is important for democratic legitimacy, which depends on the investment people have as citizens
470 in their own governing. Citizen participation in the act of governance is engendered by the media and other
471 intermediate institutions. However as widely acknowledged, the role of the media in fostering participation is vital
472 as the media reports on aspects of the decision making process and give stakeholders a voice in the process. The
473 media enables participation in two ways; as a facilitator providing platforms for the citizens to have accurate and
474 sufficient information that help citizens make rational and informed decisions and take the right course of action
475 beneficial to them: As a feedback mechanism, the media provide the means for the citizens to register their feelings
476 and express their assent and dissent concerning issues. The media as the primary intermediaries of information
477 supply the information that other sectors of the society need to participate effectively. ? Accountability Media also
478 ensures accountability through adherence to generally accepted standards. While giving a voice to the voiceless,
479 the media has also played its role in holding those in power accountable for their actions. Accountability is a key
480 requirement of Good Governance. Not only governmental institutions but also the private sector and civil society
481 organizations must be accountable to the public and to their institutional stakeholders. Who is accountable to
482 whom varies, depending on whether decisions or actions taken are internal or external to an organization or
483 institution. In general government is accountable to the society.

484 Accountability points to the responsibility of judging the practices of public administrators to determine their
485 effectiveness in the execution of their public functions. It is a process of taking responsibility for decisions
486 and actions by government and public service organizations, private sector companies, civil society institutions
487 and organizations and by the individuals working in these institutions, firms and organizations. Accountability
488 also includes how these individuals and institutions are managing public funds, and whether there is fairness
489 and performance in all aspects in accordance with agreed rules, contracts, standards and fair and accurate
490 reporting on performance results vis-à-vis mandated roles and/or plans Jobarteh, (2012). One of the strengths
491 of accountability is that it reduces the possibility of corruption in the polity to an almost zero level by reducing
492 abuse of power by the State Accountability includes various kinds of internal and external mechanism of scrutiny.

493 The free press/media represent one of the major mechanisms of accountability. Holding government
494 accountable therefore is a constitutional requirement of the Nigerian media. Access to information is the
495 cornerstone of accountability. It is only when the public are provided with the relevant and adequate information
496 can they hold those in authority accountable for their actions and inactions. As the main purveyor of information
497 the media owe a sacred duty to the public to provide them with truthful and regular information. It is in
498 recognition of this significant role of the media that the Nigerian government passed the FOI bill into law. As
499 a recent study eloquently puts it, "Without information, there is no accountability. Information is power and
500 the more people who possess it, the more power is distributed. The degree to which a media is independent
501 is the degree to which it can perform an effective public watchdog function of "Public Affairs". ??ope, (2000,
502 p.119-120). For the media to facilitate accountability in governance journalists should know the four fundamental
503 questions about accountability:

504 i. Who has an obligation? ii. What commitments or standards are supposed to be met? iii. What will show
505 whether the commitments and standards have been met? iv. What are the consequences for misconduct or poor
506 performance? Jobarteh, (2012). Accountability and transparency have been identified as twin concepts that
507 are necessary preconditions for just governance and democracy which helps to ensure that government power is
508 exercised according to the will of the citizenry. Given the above explanations, when can we say that there is
509 just or fair governance in a country such as Nigeria? Answer to this question, could be viewed from these four
510 perspectives:

511 ? When the State uses investments and scarce resources reasonably for the benefit of all citizens, and most
512 especially for the most disadvantaged.

513 21 ? Stability

514 Radio serves as a unifying force by providing a forum for informed debates in times of political conflict. Informed
515 and responsible citizens contribute to the stability of the country.

516 22 ? Fairness

517 The essential quality of the press is to be fair and just. Radio in Nepal has always attempted to be fair in
518 reporting events during times of upheaval and political uncertainty.

519 **23 ? Human rights**

520 Respect for human rights is the hallmark of every democracy. In a country like Nepal, there have been instances
521 of violation of human rights by opposing sides in a conflict. Radio has been quick to report on human rights
522 violations on numerous occasions. Ensuring human rights leads to good governance. Radio is the most effective
523 tool to draw the attention of the concerned authorities as well as the international community to human rights
524 issues. All the above contribute to ensuring effective government, and radio lies at the heart of good governance.
525 Observance of the requirements for neutrality, upholding balance and impartiality, educating the public on
526 governance issues and exposing malpractices should be the guiding principles for radio broadcasters.

527 There have been times when the media in Nepal resorted to sensationalism in reporting crime and criminal
528 activities. Reporting ethnic or religious riots must be undertaken with caution, always keeping ethical values in
529 mind. It is the duty of the media to be balanced and also to ensure that the consequences of the reporting do
530 not disturb law and order or ferment unrest. Desperate attempts by competing media to win audiences through
531 sensational reporting should not be encouraged.

532 In conclusion, I wish to stress the need for radio to evolve in order to fulfill its function to ensure good
533 governance. Radio must promote and help enforce human rights more assertively. It must strive to maintain its
534 role as a public watchdog. The media should neither doctor facts nor resort to reporting along partisan lines. It
535 cannot be expected to report anything but the truth. It is precisely this role –and the responsibility that comes
536 with it –which radio needs to assume. It is a development which the government needs to accept, and further
537 facilitate.

538 **24 ? Rule of law**

539 The rule of law is the foundation of Good Governance. Good governance requires fair legal frameworks that are
540 enforced impartially. The rule of law can be understood both as a set of practices which allow the law to perform
541 a mediating role between various stake holders in society and as a normative standard invoked by members of
542 society that demonstrate their assent to this principle (UNESCO, 2005). Indeed the obvious demonstration of
543 absence of Good Governance is the presence of arbitrariness and disregard for the rule of law. The rule of law
544 is best seen as an ideal where impartial enforcement of laws is enthroned in every sector of the society. In the
545 enforcement of the rule of law the media again plays a crucial role as the sector of the society most able to
546 promote vigilance towards the rule of law, through fostering investigative journalism, promoting the openness of
547 all the institutions that are relevant in ensuring that the rule of law is respected in the society. Citizens must
548 understand for instance that the rule of law consists of a set of institutions, laws and practices that are established
549 to prevent the arbitrary exercise of power.

550 **25 ? Responsiveness**

551 Good governance requires that institutions and processes try to serve all stakeholders within a reasonable
552 timeframe, by responding to the grievances, needs and aspirations of the citizens. As we mentioned earlier,
553 the media act as a feedback mechanism where the public's are given the opportunity to bring their plight to
554 the notice of the State. Often times than not the media do this through various media campaigns that serve
555 to remind the State of their obligations to the public. The vigilance and capacity of the media are particularly
556 important in tracking the availability and accessibility of services to various segments of the public ? Consensus
557 oriented There are several actors as well as many view points in a given society. Good Governance requires
558 mediation of the different interests in society to reach a broad consensus in society on what is in the best interest
559 of the whole community and how this can be achieved. It also requires a broad and long-term perspective on
560 what is needed for sustainable human development and how to achieve the goals of such development. This can
561 only result from an understanding of the historical, cultural and social contexts of a given society or community.
562 It is in this effectively make informed decisions and take actions resulting thereof in the good of the society.

563 **26 ? Equity and inclusiveness**

564 A society's well being depends on ensuring that all its members feel that they have a stake in it and not excluded
565 from the mainstream of society. This requires all groups, particularly the most vulnerable, to have opportunities
566 to improve and/or maintain their well being. The media's role in this regard is very simplegiving balanced and
567 fair coverage to all issues in a manner that diverse voices and opinions will be represented. It is perhaps in this
568 function that the Nigerian media have been greatly faulted. The Nigerian media have been accused of prejudice
569 in reporting and treating issues of public concern.

570 **27 ? Effectiveness and efficiency**

571 Good Governance means that processes and institutions produce results that meet the needs of society while
572 making the best use of resources at their disposal. The concept of efficiency in the context of Good Governance also
573 covers the sustainable use of natural resources and the protection of the environment. Effectiveness and efficiency
574 means that state institutions are functioning optimally according to the rule of law, thus tremendously enhancing
575 the overall effectiveness of government. Although the media cannot in themselves alone ensure effectiveness and

576 efficiency of all the institution in the society. However, the media can help keep the different institutions and
577 administrators on their toes by readily and regularly reporting cases of inefficiency and other related vices in
578 the system. This way inefficiency in public institutions, organizations and government will be greatly reduced.
579 The media through development of media campaigns, documentaries, editorial comments and other platforms of
580 criticism can spotlight institutions and practices that are inefficient and unproductive.

581 This lecture has demonstrated how the Nigerian press/media have contributed in trying to enthron Good
582 Governance in the country. Critics of the media/press points to the gaps and areas of weakness which this paper
583 acknowledged, however it is the submission of this paper that the media/press plays an indispensable role in
584 ensuring good governance in any society and that the Nigerian press/media in this regard could be adjudged as
585 having performed fairly well even though there are still gaps which other researchers are encouraged to fill.

586 **28 e) Concluding Remarks**

587 Despite acknowledging the various ways the Nigerian press/media have attempted to foster good governance, the
588 fact remains that there are still critical issues that the Nigerian press/media need to deal with. Some of the more
589 obvious and vital once will be highlighted. Nigerian journalists, oftentimes tend to over censor themselves for fear
590 of reprisals, particularly the public media. This leads to factual inexactitude. A situation where information are
591 often incomplete or deliberately down played or some facts missing. Some of the other challenges for the Nigerian
592 media/press include: the issue of poor remuneration for the journalists; the polarization of the media along North
593 -South divide that pervades Nigerian politics; ownership influence that affects media stand on issues, the private
594 media, as well as the public media have often been accused of reflecting the ideological and political considerations
595 of the proprietors ;the issue of protocol journalism in which highly placed public officials are deliberately shielded
596 from embarrassing questions and investigations from the media in return for some consideration for the media
597 Jibo, (2003); extreme commercialization of news; partisan, biased or ethnic reporting of events Olukotun, (2000)
598 and the practice of black mail journalism. ??ee Dunu, (2013).

599 To what extent does free and independent media contribute to good governance and what are the consequences
600 for human development? This lecture examined the results of a cross-sectional comparison analysing the impact
601 of press freedom on multiple indicators of democracy and good governance. The paper seeks to explain and argue
602 that, where the media/press functions effectively as a watch-dog, a civic forum and an agenda-setter, it helps to
603 promote democracy, good governance and thus human development. Findings support claims that the free press
604 is important, both intrinsically and instrumentally, as a major component of democracy, good governance and
605 human development.

606 The growth of the free press and the process of democratization are thought to enhance each other. It is
607 claimed that: i. The transition from autocracy opens up the media to private ownership, broadens access to the
608 media, and reduces government control of information;

609 Volume XIV Issue III Version I ii.

610 The media then directly contributes to democratization and governance by serving as a watch-dog (promoting
611 accountability and

612 In doing this, the media help to mobilize the citizen to achieve development programmes of the country.
613 The mass media's role in mobilizing Nigerians for the 2006 census could be seen as a good case in point. The
614 census took place between 21st and 27th of March, 2006. The media's role was apparent before, during and
615 after the head count. The National Population Census (NPC) collaborated with the mass media to "ensure
616 a full-scale participation in the census exercise " Ojete, (2008). One way the media provided meaningful
617 information and education on the census is via editorials, news, headlines and other journalistic genres (Ojete,
618 Ibid). transparency), a civic forum (allowing multiple voices to be heard) and an agenda-setter (highlighting
619 social problems); iii.

620 Political freedoms and a free press contribute indirectly to human development by encouraging government
621 responsiveness to public concerns. There is however a lack of evidence and relatively little comparative research
622 to support these claims. Furthermore, most existing research focuses on the impact of media access, rather than
623 on that of press freedom.

624 The paper finds that the free press is significantly associated with levels of democracy, irrespective of the
625 indicator of democracy used. (The impact of media/press liberalization was the most consistent predictor of
626 democracy, and was even stronger than wealth.) Further, countries where much of the public has access to
627 the free press usually have greater political stability, rule of law, government efficiency in the policy process,
628 regulatory quality, and the least corruption. Other findings relate to the global distribution of press freedom
629 includes:

630 ? There are significant regional variations, with the highest levels of press freedom found in industrialized
631 nations (including the most affluent economies and longest-standing democracies). Latin America and South-
632 East Asia enjoy relatively high levels of press freedom, while Arab states appear to have the lowest levels. ?
633 There are also considerable variations within Latin America, Africa and Asia. Some countries with low levels of
634 economic development have high levels of press freedom such as Benin and Mali. See Noris, (2006, Pp 1 -26).

635 A free and independent media is integral to the process of democratisation and good governance and ultimately
636 to human development. This lecture attempted to highlight both the direct and indirect benefits of the free press
637 on human development, other studies indicate the plausibility of the assumption that improvements in democracy

28 E) CONCLUDING REMARKS

638 and good governance contribute indirectly to poverty alleviation by making governments more accountable and
639 responsive to need.

640 Good Governance requires the understanding and participation of every member of the society. However, it
641 has been observed that for governance to be just and democratic, leaders more than any other sector of the
642 society need to use their power responsibly and for the greater good. Systems and procedures need to be in
643 place that impose restraints on power and encourage government officials to act in the public's best interests.
644 The media/press, their roles, channels and contents, are considered powerful enough to make this achievement
645 a reality. The Nigerian media/press as exemplified by the NUJ have been in the vanguard for the promotion
646 and sustenance of the democracy we now have in the country, even the struggle for independence was pioneered
647 and fought for by the Nigerian media/press. But a great number of existing media channels in the country
648 need to take up the responsibility of adequately engendering better governance in our democratic polity. As the
649 institution mandated to hold those in governance accountable, the Nigerian media/press can effectively achieve
650 this if they apply the basic principles of patriotism, accountability, transparency and objectivity in the discharge
651 of their duties as well as uphold the sanctity of truth and fairness at all times.

652 I thank you all, once again for given the opportunity to share ideas with you and may God bless you for your
kind attention please.



Figure 1: Figure 1 :

them and have a say about what they need and
want
paraphrased).

from governmentJobarteh, (2012;

Figure 2:

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