

When Journalism Becomes a Burden: Practical Effect of Journalism Practices in Nigeria's Developing Democracy under Muhammadu Buhari

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Abstract : Journalism practice has faced several challenges across the globe, particularly in developing countries such as Nigeria. While Nigeria has thrived under democratic experiment for twenty years since the return to democracy in 1999, there is still a great lacuna in freedom of expression, such that the presidents, though elected democratically, have had the tendencies to use military might in clamping down on journalism practices across the country. Under Muhammadu Buhari, it seems Nigeria has returned to the military era when powers were used against who says what, on a media, so today, in Nigeria, there are obvious cases of outright human rights violations and detention of journalists whose offenses were not spelled out. From Abiri Jones to Abba Jalingo and Omoyele Sowore, Nigeria journalists have been placed under the cocoon of the tyrannical administration of Muhammadu Buhari, the president, with subsequent clamping down on the instruments of freedoms such as access to justice and fair hearing. This paper gave vivid analytical and empirical perspectives of journalism practice under the dark days of Muhammadu Buhari as Nigeria's president. The objectives include; examining the core cases of attacks on journalists since 2015 to date, determining the burden of practicing journalism in a tyrannical government, reeling out the effects of restrictive practices of journalism on freedom of expression among Nigerians and proffering solutions for improvement in the years ahead. Using the cognitive dissonance theory, the survey method was used for the study, with qualitative research analysis as a tool for data presentation. In the findings, the number of journalists in jail for publishing objectively under the Buhari administration remains high while the government has clamped down on freedom of expression among the people. The study concluded that there is a need for repelling of laws made by the Nigeria government in order to save the Nigerian journalism industry from total collapse.

Keywords : communication, developing democracy, press freedom, journalism practices

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