

# Nigeria - Media Landscape

Author(s): Simon Kolawole

Copyright © European Journalism Centre (EJC) 2018 - [MediaLandscapes.org](http://MediaLandscapes.org)

---

## Table of contents

- Introduction
  - Media
    - Print
    - Radio
    - Television
    - Digital Media
    - Social Networks
    - Opinion Makers
    - Sources
  - Organisations
    - Trade Unions
    - Journalist Associations
    - News Agencies
    - Audience measurement organisations
    - Sources
  - Policies
    - Media legislation
    - Accountability systems
    - Regulatory authorities
    - Sources
  - Education
    - Universities and schools
    - Professional development
    - Sources
  - Conclusions
    - 5.1 Conclusion
    - 5.2 References
- 

## Overview

The print, television and radio once maintained a three-way stranglehold on the Nigerian reading public. The print typically appealed to elitist audiences — the literates, politicians, power movers, leaders of the corporate world and the rest of the

educated class with distinctive affinity for pretty English. In contrast, the radio drew its largest audiences from the opposite group — illiterates who, with a small, battery-powered transistor, could catch up with happenings usually in their locality but sometimes in the rest of the world. The radio-oriented elites tuned in mostly in the mornings at home and while driving to the office.

TV, like radio, drew its viewership from all ends; but because of its reliance on electricity — and electricity has always been big problem in Nigeria — regular access to TV is a function of social status, of the ability to self-supply power. So, print, online and TV had their fair share of dominance on the Nigerian media landscape. Until the turn of the current millennium when the advent of Internet began to have real impact on journalism practice.

Although it was in 1996 that the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) licensed 38 internet service providers to sell internet services in Nigeria, it wasn't until the year 2000 that an Internet-using population began to emerge: just a shocking 0.3 percent. Between 2002 and 2004, it rose to 1.5 percent. By 2007, it had risen to 7 percent. By that time also, the Internet was already redefining the practice of journalism. For example, Sahara Reporters, one of the oldest online news providers, had been founded. News would soon become available in virtual format and on the go — accessible via mobile phones, tablets, and laptop and desktop computers. A 24-hour news cycle was springing, and social media became a major tool for sourcing, presenting, and disseminating news. Not only had journalism practice been altered, the entire media dynamics had been disrupted.

Over the decade that would follow, print newspapering, once the cornerstone of Nigerian journalism, dwindled considerably in patronage. As the newsprint became less important in news presentation and newspapers began to experience a plummeting in numbers, newsrooms started to shrink as it became clear to newspaper proprietors that operation models had to be rejigged.

To compete with emerging digital news providers, print newspapers began to relocate their resources online. But this wasn't just a print phenomenon. As legacy papers opened online versions, the electronic media followed suit. Radio and TV stations would soon discover that they couldn't exist without an online version. And that holds true till today: digital has become the centerpiece of Nigerian journalism, with all of print, radio and TV feeding off the massive powers and rallying numbers of the Internet.

From the pre-independence era till date, partisanship has always been a core component of Nigerian media, print particularly. *West African Pilot*, the first Nigerian-owned English-Language newspaper, was founded in 1937 by Nnamdi Azikiwe (who would later become the first President of Nigeria) strictly to fight for independence from British colonial rule. Offshoots of that title, all catering to state or regional interests, include: *Eastern Nigerian Guardian* (launched in Port Harcourt), the *Southern Defender* (in Warri), the *Sentinel* (in Enugu) and the *Northern Advocate* (in Jos). While Azikiwe's paper defended the eastern agenda, Obafemi Awolowo launched the *Nigerian Tribune* in Ibadan in 1949 — five years before he became the first Premier of the Western Region — with a leaning for south-western interests.

Today, politics remains a dominant theme in Nigerian media establishments. *The Nation*, one of the top newspapers, was founded in 2006 by Bola Tinubu, then opposition politician who, in the following years, helped to build the All Progressives Congress (APC) to rival the ruling Peoples Democratic Party (PDP) and eventually overthrow it in 2015. *The Sun*, another leading daily, was founded by Orji Uzor Kalu in 2001, two years after he became Governor of Abia State. One year before the 2015 presidential election, Kalu launched a sister daily, *New Telegraph*.

The chief consequence of this intertwining of journalism and politics is that the media sometimes shirks in its obligation to be objective in its coverage of politics in particular and the society in general. A corollary to this is how the public now views media content with scepticism, often sieving the news to separate the story from the interest of the paper. Therefore, the

media — the watchdog — sometimes becomes the ‘watched dog’. The politics-journalism alliance has also limited the capacity of journalists to build professional careers independent of political influence. It has increased the diffusion of journalism with politics, to such extent that the journalist today is a politician tomorrow and is back to journalism the next minute.

Still, journalism has been one of the undisputed bastions of democracy in Nigeria. The media played an important role in the agitations for an end to years of military rule in the 1980s and 1990s, often finding itself at the receiving end of military might. *Concord* and *The Guardian*, two of the leading papers of the time, were the subject of frequent military crackdown, many of their senior editors spending lengthy times in jail. The media continued on this path upon return to civilian rule in 1999, with a newsmagazine, *The News*, exposing age and certificate falsifications by Salisu Buhari, the first Speaker of the lower chamber in the Fourth Republic who, after a few denials, had little choice but to admit to the crime, weeping on national TV before throwing in the towel.

State intervention in the media has always been overbearing. Back in the military era, it was in nauseating proportions. Media houses were shut down at the whims and caprices of the state; numerous journalists were arrested and jailed indiscriminately. One, Dele Giwa, was even assassinated. Though unresolved, his death is believed to have been masterminded by the military regime of the time. Return to democracy has lessened the scale of government intervention in the media, but arrests of journalists and invasion of media rights continue. Most recently, for two consecutive days in 2014, the Army, acting under the authority of then President Goodluck Jonathan, seized, and in some cases destroyed, thousands of copies of several newspapers, including *Daily Trust*, *Leadership*, *The Nation* and *Punch*, claiming to have received information that materials with grave security implications were to be distributed alongside the newspapers.

## Media

---

### Print

Once the giant of Nigerian journalism, the print media has recently witnessed a large-scale weakening of its powers — exactly the way it has happened all over the world. As would have been expected, the Nigerian print media hasn't been immune to the dwindling global advertising revenue of newspapers worldwide and, latterly, the advent of the Internet.

However, while other countries can reel out figures of dwindling newspaper sales, Nigeria cannot. Instead, the evidence can be found in a Nigeria-centric ‘Free Readers’ trend. In the 1970s and 1980s, the standing of print in Nigerian journalism could be gleaned from the crowd of people who thronged newspaper stands despite their inability to purchase newspapers. Since they couldn't buy the papers themselves, they crowded out the vendor at each stand, chatting him up for hours in exchange for the chance to read the front pages from afar, or even read the inside pages from magnanimous buyers who were willing to delay their exit by a few minutes. As these people couldn't buy papers but were always seen at newspaper stands, they were nicknamed the ‘Free Readers Club’. Their ubiquity made them so important that they soon became the news themselves, a few newspapers dedicating reporters to covering free readers' opinions on important national issues. At newsstands these days, the population of free readers is dwindling — the ultimate proof of the wilting of print newspapers' sales, revenues, influence and following.

In the last decade, many newspapers and magazines that have quit printing, resorting to maintaining only their online versions, include *The News*, *PM News*, *City People* and *Net NG*. *NEXT* newspaper, *Compass* and *Tell Magazine* folded up

altogether. In their place has risen a string of online newspapers.

Still, the traditional superpowers have successfully withstood the newspaper *Tsunami*, along with a digital newspaper early-bird and two online-only digital platforms run by reputable legacy newspaper converts. In the former class are *Punch*, *THISDAY*, *The Nation*, *Vanguard*, *Daily Trust*, *Sun* and *The Guardian*; and in the latter are *Sahara Reporters*, *Premium Times* and *The Cable*. These ten, roughly, are the leaders of a news industry populated by hundreds of publications.

*Punch* is reputed as Nigeria's most widely read newspaper. It is a status it has enjoyed for decades — although the last statistical backup for that feat dates back to two decades ago: in 1998 and 1999, the Research and Marketing Services (RMS), Lagos, published independent surveys that rated the paper the most widely read in the country. Although conservative with regard to its funding models and in-country media partnerships, *Punch's* journalism is leftist, the paper boasting an endless list of hard-hitting editorials against both civilian and military governments. *Punch* was founded in 1971 by two friends, Olu Aboderin, an accountant, and Sam Amuka, a columnist and editor of the then leading *Daily Times of Nigeria*. A disagreement would later see Amuka break away 12 years later to found *Vanguard*, till date one of the country's legacy newspapers.

Originally known as *The Comet*, *The Nation*, was bought and renamed in 2006 by Bola Tinubu, then Governor of Lagos State. Over the following nine years, the paper was ultimately an opposition newspaper, earning a reputation for its strong anti-government stance — a feature that has softened remarkably since the All Progressives Congress (APC), Tinubu's party, assumed power in 2015. A survey in 2009 and another in 2011 rated *The Nation* as Nigeria's second most read newspaper; it has been so ever since. *The Nation* enjoyed tremendous advertising patronage from government agencies in the states under the control of the Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN).

In all 19 states in northern Nigeria, any serious event requiring media coverage does not kick off until the arrival of the *Daily Trust* reporter. Such is the reach and influence of a paper founded in 1998 with only N22,000 by a group of friends, one of whom is Kabiru Yusuf, who currently serves as Chairman. *Daily Trust* broke a jinx — newspapers in northern Nigeria were always a commercial failure. The absence of a strong newspaper from the region had led to the characterisation of the Nigerian media as a southern establishment. With *Daily Trust*, a bit of a balance has been achieved in the media industry in the country.

## Radio

Radio has come a long way from its introduction to Nigeria in 1933 primarily for relaying the overseas service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) to the public over loudspeakers. Since the then Radio Diffusion Service (RDS) metamorphosed to the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), radio has been embraced by both public and private interests as a medium of mass communication. Its reach is in such proportions that each of the country's 36 states has at least one government-owned and another private radio station. The radio is Nigeria's biggest means of news dissemination (although it remains perpetually in the shadows of television and print/online in terms of influence).

According to a 2015 research by Broadcasting Board of Governors — an independent agency of the US government with the mission to “inform, engage, and connect people around the world in support of freedom and democracy” — Nigerians are avid consumers of news, with 77.4 percent overall and more than seven in 10 across all major demographic groups saying they listen to the radio for news at least weekly.

Three-quarters of Nigerians said they listened to the radio in the week preceding the interview. In terms of waveband, FM is by far the most commonly used (90.4 percent), while AM (30.2 percent) and SW (19.7 percent) use fell in 2014 (from 45.3 percent and 28.7 percent, respectively). Also, 64.7 percent reported past-week usage of a conventional radio. Of this, nearly

four in 10 said they listened to the radio weekly using a mobile phone (37.3 percent) and 12.0 percent reported listening on a car radio. Other methods of listening are satellite receiver (5.1 percent), cable TV (4.0 percent), or the Internet (3.4 percent).

Of the hundreds of radio stations in Nigeria, the two most listened-to are *Wazobia FM* and *Ray Power*. These two topped a poll by Kantar-GeoPoll Media Measurement, and Africa-centric media ratings provider, of the top radio stations in for three months in 2015 spread across eight states: Abia, Edo, Enugu, Federal Capital Territory (Abuja), Kaduna, Lagos, Oyo, and Rivers. The two stations were in close competition for audience, each averaging 11.6 percent of the listening populace. *Cool FM* and *Splash FM* followed with 7.0 percent and 6.6 percent shares respectively. (When the research was narrowed down to Lagos, Nigeria's commercial nerve centre, the top stations were similar: *Wazobia FM* 14.5 percent and *Ray Power FM* 11.8 percent.)

A similar national report for the first quarter of 2017 saw *Wazobia FM* retain its top spot with an average of 9.6 percent of all listeners, followed by *Ray Power FM* with an average of 8.2 percent. *Nigeria Info FM* got the third position with a distant share of 3.84 percent, followed closely by *Fresh FM* with 3.83 percent.

Founded in 2007 by Globe Communications Limited, *Wazobia* (loosely an expression of 'come' in the three main ethnic languages), owes its popularity to broadcasting in street lingo, Pidgin English. It is based in Port Harcourt, capital of Rivers State.

Meanwhile, *Ray Power* began operating in 1994 as the first 24-hour broadcast service station in Nigeria and the first private independent broadcasting station in the country. It is owned by Raymond Dokpesi, a businessman and politician.

The largest radio network is marshalled by the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN), Nigeria's publicly funded radio broadcasting organisation with FM stations across the 36 states and a zonal station in each of the six geopolitical zones of the country.

## Television

In the context of a media industry disrupted by the influence of technology, television has managed to retain if not strengthen its appeal to the public. The figures keep growing.

In 2002, only 30 percent of the Nigerian population had a television set in their homes, according to Trade Economics. By 2004, it had risen to 32 percent and close to 34 percent by 2006. By 2010, 40 percent of Nigerians had TV in their homes.

The number of Pay TV households is also on the rise. From 1.5 million in 2011 to 1.9 million in 2012, it rose to 2.3 million in 2017 and is expected to hit 4.9 million by 2021.

*Channels TV* is Nigeria's leading television station, maintaining a stranglehold on the viewing public for most of the years since it began broadcasting in 1995 — three years after its founding by John Momoh, an entrepreneur and veteran broadcaster whose father was a cook. *Channels TV* has no discernible political leaning.

A research in the first quarter of 2017 by GeoPoll Media Measurement rated *Channels TV* as possessing the highest TV following with an average of 14.2 percent of all viewers nationally. Next was *AIT*, with an average share of 13.9 percent. *Silverbird TV* achieved the third highest share with an average share of 10.3 percent, followed by *CNN* with 8.6 percent.

Unlike *Channels TV*, *Africa Independent Television (AIT)* has noticeable political interests. Its founder, Raymond Dokpesi, is officially a politician — although he wasn't as of 1996 when he founded the station. Only last year, Dokpesi sought to be the chairman of Nigeria's ruling-turned-opposition party, the Peoples Democratic Party (PDP).

Also important in Nigeria's TV landscape is the Nigerian Television Authority (NTA), which prides itself on being the largest TV network in Africa. True. NTA is so large that it has a state-controlled version in every state of the federation. As of 2014, it had a whopping 101 stations in state capitals and major towns in the country.

However, NTA, which, alongside the FRCN, produced numerous outstanding broadcast journalists — including *Channels TV*'s John Momoh — has fallen considerably beneath Channels. NTA literally operates as the official mouthpiece of the Nigerian government.

## Digital Media

By April 2014, when *TheCable* — the third of Nigeria's three strongest online newspapers — was founded, there was no print newspaper that hadn't created an online version. There was as well no television or radio station that hadn't established an online presence. That was the extent to which digital media was redesigning journalism practice.

Revenues were rising, too, particularly for the legacy papers which only needed to deploy the might of their print team to online. For them, it was simply a matter of republishing online some of the stories that were originally printed. With this seamless multiplication of strength came revenue that, a few years back, wouldn't have existed.

On the flip side, the print began to ask itself some hard questions, the leading of which was how to maintain editorial appeal in the face of a new 24-hour news cycle championed by a raft of emerging online outlets. In the mid- to late 2000s, it seemed print newspapers were the ones doing the real journalism, the online in a second-class category of journalism wannabes empowered with nothing more than technology. But by 2014, digital media had attracted enough out-and-out journalists who brought respectability and professionalism to the space. Today, three are as strong and reliable as any print outfit.

*Premium Times* is technically an offshoot of *NEXT*, the multiple-award-winning newspaper founded in 2004 by Pulitzer Prize-winning journalist Dele Olojede. After the collapse of *NEXT* in 2011 — just two years after it was first printed — a number of *NEXT* journalists, led by revered journalist Dapo Olorunyomi, moved online to launch *Premium Times*, fondly called *PT*. It is left-leaning and is Nigeria's leading investigative newspaper, regularly breaking stories that shape national discourse. *PT* is generally regarded as the leader in the serious online-only category.

*Sahara Reporters* is the oldest surviving strong online newspaper in Nigeria. Founded in 2006 by Omoyele Sowore, foremost student activist, the medium is an institutional replica of its founder's personality. *SR*, for short, is simply the relocation of activism to the media space — a policy its management defends proudly and unashamedly. *SR* is Nigeria's ultimate leak journalism site, having accessed and published tons of jealously-guarded documents exposing corruption in government and human rights abuses. On the flip side, however, much of its good work has been criticised for operating a media trial-like reportage of allegedly corrupt public officials. Not like its publisher cares. *TheCable* is considered to rank third in the serious-news online-only category of Nigerian newspapers and is one of the most respected. Founded in November 2011 by influential columnist and former *THISDAY* editor Simon Kolawole, *TheCable* was launched April 2014. The news site prides itself for its "speed and simplicity" in news delivery and aims to "deliver knowledge-driven journalism in the pursuit of Nigeria's progress." The newspaper's political leading could be described as centrist.

## Social Networks

Year after year, the Internet continues to grow in importance — in terms of number of users, connection speed and its use in influencing non-technological fields of endeavour. With Nigeria's fairly high internet penetration of 53 percent (as of mid-2017) —the highest in Africa —online media companies are harnessing Internet users' online activity to build their platforms.

For example, in the pre-Internet era, only the media alone could set agenda for the public. But recent years have witnessed the agenda-setting powers of the public. The propriety of the trend is debatable, from the egotistical, journalistic point of view, but these are the times when social media departments of digital newspapers are peeping into the Internet to see what people want to read — the questions they're asking Google, the topics they're typing into major search engines — and informing the editorial department to quickly latch on to it.

As of June 2017, the number of internet users had increased to 91.6 million, according to the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), justifying Nigeria's status as the country with the eighth highest number of Internet users across the globe. This has seen a corresponding rise in the revenue generation powers the digital space. From US\$10m in 2011, to US\$15m in 2012, and US\$24m in 2013, it rose to US\$82m in 2017. The Statista statistics portal predicts that Internet advertising revenues in Nigeria would have risen to US\$139m by 2020.

These figures are understandable, seeing the emergence of Google, Twitter, Facebook and newsletters as advertising platforms. These social networks are particularly critical to the operations of the smaller news platforms who, other than for advertising, rely on them to redirect traffic to their websites.

Courtesy of Alexa, a commercial web traffic data and analytics company, we know that as popular as Facebook is, it is only the fourth most used social network in Nigeria and the fifth most used website overall. As of February 2016, 16 million Nigerians used Facebook — the highest in Africa. On the average, 7.2 million of them were on the site every day.

Ahead of Facebook are Google.com, Google.com.ng and You Tube. Twitter, boasting 1.8 million users monthly, is the 16th most visited Nigerian website. The social networks ahead of Twitter in Nigeria are Yahoo, Nairaland, Eskimi and Instagram. Nairaland, an online community created by Seun Osewa in March 2005, currently has over 1.9 million registered accounts and over 55 million Internet users. Meanwhile, Instagram had 3.6 million Nigerian users as of March 2017, 40 percent of them female and more than 80 percent of them aged 18 to 44.

## Opinion Makers

Nigeria's 27th most popular website is neither an online newspaper nor the digital version of a print newspaper. Instead, it is *lindaikojisblog.com* — a news, entertainment, fashions and gossip blog founded in 2006 by then 26-year-old Linda Ikeji at a time when blogging was yet unpopular. Eleven years on, Linda is Nigeria's highest-paid blogger and the undisputed custodian of soft news in the country's cyberspace. Other leading Nigerian blogs are *Omojuwa.com*, *Bellanaija.com*, *Nairaland*, *360nobs.com*, *Naijaloaded.com.ng*, *Notjustok.com*, *Stelladimokokokus.com*, *Lailasblog.com*, *Misspetitenaijablog.com*, and *Ogbongeblog.com*.

## Sources

Newspapers

- [Business Day](#)
- [Daily Trust](#)
- [Leadership](#)
- [New Telegraph](#)
- [Nigerian Tribune](#)
- [The Guardian](#)
- [The Nation](#)

- [The Punch](#)
- [The Sun](#)
- [This Day](#)
- [Vanguard](#)

#### Radio

- [Cool FM](#)
- [Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria \(FRCN\)](#)
- [Ray Power](#)
- [Splash FM](#)
- [Wazobia FM](#)

#### Television

- [Africa Independent Television \(AIT\)](#)
- [Channels TV](#)
- [Galaxy Television](#)
- [Murhi International Television \(Mitv\)](#)
- [Nigerian Television Authority \(NTA\)](#)
- [Silverbird TV](#)
- [Television Continental \(TVC\)](#)

#### Digital Media

- [Daily Post](#)
- [Premium Times](#)
- [SaharaReporters](#)
- [TheCable](#)
- [YNaija](#)

#### Opinion makers

- [360nobs.com](#)
- [Bellanaija.com](#)
- [Lailasblog.com](#)
- [Misspetitenaijablog.com](#)
- [Naijaloaded.com.ng](#)
- [Nairaland](#)
- [Notjustok.com](#)
- [Ogbongeblog.com](#)
- [Omojuwa.com](#)
- [Stelladimokokokus.com](#)



# Organisations

---

## Trade Unions

Nigerian journalists have a union, the Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) that, surprisingly, predates the country's Independence. It was founded in 1955, five years before Nigeria broke away from its colonial masters. The trade union was conceptualised to be the umbrella body for all journalists. However, many journalists are not registered with it, largely because it is weak to protect their interest in an active sense, and also because it is too political. NUJ speaks for journalists often by issuing statements of protest against harassment of journalists, but can itself do little to stop it; its key officials in recent years hobnob with political office holders. Journalists aspiring for political offices often use NUJ as launchpad, the clearest example being Smart Adeyemi, former President of the union who was subsequently elected to the Senate for two consecutive terms between 2007 and 2015.

Higher up the career ladder is the Nigerian Guild of Editors (NGE), the association of the country's gatekeepers. Like the NUJ, NGE is more like a pressure group, powerless to offer tangible protection to editors' most pressing concern. Also, its arrowheads are too close for comfort with politicians. Again, like the NUJ, serving at the top of NGE is a passport to political appointments. Classic example: GarbaShehu and Femi Adesina, the two spokespersons of President Muhammadu Buhari, were NGE presidents — the former for 16 years, and the latter's three-year reign truncated by his appointment as presidential spokesman.

## Journalist Associations

As scantily-patronised as it is, the NUJ is still the single biggest conglomeration of Nigerian journalists. But there are a few others, formed primarily on the basis of beats. The most popular of these would be the Sports Writers Association of Nigeria (SWAN), which, as the name suggests, is a union of sports journalists.

Others include the Brand Journalists' Association of Nigeria (BJAN), Association of Nigerian Journalists and Writers of Tourism, Maritime Journalists Association of Nigeria (MAJAN) and the Nigeria Auto Journalists Association (NAJA).

## News Agencies

No one knows Nigeria like NAN. Very true, actually — no one covers Nigeria like the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN). With 501 editorial staff nationwide, no newspaper boasts of NAN's profound reach and mobility across the 36 states of the country. The agency produces more than 200 stories per day and is therefore subscribed to by all the major Nigerian newspapers.

The only problem is that NAN is no better than a print government mouthpiece, rarely reporting news critical of the government of the day and always leaving its independent subscribers rewriting their headlines after sieving through NAN content.

NAN is also in a perpetual cold battle against newspapers and blogs plagiarizing its content. For many years, the agency hasn't found a solution to the problem of access to its subscribed content by non-subscribers, and the appropriation of NAN stories and pictures by non-subscribers without giving due credit.

Although NAN has a correspondent in New York, it often works in collaboration with Reuters and Xinhua news agencies — the other two popular news agencies in Nigeria.

## Audience measurement organisations

One of the big gaps in the Nigerian media is the lack of credible broadcast industry audience measurement data that is accepted by all players in the sector. Three local companies — MPS, Mediatrax and MMS — measure audiences based on the monthly diary recall method, but data sets from these companies are lowly-regarded, often questionable, and rarely available to the public. Also, according to Emeka Mba, former Director General of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), some of the media buying and advertising agencies are themselves the owners of some of the measurement companies. And, even then, the ratings data are not used in media buying decisions, as brands/agencies tend to rely on bespoke/in-house research.

One audience measurement agency that publicly releases its data, though, is Kantar-GeoPoll Media Measurement (KGMM), a fusion of two groups with complementary skill sets: Kantar Media's expertise in audience research and GeoPoll's mobile survey platform. KGMM uses panel-based mobile surveys to collect audience measurement data for TV, radio, and print.

Advertisers and other members of the Nigerian public often rely on Alexa for measuring the audience strength of digital newspapers.

## Sources

Trade unions

- [Broadcasting Organisations of Nigeria \(BON\)](#)
- [Nigeria Union of Journalists \(NUJ\)](#)
- [Nigerian Guild of Editors \(NGE\)](#)
- [Online Publishers Association of Nigeria \(OPAN\)](#)
- [Sports Writers Association of Nigeria \(SWAN\)](#)

Journalists associations

- [Association of Nigerian Journalists and Writers of Tourism](#)
- [Brand Journalists' Association of Nigeria \(BJAN\)](#)
- [Maritime Journalists Association of Nigeria \(MAJAN\)](#)
- [Nigeria Association of Women Journalists \(NAWOJ\)](#)
- [Nigeria Auto Journalists Association \(NAJA\)](#)
- [Nigeria Union of Journalists \(NUJ\)](#)

News agencies

- [News Agency of Nigeria \(NAN\)](#)
- [Reuters News Agency](#)
- [Xinhua News Agency](#)

Audience measurement organisations

- [Kantar-GeoPoll Media Measurement \(KGMM\)](#)

# Policies

---

## Media legislation

As the fourth estate of the realm cannot be more efficient than the state within which it operates, the structure and performance of the Nigerian media system are not immune from the shortcomings of governance and legislation in Nigeria.

The intersection of politics and journalism has given rise to a situation where, rather than legislate the media, democratic governments sought to infiltrate and influence media operations to suit their own interests. Influencing, rather than legislating, the media has led to the abandonment of the legislative structures put in place decades ago to prevent the media from becoming a lord unto itself. In the days of military rule, the Nigerian media was a victim of over-legislation in the form of ruthless decrees promulgated to pave the way for the harassment of journalists, closure of newspapers, and stifling of press freedom. These days, it is under-legislation that is the bane of the media.

## Accountability systems

Accountability systems in Nigerian media are not all-encompassing; they vary, at the end of the day, according to the organisational culture of the specific media house or the professionalism of its editors. This is easily evident in the digital space, where a newspaper's sole response to publishing an erroneous story is to activate the delete button; meanwhile, another newspaper, finding itself in a similar situation, retracts the story and offers the public a corrigendum, or corrects the story with the complement of an Editor's Note clarifying the edits.

## Regulatory authorities

The Nigerian Press Council Act No 85 of 1992 (as amended in Act 60 of 1999) is the piece of legislation touted to revolutionise media legislation in the country, to maintain high professional standards for the press through an agency known as the Nigerian Press Council (NPC). The Council was so empowered that it could summon any Nigerian to its meeting to give evidence and to be examined as a witness in any case brought against journalists or newspapers. It could also suspend errant journalists from practice for a period of up to six months.

Close to three decades after the establishment of the Council, there are no recent examples of sanctions against journalists or newspapers. Nigerian journalism is replete with shining lights who adhere to globally acceptable standards of ethics. But the system is not entirely free of unethical and biased reporting, suppression of stories and corruption, against which the NPC has been toothless to act.

The NPC is also inconspicuous in matters relating to its mission "to proactively respond to the needs of the Nigerian mass media and the public by facilitating — through complaints resolution, research, training and workshops — the sustainable development of journalism profession, curricula and accreditation of journalism training institutions in Nigeria."

Much against the lofty ideas that birthed its establishment, NPC currently operates in the realm of a pressure group, its executive secretaries often seen giving speeches at events and issuing statements to journalists and the public.

The broadcast industry story is the complete opposite. The National Broadcasting Commission (NBC), the broadcast regulator set up in 1992 by Decree 38 of 1992, later amended as an Act of the National assembly by Act 55 of 1999 and now known as National Broadcasting Commission Laws of the Federation 2004, CAP N11, regulates and controls the

broadcasting industry, among other responsibilities.

NBC maintains strict regulatory control over the Nigerian airwaves, with zero tolerance especially for Not To Be Broadcast (NTBB) content. Only in November 2017, it fined 23 broadcasting stations to the tune of N2.849m for various breaches of the Nigeria Broadcasting Code.

## Sources

Laws, regulations and institutions

- [National Broadcasting Commission \(NBC\)](#)
- [National Broadcasting Commission Act No 38 of 1992 \(as amended\)](#)
- [Nigerian Press Council](#)
- [Nigerian Press Council Act No 85 of 1992 \(as amended in Act 60 of 1999\)](#)

## Education

---

### Universities and schools

So many tertiary institutions in Nigeria offer journalism-related courses. At polytechnics, Mass Communication is a very popular course. At universities, aspiring journalists usually opt for courses such as English Language, Communication and Language Arts, History and International Affairs.

It is common occurrence for science students or Arts students who didn't take any of these courses to pick an interest in journalism. They usually proceed to the Nigerian Institute of Journalism (NIJ), Lagos. Established in 1963 by the International Press Institute (IPI), with Headquarters in Zurich, Switzerland, NIJ is one of the foremost training institutions for journalism, media and communication studies in Nigeria and Africa. The not-for-profit Institution is owned and operated by professional associations in the media industry: Newspaper Proprietors Association of Nigeria (NPAN), NGE, NUJ, NAN, Advertising Practitioners Council of Nigeria (APCN) and the Nigerian Institute of Public Relations (NIPR).

Lately, the School of Media and Communication (SMC) of the Pan Atlantic University (PAU) has emerged as both a rival and complementary force to NIJ's quest to produce topnotch Nigerian journalists. Another non-profit educational institution, PAU was established in 2002. Affluent students seeking a career in journalism enroll for its undergraduate programme. Also, NIJ graduates apply to PAU's SMC for a master's in communication.

However, a new trend in Nigerian journalism is seeing the rise of brilliant journalists who didn't formally study journalism-related courses, particularly at undergraduate level. Examples abound.

Oluwatoyosi Ogunseye, multiple-award-winning journalist, arguably Nigeria's most successful young journalist, studied Biochemistry at the University of Lagos. Ogunseye, Editor of Sunday Punch until January 2018, is currently the Head of Languages, BBC West Africa.

Idris Akinbajo, Editor of Premium Times, studied Food Science and Technology at Obafemi Awolowo University (OAU) for his first degree, while 'Fisayo Soyombo, pioneer Editor of *TheCable*, studied Animal Science at the University of Ibadan.

These journalists, and lots more, are proving that journalism can be self-taught. In this age of technological advancement and information glut, the Internet is replete with enough training resources and materials for any willing, passionate aspiring journalists.

## Professional development

There is no rule in Nigerian journalism compelling journalists to attend a specified number of professional training courses in any given period. It is first a question of the journalist's individual thirst, and afterwards a function of his employer's disposition to training.

The finest of journalists understand that knowledge is infinite and training must be continuous; that is why the most successful Nigerian journalists are usually the ones who are keen on applying for relevant training opportunities.

## Sources

- [Lagos School of Media and Communication, Pan Atlantic University, Lagos](#)
- [Nigeria Institute of Journalism \(NIJ\)](#)

# Conclusions

---

## Conclusion

The Nigerian media landscape is a changing climate. Once dominated by print, radio and television, it is experiencing a disruption by digital platforms. The chief limitations of journalistic excellence are the poor remuneration and the overlapping of journalism and politics often to the detriment of objectivity. However, despite all these limitations, Nigeria — considering its delicate religious and ethnic makeup — cannot afford a state without the media. Chaos would be the irrevocable end-result.

## References

- Alexa.com, [Top Sites in Nigeria](#).
- Broadcasting Board of Governors (2014), [Nigeria: mobile rises sharply while radio dominates for news](#).
- EIE Nigeria ([Twitter](#)).
- Geopoll, [Nigeria Q1 2017 Radio & TV Audience Ratings Report](#)
- Geopoll, [Radio Ratings in Nigeria, May-July 2015](#).
- NapoleonCat.com, [Instagram user demographics in Nigeria – March 2017](#).
- Punch Nigeria, [NBC sanctions 23 radio stations](#).
- QUARTZ Africa, [More people use Facebook in Nigeria than anywhere else in Africa](#), Y. Kazeem (2016).
- Statista.com, [Internet advertising revenue in Nigeria from 2011 to 2021 \(in million U.S. dollars\)](#)
- ThisDayLive.com, [Funding Television: DSO, Audience Measurement & Advertising](#)
- ThisDayLive.com, [Internet Penetration in Nigeria Rises to 53%](#).
- Vanguard (2010), [Internet: 13 years of growth from ground zero in Nigeria from 1960-1996](#)
- Vanguard (2017), [Internet users in Nigeria hit 91.6m](#).

- Webclick.com, [2017 Nigeria Internet Statistics, Users and Social Network](#)
- Wikipedia.org, [Nairaland](#).

---

Copyright © European Journalism Centre (EJC) 2018 - [MediaLandscapes.org](#)

Document generated on 15/12/2018