

**Title of Article:** The Development and Influence of Mass Media in the Nigerian Society

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**Abstract:** The history of mass media development in Nigeria is chequered and phasic in nature. What started as a vehicle for social interaction and information dissemination later metamorphosed into a weapon for canvassing nationalist ideas and propagandas aimed at wresting the political and economic hegemony from the British colonialists. Similarly, from being a tool for individual and community expression, it was hijacked by the regional and national governments to ventilate their political and partisan reflections and ethnic interests within the Nigerian socio-political space. Mass media institutions in Nigeria, although a mirror of the dominant class' ideological bent and proclivity, have also emerged as defenders of popular rule and the social conscience of the Nigerian society, striking fear in the hearts of autocrats and catalysing regime changes through subtle but vocal and aggressive mobilisation of the populace in such directions. In this chapter, the author has traced the historical development of the mass media in Nigeria through its different phases and faces and identified the influence of this social institution on the Nigerian society. Situating this write-up against the backdrop of the Marxist and Cultural Hegemony theories, the author argues that although the mass media institution and practitioners are sometimes agents of the dominant class, they have also been seen to have altruistically pursued causes that advanced the interests of the Nigerian masses. The author concludes that the development of the mass media institution in Nigeria is critically germane to national development.