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CHAPTER NINE



CROSS-FERTILISATION OR MONOLITHIC JOURNALISM: WHICH APPROACH TO POST-CENTENARY JOURNALISM TRAINING IN NIGERIA?

**Abdulmutallib Ado Abubakar
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Introduction

Journalism as a field of study and professional enterprise is a critical component in the process of societal development. For this reason the complexities of the teaching, learning and practice in the field needs to be critically evaluated and harnessed so that journalism can be properly situated within the socio-cultural and religious milieu of the area which it serves (Deuze 2005: 442). Though one can argue the same for other professions, for example the medical and legal profession would work better when their organization takes cognizance of the social context in which they will serve, this paper argues that the imperative is higher in the case of journalism which reveals, promotes, comments on human endeavor from diverse identity groups. As Pate (2010) notes, the beauty and strength of existence lie in the variety and differentiation in the industry yet, this is not always guaranteed. In this study, we argue that for this beauty to be appreciated and enjoyed, there is need for deliberate and concerted efforts towards strategic integration of such diversity within the industry. If social diversity is to be mainstreamed, it should first be established in journalism training and practice and the paper argues that this is essential in a multi-cultural Nigeria.

Nigeria, with its population estimated over 170 million people, is the most populous nation in Africa. Its multi-cultural nature is evident in over 500 languages (out of which, 22 are institutional with clear cut structure, 80 are developing, 358 are vigorous, 62 are in trouble and dying). Nigerians have different cultures, observe different traditions and customs; adhere to different religious faiths including Islam,

Christianity, Traditional African Religions and Humanism (Seibert 2000: 1).

The nation's cultural diversity is further reflected in its geopolitical constitution which is complex, technical and dynamic. Prior to the emergence of Nigeria as a country, the present 923,768 sq.km land mass was occupied by many centralised and decentralised primordial nations including the Benin Kingdom, Hausa states, Igboland, Oyo Empire and many others. This was before the colonial rule and the creation of the Northern and Southern protectorates of the British Empire. Nigeria as it is known today was formed with the amalgamation of both protectorates in 1914. For administrative convenience, the country at inception was divided into Northern, Eastern and Western regions, and Lagos the Federal Capital Territory. Later the Mid-Western region was carved out of the Western region and by 1967, Nigeria had metamorphosed into a 12-state structure. This increased to 19 in 1976, 21 in 1987. By 1991, there were 30 states and by 1996, 36 states along with Abuja the Federal Capital Territory (FCT). On its 100th anniversary as a nation, there were still 36 states and 774 Local Government Areas in Nigeria (Pate & Abubakar, 2013). For political convenience, the country had been divided into six geopolitical zones without constitutional provisions. These are North-Central, North-East, North-West, South-East, South-West, and South-South.

It is now over a century since the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914; the socio-cultural, political and economic diversities continues to swell and the nation becomes more fragmented within the established territorial national boundaries. Pate (2010) argues that just as the geographical landscape of the country differs, stretching from the Sahel Savannah in the far north to the rain forest down south, so do our people differ in their outlooks though united in their humanity. He adds that generally, diversity is a reality of life and if these things are lacking in a social setting, life could be very boring. The complexities in a social structure, the divergent views, ideas, norms and values make human existence brighter but they have to be handled and assimilated strategically into every facet of human society for social harmony. The discussion above reveals the foundations of the complex and diverse nature of Nigeria. Dwyer (2010) argues that diversity is sometimes referred to as multiplicity and heterogeneity in sex, cultural practice, ethnicity, religious affiliation, ideological stance, political leaning, level of social development, place of habitation, among others. Going by its holistic meaning, the issue of diversity is present in all societies. Diversity is evident through various aspects of culture - politics, economics, agriculture, geography, language, foods, land and so on as Albert (2002) in Pate (2010) notes. Dwyer (2010, p.70), argues that diversity as a concept also points to the need for (or existence of) pluralism in social, political, cultural, economic and media discourses. Thus, to sum up, it can be argued that though all societies experience diversity, issues of diversity in Nigeria are peculiarly complex.

The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) and indeed academic scholars have found Nigeria's media system to be impressively

free, robust, the most developed in Africa with regard to both training and practice (Colmery et. al., 2009). However, there is a mishandling and improper integration of the potential to respond to diversity issues (critically in this instance multidimensional aspects of ethnicity, gender lop-sidedness) in the composition of trainers within journalism education and professional practice-based training. The paper argues, like Powell and Powell (2004) that this can affect the kind of knowledge that people acquire, internalise and transmit across generations. They suggest that the management of multiculturalism and diversity issues affects effective communication at macro and micro levels in society.

This study examined issues of diversity with specific references to gender representations and geopolitical orientations and socio-ethnic affiliations of trainers in journalism institutions, and infers on possible effects of this on practice in centenary Nigeria. This was done by assessing the structural composition of journalism trainers in four leading Nigerian institutions¹ to advocate alternative affirmative approaches towards integrating and mainstreaming some of Nigeria's complex and diverse perspectives not the country's journalism institutions, journalism practice and the mass communication industry as a whole.

The proposed alternative approach is christened “cross-fertilisation journalism”. The concept is borrowed from Biology, where male and female plant or animal sex cells, sometimes of different or related species are scientifically joined to allow re-combination and re-composition of genetic materials of both species to enable the manifestation of superior traits to manifest in the offspring. This could result in a brand new variety or species which is devoid of the deficient characteristics hitherto known in the earlier known ones. The concept has for long been applied to ideas – thus, the phrase “cross-fertilisation of ideas”. In this paper, cross-fertilisation journalism is conceptualised as the strategic composition of trainers in journalism training institutions to ensure students exposure to ideas and people from diverse ethnic backgrounds and varied gender reflecting Nigeria's diverse geographic landscapes, among other elements of diversity to allow the cross-breeding of knowledge requisite in mass communication for Nigeria with its diverse peoples. The purpose is to nurture understanding communicators who will promote a culture of inclusiveness through the media, raise a new crop of sympathetic media and journalism practitioners.

Journalism Training and Practice in Pre-centenary Nigeria

Training for most professions in a modern society is a process, requiring the acquisition of skills, knowledge and practical experience. Journalism practice as a profession in pre-centenary Nigeria predated training and training institutions. For example, the first newspaper in Nigeria, *Iwe Irobin fun Awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba* was established in 1859 prior to the establishment of Jackson College of Journalism (JCJ) in Enugu which metamorphosed into the Department of Mass Communication after the creation of the University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN). The JCJ, established in 1961

is the first journalism training institution in Nigeria followed by the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ), which was established in 1963 as an experimental school of journalism in Africa along with Kenya's. The Nigeria Institute of Journalism (NIJ) was established by the Zurich-based International Press Institute (IPI) in Lagos, but closed in 1965 due to political crisis and subsequent Nigerian Civil War. It was reopened in 1971 (NIJ, 2015; UNN, 2015; Odunlami 2014; Akinfeleye 2011: 35).

It can be argued that prior to the 1960s, there was no provision for any kind of formal training or higher education in journalism or mass communication in Nigeria. At independence, there were only three recognized tertiary institutions in Nigeria. The first tertiary institution established in 1947 was Yaba College of Technology. The University of Ibadan, then a college of University of London, was established as the first university in Nigeria in 1948. It became a full-fledged university with independent powers in 1962. The Kaduna Technical Institute established in 1956, and renamed Kaduna Polytechnic in 1962 was the third institution at the tertiary level in Nigeria prior to independence (<http://www.ui.edu.ng/history>). None of these offered journalism education or mass communication at the time.

From 1962 to 1980, only three universities, two polytechnics and three monotechnics offered journalism training in Nigeria. These include: University of Nigeria, Nsukka; University of Lagos; and Bayero University Kano. The polytechnics include: Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu and Moshood Abiola Polytechnic, Abeokuta. The monotechnics are the Times Journalism Institute, Nigerian Institute of Journalism (which was being revived after its truncated first incarnation 1963 – 1965) and Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria Training School (Akinfeleye 2011: 189-190). The sites of these institutions reveal an imbalance in terms of geographical spread.

With regard to institutions established in this period (1960 – 1980), Bayero University Kano was the only one in Northern Nigeria to offer journalism training and related courses. In the South, there were already six institutions. It was not until 1983 that another journalism training department was established in Northern Nigeria at the University of Maiduguri with the establishment of its Mass Communication Department. Thereafter, other institutions like Ahmadu Bello University, University of Jos, Benue State University and Kaduna Polytechnic, among others commenced journalism training.

The delay and imbalance in establishing tertiary institutions and commencing journalism training in Northern Nigeria may be connected with an aversion to western education and subsequent antagonism toward western education in Nigeria's North. This may be connected with the region's historical links. For instance, Gusau & Dauda (2010) in an interview with the Shehu of Dikwa chronicled that Islam was long in existence in Northern Nigeria, in the Kanem Borno Empire since 1775 when El-Kanemi, the founder of the dynasty came from Fezzan, in Turkey to settle in

Gamboru Ngala. According to the Shehu of Dikwa, El-Kanemi visited Mecca and Jeddah in today's Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, and Egypt where he studied Islamic and Qur'anic concepts and became a Qur'anic teacher. This was even before the conquest of Fulani jihadists led by Usman Dan Fodio. This suggests that Northern Nigerians, were already literate in Arabic and Islamic literature, and may have considered western education, its knowledge and principles dissonant with their religious beliefs and doctrines. More so, colonialists and missionaries were found to be enmeshing propagation of Christian religious beliefs in campaigns for western education. Echoes of such ideology still exist in the beliefs of groups like Boko Haram, whose reign of terror has created an unprecedented state of insecurity across Nigeria, especially the Northeast and neighboring countries like Chad, Niger and Cameroun where thousands have been killed, properties worth billions of naira destroyed and millions of persons displaced.

Trends in journalism training also differed globally. For example, in terms of formalized educational training, the initiative occurred at different times. In the United States of America, the journalism training school was first established in 1908 at the University of Missouri. Australia's came in 1921 and the United Kingdom's later in the late 1960s (Oso, 2012; Herbert, 2000). Nigeria's debut thus compares favourably. By the late 1990s, there were already 58 journalism training institutions and by 2012, as it approached its centenary anniversary as a nation, the number of formal training institutions had increased to 80 - 54 universities and 26 polytechnics (Oso, 2012; Akinfeleye, 2011). These figures do not include journalism training schools forced to coexist within other subject disciplines in departments where they are less visible such as Language and Communication Arts as in the University of Uyo (Oso, 2012).

Nigeria's National Universities Commission (NUC, 2015a, b & c) documents that there are 127 universities in Nigeria: 41 federal, 25 state, and 61 privately-owned. Of these, 73 offer journalism and communication-related courses. Of the 73 universities who offer mass communication and related courses, 16 are federal – seven in the north and nine in Southern Nigeria respectively. There are 20 state-governments established universities – eight in Northern Nigeria and 12 in the south respectively. The other 37 universities are privately-owned and only five are situated in Northern Nigeria. These figures suggest that in Northern Nigeria, provision for journalism education and western education in general, compared with Southern Nigeria's has not received adequate attention of government and private establishments. That said, 18 (58 percent) out of 31 polytechnics and monotronics which offer journalism and mass communication training, are in Northern Nigeria and 13 (42 percent) are from the south. Departments of communication in these institutions, besides Yaba College of Technology, Kaduna Polytechnic, Nigerian Institute of Journalism, International Institute of Journalism, Ramat Polytechnic, Kano State Development Journalism Institute and Osisa Technology Enugu (a private polytechnic) were established during military regimes. Universities did not fare so well under the military.

The most recent Nigerian universities which offer journalism and mass communication training were established in the fourth republic 1999-2015; a total of 60 departments (37 of which are privately owned) were created in this era. The earlier growth spurts also coincided with the democratic dispensations. The first two universities (University of Nigeria and University of Lagos) were established during the First Republic (1960-1966), and another five in the Second Republic (1979-1983). Five departments had been created in 1990-1995 during the aborted Third Republic. The fourth republic was by far the most prolific, more so with the involvement of privately funded institutions. All 61 private universities offering journalism and mass communication were established in the Fourth Republic. Interestingly, only nine (9) of the journalism and mass communication departments in Nigerian universities were established during military administrations. This pattern may be indicative of an inextricable relationship between democracy and the media on the one hand, and the antagonism of the media and journalism by military dictatorships. The media are regarded as key players in social transformation and national development. Altogether, 105 departments offer mass communication and journalism training in Nigerian universities, polytechnics and monotechnics.² These figures align with Akinfeleye's 2001 estimation that the number of training institutions would have increased by 2005.

It has been suggested in various quarters that the nonexistence and slow development of journalism training in the early years of an independent Nigeria, especially during military regimes, was mainly due to the erroneous belief by the military juntas that journalists antagonised their governments. They also believed journalism did not require any formal training. There were also factors such as low literacy rate, absence of vision, lack of sympathetic capitalist (economic) structures and the reticent attitude of British colonialists towards offering journalism education to Nigerians. (Akinfeleye, 2011) Perhaps such reticence was because training could empower people to seek their rights heightening the clamour for independence. It could also reflect the difference between the Americans and British attitudes to journalism training as evident in the dates when the first institutions of journalism were established. In addition, Akinfeleye (2011) notes that, political independence and high (conventional)³ literacy level made the media more liable to be adopted as a tool of manipulation, dominance of capitalism and commercialisation of knowledge production and sharing. One can also argue that the unprecedented expansion of journalism practice and proliferation of training institutions in Nigeria is consequent to the realisation that media can serve as a tool for social integration of diverse views.

Nigerian universities operate with comparable academic curriculum, so do other categories training institutions. Benchmarks for each bracket were set by Nigerian communication scholars with support from UNESCO. These are executed under the supervision of local regulatory bodies - the National Universities Commission (NUC) and the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) which oversees institutions such as polytechnics and monotechnics. As its focus is on vocational and technical (rather than academic) education the NBTE approved curriculum, though similar is

designed for equipping journalists with technical and vocational aspects of the profession.

Another difference noted in the institutions offering mass communication and journalism-related courses in Nigeria is the different ideological orientations emphasized. Scholarly perspectives fall within the range from Critical, to Liberal or Historical. Emphasis on methodological approaches have also differed, with preference for either Quantitative or Qualitative research approaches, but this is changing. Emerging scholars with higher academic qualifications from both foreign and local universities are now adopting some middle ground with respect to research approaches. They now experiment with methods that blend both Quantitative and Qualitative research approaches.

Meanwhile, Nigeria's media sector has been growing. As at 2013, there were over 632 functional media houses, including: 282 registered newspapers and magazines, 350 functional radio and television stations – 233 public and 123 private radio/television stations, 33 Multichannel Multipoint Distribution Services (MMDS) and 13 Direct-To-Home (DTH) (NPC, 2013; NBC, 2011). However, there is regional disparity in terms of private media ownership and control. Most Nigerian print media are situated along the Lagos-Ibadan axis and owned by proprietors of Southern Nigerian origin. National newspapers owned by proprietors from Northern Nigerian are relatively few and they operate in the Abuja-Kaduna axis.

These structural imbalances bring to fore several issues on how best to equip aspiring journalists with knowledge about the structure and complexities of the Nigerian society. There is also the issue of how these journalists should use knowledge acquired, and the need to ensure that they source, process and disseminate information that foster social integration and progress among the diverse public (CoE, 2012; Akinfeleye 2003). These have to be reflected in, the specific purposes set for journalism training and practice. This is evident in the broader educational policy overseen by the NUC and NBTE; they are to equip the [diverse] human resource requirements for mass communication in Nigeria. The NUC (2015a) was established in 1962 as an education advisory agency but acquired a statutory mandate in 1972. The NBTE which supervises the provision of technical and vocational education was created in 1977. Both agencies are under the purview of Nigeria's Federal Ministry of Education.

The agencies ensure that journalism education and training institutions produce competent communication, journalism and media scholars and trainers, editorial staff (reporters, editors and managers) for media organisations, and creative public relations and advertising professionals for image making and marketing industries (Akinfeleye, 2003; NUC, 2015a; NBTE, 2015). The quality of education from these institutions may impact on the ecology of communication and quality of symbolic mediated social interactions. If journalism trainers are not broadminded and fail to adopt

multicultural perspectives in teaching and learning, if they are not adequately exposed to the dynamic nature of the Nigerian society, they may graduate practitioners who due to insufficient knowledge of the society go on to create social disharmony and disintegration contrary to expectations for socially responsible, culturally well-adjusted journalists and media practitioners. For this reason, media and society scholars have periodically been collaborating with development partners to review the journalism training curriculum to reflect current trends in training needs and meet global demands for diversity integration (for example Umaru Pate's work with UNESCO) (Bashir, 2014). Such curriculum reviews help to keep students aware of trends, fostering better appreciation of the socio-cultural needs of audiences. The capacity of prospective journalists to deal with news sources, their ability to comply with norms of decency with regard to their dressing, behavior, even in asking what will be deemed meaningful questions and recognizing appropriate answers in accordance with Nigeria's cultural complexities will be enhanced.

However, it has been argued that socio-cultural diversity and varied ideological perspectives had existed in journalism training and practice in Nigeria since the 1960s (Odozi, 2014). Differences in the ideological strains informing journalism training and practice from the American liberal perspectives and British public service philosophies were evident in the curriculum. Expectedly, Mass Communication scholars have different ethnic backgrounds but most (including late Professors Alfred Opubor and Frank Ugboajah) were from the South. That was long before the proliferation of educational provisions for journalism training and the assertiveness of local (particularly minority ethnic) identities evident through creation of more states and local governments. More than obtained before, education offered to aspiring journalists and media practitioners should foster respect, cultural sensitivity and socio – cultural integration. It has been argued that exposure to multicultural faculty teams is another way to attain this (Odozi, 2014).

Regional And Gender Disparities In Journalism Training

Spread across four zones, geopolitical balance was attained in Nigeria when the first four university departments offering mass communication and journalism training were established – University of Nigeria Nsukka (South-East, 1962) University of Lagos (South-West, 1966) Bayero University Kano (North-West, 1979) and University of Maiduguri (North-East, 1983) (Akinfeleye, 2011). This parity might have been created deliberately, especially in the case of the latter two universities; perhaps they were established to achieve a semblance of balance among what Mustapha (2007) called 'a tripodal ethnic structure' which comprises Hausa, Igbo and Yoruba, and to appease other ethnic groups in Nigeria's North-East. Mustapha noted that the three ethnic groups dominated the political and [cultural] educational economy of the country. Therefore, the federal government introduced a system of 'informal quotas as the basis for representation'. Later, representation on the basis of Federal Character was enshrined in the 1979 Constitution to allow for 'fairness' within federal educational institutions and recruitment of academic staff as was also the case in

public appointments. This also had the potential of fostering exposure to other people and national integration of diverse cultures (Mustapha, 2007).

In spite of these efforts, structural educational inequalities stemming from the colonial era persisted. The pioneering students in the earliest journalism training institutions were from Southern Nigeria. Though the 1966 Civil War disrupted learning at the Jackson School of Journalism, University of Nigeria, its students (a handful) were relocated to the newly established department in University of Lagos. Much later the pioneering academic staff at the departments in Bayero University Kano and University of Maiduguri came from Southern Nigeria (notably South-East or South-South), with a few foreign nationals.

Another disparity evident in journalism training institutions particularly in Northern Nigeria, is gender related. Female trainers, though present, are somewhat invincible; the field is male dominated. Perhaps this reflects the poor situation regarding girl-child education particularly in Northern Nigeria. The contempt with which the girl-child is treated is still evident in certain quarters in the north. This may have religious colorations as it is commonplace for Muslims to give their daughters out in marriage at puberty. Ovuorie (2013) chronicles in the Africa Health, Human and Social Development Information Service 2013 Report that besides being worst in girl-child education, Northern Nigeria had the highest female illiteracy, highest adolescent girl marriage, highest under-15 child bearing, and highest risk of maternal death and injury. Nmadu et al. (2010) argue that as at 2008, female enrollment at secondary school level, was 22 per cent and this declined to 12 per cent at the tertiary level. This is just one explanation for the few women found among the cadre of trainers of journalists and mass communicators. In fact as at 2014, there was only one female Senior Lecturer in two of the leading Northern Nigerian universities in this sector. It is little wonder that neither of those institutions has produced a female head of department. This can also explain why none of the Northern Nigerian institutions offering journalism and mass communication-related training has been headed by any female. There are no guarantees that a female Head of Department (HOD) will better motivate younger female students to achieve academic excellence, but female students and junior scholars could benefit from such role models, to encourage and mentor them in their academic or professional journalism and mass communication-related careers.

The situation in southern parts of Nigeria contrasts this; there are more women in education even at the tertiary level. Though these may not compare favourably with international standards of gender parity in enrollment, universities in the South-East and South-West for example, in the University of Nigeria Nsukka and University of Lagos, have women in the Senior Lecturer cadres and above. This improved fortunes may be linked to a warmer reception of western education, the early appreciation of the subject and consequent early establishment of journalism training institutions in these parts. Even then, it has taken a longer time for the women to break through the

glass ceiling. Despite its age, the University of Lagos with the longest uninterrupted service as a department only produced its first female Head of Department in 2014, and this in acting capacity.

Further compounding noted disparities is a general inadequacy of educational provision for Nigeria's yawning human resource needs as Mustapha (2007) notes. He asserts that educational inequalities across the country reproduced inequalities in manpower and human capital development. He argued that in 2003, the northern zones with 53 percent of the population had only 10 percent of engineers, 15 percent of professors, 10 percent of architects, 25 per cent of lawyers, eight per cent of bank executives, and less than two per cent of insurance practitioners. Though fairly dated now, such statistical evidence reveals a trend of educational gaps, still evident, in the sector. So for instance, records from the institutions show that whereas the department of Mass Communication, University of Lagos annually produces about 70 postgraduates degree holders, Bayero University Kano and the University of Maiduguri together, hardly produce ten.

Gender Disparity In Journalism Practice In Nigeria

Achieving gender parity is not peculiar to Nigeria. The concern for mainstreaming gender issues is globally recognized in the quest to attain inclusive and sustainable development. Gender parity is a crucial part of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). Later tagged Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) these objectives reflect the need to redress gender differences crucially in education, health, and political participation. It requires a balance in representation and inclusion in diverse sectors of society including journalism training and practice. (Gagnon, 2010). Because of journalism's interface with a variety of critical social sectors, one can argue that attaining gender parity in journalism is most crucial.

So, besides technical skills required in the practice of journalism, communication needs of media audiences demand the presentation of diverse perspectives. Gender balance in the sector may foster this. For this to happen, there needs to be balanced access to formal education and opportunities for vocational training on the job all pointing towards gender participation. It is logical to expect that students from institutions which lack the gender balance and a multi-disciplinary approach to teaching, would likely fall short when catering for the information needs and aspirations of a diverse audience.

Gender diversity is relatively low in Nigeria as found among eight media houses that employed approximately 750 media practitioners. Only 288 (38.4 percent) were female and 456 (61.8 percent) were male. This indicates that men outnumbered women in journalism practice. However, women practitioners secured a third or more of the jobs at occupational levels and there was moderate movement of women to top management. The number of women journalism practitioners hovered a little just above 15 percent (IWMF, 2011). The gatekeeping process, which ensures that the final

decision about what appears prominent and what does not, appears to be a preserve of male journalism practitioners too. For instance, presently, only This Day newspaper, which is one of Nigeria's influential, have a woman as its Editor. Women journalists mostly cover soft aspects of journalism that includes issues of women and children. However, some cover politics, economy, agriculture and areas related to governance and decision making process. Chioma, Okere, Alao, Atakiti and Jegede (2015) however explain that women journalists face peculiar challenges as a result of their gender like sexual harassment, unequal opportunities and household responsibilities. Nonetheless, female mass communication students in Nigeria still consider careers in journalism. Majority perceive journalism to be a good profession for women and over half of them would positively consider a career in journalism, especially in photojournalism [which is an area of journalism that was hitherto male-dominated] (Chioma et al, 2015).

Method Of The Study

This study is mainly descriptive though it offers some analysis of its observed patterns. It has employed a purposive sample, focusing on departments of mass communication in which journalism is taught from four public-funded universities – Bayero University Kano, University of Lagos, University of Maiduguri and University of Nigeria Nsukka. These were examined because of their historical antecedents as premier institutions in their geopolitical location, the ownership and their contribution to the crops of locally trained media practitioners and scholars. The staff composition was expected to be diverse, thus able to produce more broadminded and liberal practitioners since the schools are funded by the federal government.

The data on the list of academic staff and their geopolitical origin and gender were extracted from the universities' websites, departmental hand books, personal observations and mail interviews. For instance, after retrieving the list of academic staff of the UNN and inferences made about geographical and gender identities, the list was emailed to an academic staff in the department who cross-checked, verified and validated the data. Personal observations and brief personal interviews were also conducted with at least an academic staff in the Mass Communication Department of BUK, Unilag and Unimaid to generate data for the analysis presented in the following section. The staff list, their geographical representations and gender compositions are hereby attached as appendices.

Findings: Staff Composition

The data on the geopolitical representation and gender compositions of academic staff from the sampled institutions reveals a definite pattern of disparity. There is a tendency for more staff to be from the geopolitical location of the institution and staff were more than likely to be male.

Geopolitical Representation

Table 1: Geopolitical Representation of Academic Staff

Institution	Geopolitical Representation						Total	%
	North-Central	North-East	North-West	South-East	South-South	South-West		
University of Lagos (UNILAG)	0 (6.3%)	1 (3.1%)	29 (90.6%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	30	100%
University of Maiduguri (UNIMAI)	0 (0%)	5 (85%)	1 (5%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	6	100%
University of Nigeria Nsukka (UNN)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	18 (100%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	18	100%
Total	0	6	30	18	0	0	54	

Table 1 above reveals that 29 (90.6 percent) of the 32 academic staff in Bayero University Kano, are from the North-West. Only two are from the North-Central and one from the North-East, while there are none from the South-East, South-South and South-West respectively. This institution had the largest faculty. At the University of Lagos, which had the smallest faculty size, 11 (68.8 percent) of the 16 academic staff are from the South-West, three are from the South-East and one (6.3 percent) is from the North-Central. There were no representations from the North-West and North-East. Indeed if the representation from North Central was from Kwara State, then it might still be culturally affiliated with the South-West. The University of Maiduguri, consisting 20 academic staff, have 17 (85 percent) from the North-East while the remaining three are each from the North-West, South-South and South-West respectively. There was nobody from the South-East. Meanwhile all 18 (100 percent) of the academic staff of the University of Nigeria Nsukka are from the South-East. The findings are diagrammatically depicted in the bar chart in Figure 1 below.

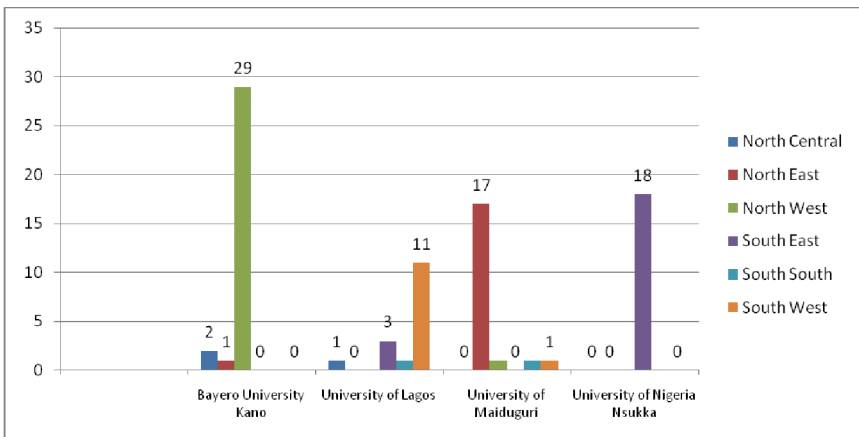


Figure 1: Geo-political representations of academic staff of BUK, Unilag, Unimaid & UNN

Gender Composition

Table 2: Gender Composition of Academic Staff

University	Frequency				Total	
	Female		Male		N	%
	N	Percent	N	Percent		
BUK	5	15.6	27	84.4	32	100
Unilag	5	31.3	11	68.8	16	
Unimaid	4	20	16	80%	20	
UNN	4	22.2	14	77.8	18	
					86	

The result shows that the institution based in Nigeria's most cosmopolitan city, the University of Lagos has five (31.3 percent) female and 11 (68.8 percent) male academic staff. This is a ratio of about 1 woman to 3 men. Bayero University in Kano, a foremost cosmopolitan city in northern Nigeria, also has five (15.6 percent) female and 27 (84.4 percent) male academic staff. This is a ratio of about 1 woman to 5 men. University of Maiduguri has a ratio of 1 woman to 4 men, with four (20 percent) female and 16 (80 percent) male academic staff. University of Nigeria Nsukka also has four (22.2 percent) female and 14 (77.8 percent) male academic staff. These findings are pictorially represented in the pie chart in Figure 2 below:

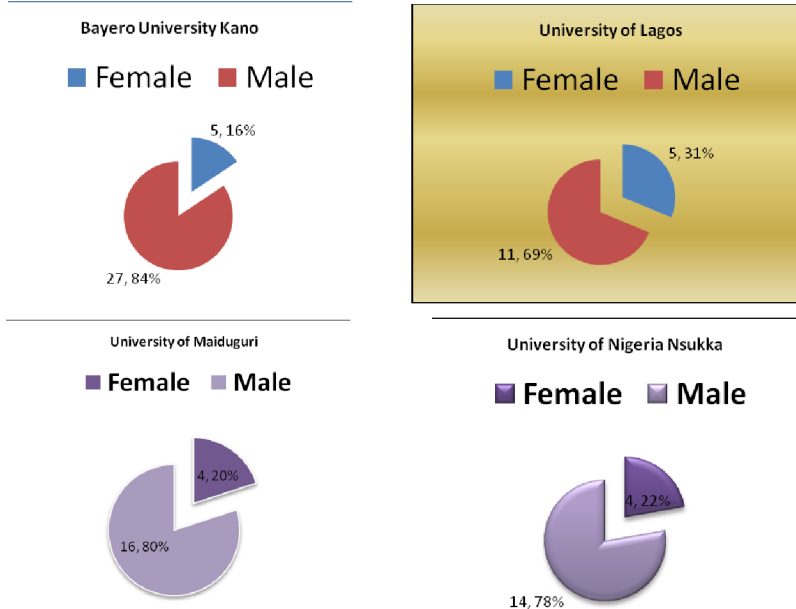


Figure 2: Gender Composition of Academic Staff

Discussions

Attention to diversity in the educational provision for mass communication and journalism is important because communication scholars and practitioners need to understand the complexities of the composition of their society as such issues of diversity are inextricably linked to the attaining and sustaining of development goals. Ideas for national development and integration may flounder if interests and ideological values within a nation remain divergent obtuse and sacrosanct.

The study shows University of Lagos in the South-West and University of Maiduguri, in the North-East Nigeria have the most diversified geopolitical representations, with at least one academic staff from four of Nigeria's six geopolitical zones. At the University of Lagos the representation was widest since each of the three regions in the earliest administrative structure of Nigeria was reflected; there was at least, one person from Nigeria's North, South and West.

University of Lagos, situated in the city which had once been a federal territory and the nation's capital, also had the best gender balance in the sample. Yet, in the composition of academic staff, all four universities in the sample, have both regional and gender bias. Although these are all federal universities, which should reflect Nigeria's federal character, geopolitical representation was skewed. Our argument is that without the cross-fertilisation of ideas that should occur in the event of a diversely composed team of trainers, journalism training institutions and media organisations may struggle to produce individuals who can cater for differences in orientation, or cultural nuances underlying the attitudes and behaviour of students and audiences. Catchment area admission policy for federal universities allows for the recruitment of a small quota of indigenes from the zone in which institutions are situated. There is no such policy for recruiting academic staff that could possibly explain the observed lopsidedness in geopolitical representations of academic staff. Rather, cultural affinity may inform individuals' choice of residence and access to employment opportunities.

Levels of disparity in terms of gender varies between the geopolitical regions and Lagos (South-West) fares best as shown, but the picture across the nation is poor. Using cumulative figures from the entire sample, the number of female (18) to male (68) academic staff, yields an average ratio of about 1: 4. This is no surprise given prevalent attitudes to girl child education as discussed in a section above. Yet the disparity may also be due to the gendered nature of journalism and other occupational tracks in the media industries. Socially defined roles for women and rejection of western education especially in Northern Nigeria may further compound this. In the event that there are shifts in the gendering of these occupations, as may be evident in the gender ratio of current students, in time the desired balance may be reflected in the staff team, as is already the case in the University of Lagos. However, 21st Century journalism training and practice, especially in Nigeria where there are ethnic, religious, cultural, socio-political, and other diversities requires strategic mainstreaming. Besides honing core professional skills, journalism and mass communication

programmes of study, should expose students to different perspectives informed by thinking from diverse ethnic backgrounds and mindful of different gender. This is to foster respect for different cultural positions or competing viewpoints. Practitioners, in the course of national integration, conflict reporting, attitudinal and behavioural change communication, those who collect, process and disseminate information to diverse audiences can also report objectively with fairness and precision. Cultural complexities involved in these tasks can be better appreciated if issues of diversity are mainstreamed from classrooms to newsrooms. Dealing with these issues at the local (national) level should help practitioners become more critical when engaging with other complex social, economic and political issues at the global level.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study suggests that poor cultural integration of academic staff teams and inadequate engagement with diversity issues in journalism and mass communication training institutions may impact negatively on media practices in a nation as diverse as Nigeria. It argues that cross-fertilisation of ideas, attainable through improved geopolitical and gender representation of staff can facilitate development efforts which require people with diverse profiles to participate. Therefore, this argument complements the participatory approach to development. It may be necessary to introduce regulatory measures regarding recruitment, admission and curriculum of teaching to foster more diversely composed institutions. Student and staff exchange programmes may also be encouraged. Senior academic staff should be encouraged to take their sabbatical leave outside their geopolitical zones. Travel grants can be set aside for journalists and student journalists to enhance their exposure. With travel, they may gain perspectives and better understand multicultural contexts of subjects within and outside their country of residence. UNESCO, which has already institutionalised and rigorously advocates diversity in media education, can be a worthy promoter, in this regard. We also advocate for the institutionalisation of a policy of cross-fertilisation in the composition of editorial and management teams of media organisations, since Dwyer (2010) posits that diversity is about pluralism in the cultural, economic, political, social and media discourses. Deuze (2005) also opines that journalism as a field of study and professional enterprise is a critical component in the process of societal development that should be critically evaluated and mainstreamed within the socio-cultural and religious complexities of teaching, learning and practice. It is then imperative to have broadly diverse representations among media practitioners; that is gatekeepers in core journalism and other critical message producers.

Above all, there should be regular opportunities to share ideas such as those provided by the Association of Communication Scholars and Professionals of Nigerian (ACSPN). These opportunities for dialogue between academic bodies and various stakeholders may lead to advocacy and lobbying. Academic bodies can take the lead in such initiatives, addressing appropriate institutional policymakers on necessary changes to the curriculum.

We also recommend the review of statutory provisions perhaps through the supervisory bodies like NUC, and NBTE. This may hasten the bedding of practices that foster desired cross fertilization and revolutionise the teaching and learning of media practices. It is expected that if successfully implemented, these recommendations will ultimately enhance the quality of media interventions, and broadly strengthen Nigeria's post-centenary development efforts.

Suggested Areas for Further Studies

For its interest in diversity issues, this study examined geopolitical and gender representations of academic staff in four leading Nigerian universities which offer journalism and mass communication education. As ancillary to its recommendations on educational institutions, the study has suggested changes in staffing of media organization without appraising staffing composition of media organisations. Considering the multi-cultural nature of Nigeria and the differences these may generate, it is imperative to undertake another tier of research to ascertain staff composition of leading media outfits in order to generate baseline empirical data on the state of diversity in the composition of key media gatekeepers in Nigeria.

Furthermore, a separate study on departments that teach journalism and communication in state government funded and private universities, polytechnics and monotechnics is required. In terms of staff composition and programme delivery, these differ from federal universities covered in this study. Notable is the difference between academic mandate of universities and polytechnics which offer vocational and technical education. There is also bias of ownership and its influence; private universities are not bound to reflect the federal character whether in staff or student population. Since some private universities are owned by individual or religious groups, the particular influence of these owners and their creed on the composition of those responsible for teaching prospective journalists and media practitioners, and the crop of students that they attract ought to be explored.

The essence of all these studies is to provide support for some affirmative action that fosters integration of diverse cultural identities into academic and professional media and journalism institutions. The consequent cross-fertilisation of ideas is part of the collective effort required to build a stable and united country through inclusive knowledge production and sharing.

Endnotes

¹ Details of academic staff of the four Nigerian universities sampled in the study are attached in the appendices.

² List of universities, polytechnics and monotechnics offering Mass Communication degree program in Nigeria are attached as appendices.

³ That is literacy determined by Western educational standards

NOTE: The ranks and institutions of academic staffs are constantly changing due to promotion, academic mobility and civil unrest in the cases of staff at the University of Maiduguri, in North East Nigeria, where Boko Haram's insurgency has taken the most toll. Academic staff mobility may also affect staff of any of these universities due to the establishment of private universities, who offer better emoluments and working conditions to attract scarce senior-cadre academic staff.

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Appendices

ACADEMIC STAFF OF THE FOUR NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES SAMPLED⁴

1. Bayero University Kano (BUK)

MHh.	Rank of academic staff	Gender	Region
1.	Professor	Male	North West
2.	Professor	Male	North East
3.	Reader	Male	North West
4.	Reader	Male	North West
5.	Reader	Male	North West
6.	Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Male	North West
7.	Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Male	North Central
8.	Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Male	North West
9.	Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Female	North West
10.	Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Female	North West
11.	Senior Lecturer	Female	North Central
12.	Senior Lecturer	Male	North West
13.	Senior Lecturer	Male	North West
14.	Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	North West
15.	Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	North West
16.	Senior Lecturer	Male	North West
17.	Lecturer I	Male	North West
18.	Lecturer I	Male	North West
19.	Assistant Lecturer	Male	North West
20.	Lecturer I	Male	North West
21.	Lecturer II	Female	North West
22.	Lecturer I	Female	North West
23.	Assistant Lecture	Male	North West
24.	Lecturer II	Male	North West
25.	Lecturer II	Male	North West
26.	Lecturer II	Male	North West
27.	Lecturer II	Male	North West
28.	Lecturer II	Male	North West
29.	Lecturer II	Male	North West
30.	Assistant Lecturer	Male	North West
31.	Assistant Lecturer	Male	North West
32.	Assistant Lecturer	Male	North West

Source: Department of Mass Communication, BUK, 2013/2014 Academic Session

2. University of Lagos (Unilag)

MHh	Rank of academic staff	Gender	Region
33.	1Professor	Male	South West
34.	2Reader	Female	South-South
35.	3Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South West
36.	4Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South West
37.	5Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South West
38.	6Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	North Central
39.	7Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South West
40.	8Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South West
41.	9Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Female	South East
42.	1Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Male	South East
43.	1Lecturer I	Male	South West
44.	1Lecturer I	Male	South West
45.	1Lecturer I	Male	South West
46.	1Assistant Lecturer	Female	South West
47.	1Assistant Lecturer	Female	South West
48.	1Assistant Lecturer	Female	South East

Source: <http://sosc.unilag.edu.ng/index.php/personnel-mass-comm/academic-staff-mass-comm>; Retrieved: July 2, 2014

3. University of Maiduguri (Unimaid)

MH	Rank of academic staff	Gender	Region
33.	Professor	Male	North East
34.	Reader	Male	South
35.	Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	North East
36.	Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	North East
37.	Lecturer I, Ph.D.	Male	North East
38.	Lecturer I	Male	North East
39.	Lecturer I	Male	North East
40.	Lecturer I	Male	North East
41.	Lecturer I	Male	North East
42.	Lecturer I	Male	North East
43.	Lecturer I	Male	North East
44.	Assistant Lecturer	Female	North East
45.	Assistant Lecturer	Female	North East
46.	Assistant Lecturer	@f Ze`	North East
47.	Assistant Lecturer	Male	South West
48.	Assistant Lecturer	Male	North West
49.	Graduate Assistant	Male	North East
50.	Graduate Assistant	Female	North East
51.	Graduate Assistant	Male	North East
52.	Graduate Assistant	Male	North East

Source: Department of Mass Communication, Unimaid, 2013/2014 Academic Session

4. University of Nigeria (UNN) Nsukka

{ b	Rank of academic staff	Gender	Region
33.	Professor	Male	South East
34.	Reader	Male	South East
35.	Reader	Male	South East
36.	Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South East
37.	Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South East
38.	Senior Lecturer, Ph.D.	Male	South East
39.	Lecturer I	Female	South East
40.	Lecturer II	Male	South East
41.	Lecturer I	Male	South East
42.	Lecturer I	Male	South East
43.	Lecturer I	Male	South East
44.	Lecturer I	Male	South East
45.	Lecturer II	Female	South East
46.	Lecturer II	a A`	South East
47.	Lecturer I	Male	South East
48.	Assistant Lecturer	Male	South East
49.	Assistant Lecturer	Female	South East
50.	Assistant Lecturer	Female	South East

Source: <http://unn.edu.ng/cms/mass-communication-staff-profile>; Retrieved June 25, 2014

LIST OF UNIVERSITIES OFFERING MASS COMMUNICATION DEGREE PROGRAMS IN NIGERIA

Federal Universities:

MNo	Name of university	Program	Year established	Region
1.	Ahmadu Bello University	Mass Communication	1992	North West
2.	Bayero University Kano	Mass Communication	1976	North West
3.	Federal University of Technology, Minna	Information and Media Technology	2011	North Central
4.	Federal University, Otuoke, Bayelsa	English Language and Communication Studies	2011	South-South
5.	Modibbo Adama University of Technology, Yola	Information and Media Technology	2003	North East
6.	Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka	Mass Communication	1992	South East
7.	University of Benin	Mass Communication	2004	South-South
8.	University of Calabar	Language and Communication Arts	2012	South-South
9.	University of Ibadan	Communication and Language Arts	1975	South West
10.	University of Ilorin	Mass Communication	2006	North Central
11.	University of Jos	Mass Communication	2001	North Central
12.	University of Lagos	Mass Communication	1962	South West
13.	University of Maiduguri	Mass Communication	1983	North East
14.	University of Nigeria, Nsukka	Mass Communication	1961	South East
15.	University of Port Harcourt	Language and Communication Studies	1999	South-South
16.	University of Uyo	Mass Communication/ Communication Arts	1985	South-South
State Universities				
17.	Abia State University, Uturu	Mass Communication & Language and Communication Studies	2001 & 1981	South East
18.	Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba	Mass communication	2005	South West
19.	Akwa Ibom State University of Technology, Uyo	Mass Communication	2012	South-South
20.	Anambra State University of Science & Technology, Uli	Mass Communication	2000	South East
21.	Benue State University, Makurdi.	Mass Communication	1999	North Central
22.	Cross River State University of Science & Technology, Calabar	Mass Communication	2002	South-South
23.	Delta State University Abraka	Mass Communication	1991	South-South
24.	Ebonyi State University, Abakaliki	Mass Communication	1999	South-East
25.	Enugu State University of Science and Technology, Enugu	Mass Communication	1982	South East
26.	Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida University, Lapai	Mass Communication	2007	North Central
27.	Imo State University, Owerri	Mass Communication	1995	South East
28.	Kaduna State University, Kaduna	Mass Communication	2006	North West
29.	Kogi State University Anyigba	Mass Communication	2000	North Central

1.	Kwara State University, Ilorin	Mass Communication	2009	North Central
31.	Lagos State University, Ojo	Mass Communication	2008	South West
32.	Nassarawa State University, Keffi	Mass Communication	2005	North Central
33.	Osun State University, Osogbo	Linguistic and Communication Studies	2006	South West
34.	Plateau State University, Bokokos	Mass Communication	2010	North Central
35.	Rivers State University of Science and Technology, Port Harcourt	Mass Communication	1990	South-South
36.	Taraba State University, Jalingo	Mass Communication	2008	North East
Private Universities				
37.	Achievers University	Mass communication	2014	South West
38.	Adeleke University, Ede.		2011	South West
39.	Afe Babalola University, Ado-Ekiti - Ekiti State	Communication and Media Studies	2009	South West
40.	Ajayi Crowther University, Ibadan	Mass communication	2006	South West
41.	Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin	Mass Communication	2011	North Central
42.	American University of Nigeria, Yola	Mass Communication	2005	North East
43.	Babcock University, Ilishan-Remo	Mass Communication	1999	South West
44.	Baze University	Mass Communication	2011	North Central
45.	Benson Idahosa University, Benin City	Mass Communication	2002	South-South
46.	Bingham University, New Karu	Mass Communication	2006'	North Central
47.	Bowen University, Iwo	Mass Communication	2002	South West
48.	Caleb University, Lagos	Mass Communication	2012	South West
49.	Caritas University, Enugu	Mass Communication	2004	South East
50.	Covenant University Ota	Mass Communication	2002	South West
51.	Crescent University	Mass Communication	2009	South West
52.	Elizade University, Ilara-Mokin	Mass Communication	2013	South West
53.	Fountain University, Oshogbo	Mass Communication	2014	South West
54.	Godfrey Okoye University, Ugwuomu-Nike - Enugu State	Mass Communication	2011	South East
55.	Gregory University, Uturu	Mass Communication	2012	South East
56.	Igbinedion University Okada	Mass Communication	2002	South West
57.	Joseph Ayo Babalola University, Ikeji-Arakeji	Mass Communication	2006	South West
58.	Kwararafa University, Wukari	Mass Communication	2006	North East
59.	Lead City University, Ibadan	Mass Communication and Media Technology	2005	South West
60.	Madonna University	Mass Communication	1999	South East
61.	Novena University, Ogume	Mass Communication	2006	South West
62.	Oduduwa University, Ipetumodu - Osun State	Mass Communication	2009	South West
63.	Pan-African University, Lagos	Mass Communication	2013	South West
64.	Olabisi Onabanjo University, Ago-	Mass Communication	1999	South West

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43.	Redeemer's University, Mowe	Mass Communication	2005	South West
66.	Renaissance University, Enugu	Mass Communication	2007	South East
67.	Rhema University, Obeama-Asa - Rivers State	Mass Communication	2009	South-South
68.	Southwestern University, Okun-Owa	Mass Communication	2012	South West
69.	Tansian University, Umunya Onitsha	Mass Communication	2007	South East
70.	University of Mkar, Mkar	Mass Communication	2009	South East
71.	Wellspring University, Evbuobanosa - Edo State	Mass Communication	2009	South-South
72.	Wesley University of Science & Technology, Ondo	Mass Communication	2007	South West
73.	Western Delta University, Oghara	Mass Communication	2007	South-South

Source: National Universities Commission (NUC), 2015

LIST OF POLYTECHNICS AND MONOTECHNICS OFFERING MASS COMMUNICATION DEGREE PROGRAM IN NIGERIA

Federal Government

MNo	Name of polytechnic/ monotechnic	Program	Year	Region
1.	Federal Polytechnic Ibadan	Diploma in Mass Communication	1970	South West
2.	Federal Polytechnic Bidida	Diploma in Mass Communication	1979	North West
3.	Federal Polytechnic Auchu	Diploma in Mass Communication	/ 757	Mnna-South
4.	Federal Polytechnic Bauchi	Diploma in Mass Communication	1979	North East
5.	Federal Polytechnic Anambara	Diploma in Mass Communication	1992	South East
6.	Kaduna Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication		North West
7.	Federal Polytechnic , Nassarwa	Diploma in Mass Communication	1987	North Central
8.	Federal Polytechnics, Offa	Diploma in Mass Communication	1992	North Central
9.	Yaba College of Technology	Diploma in Mass Communication	1947	South West
10.	Federal Polytechnics Mubi	Diploma in Mass Communication	1979	North East
11.	Federal Radio Corporation, Ikeja	Diploma in Mass Communication		South West
12.	Television College, Jos	Diploma in Mass Communication	1970	North Central

State Government

13.	Katsina State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1983	North West
14.	Lagos State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1978	South West
15.	Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1991	South-South

/4,	Osun State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1992	South West
17.	Institute of Management and Technology, Enugu	Diploma in Mass Communication	1991	South East
18.	Moshood Abiola Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1980	South West
19.	Sokoto State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	2002	North West
20.	Ramat Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	2015	North East
21.	Nuhu Bamalli Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1995	North West
22.	Adamawa State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1992	North East
23.	Abubakar Tatara Ali Polytechnic, Bauchi	Diploma in Mass Communication	1992	North East
24.	Benue State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1976	North Central
25.	Edo State Institute of Technology & Management	Diploma in Mass Communication	2002	South-South
26.	Kwara State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	/ 772	Hhka Central
27.	Taraba State Polytechnic	Diploma in Mass Communication	1979	North East
28	Kano State Development Journalism Institute	Diploma in Mass Communication	2013	North West
MONOTECNICS				
28.	Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ), Lagos State	Diploma in Mass Communication	1963	South West
29.	International Institute of Journalism (IIJ), Abuja	Certificate in Mass Communication	1971	North Central
PRIVATE				
30.	Osisa Technology Enugu	Diploma in Mass Communication	1989	South East

Source: <http://www.nbte.gov.ng> and webpages of individual institutions