

**FREEDOM OF THE PRESS IN THE EYES
OF NIGERIAN LAW**

**ABSTRACT
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ABSTRACT

Section 22 of the 1999 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria States that the press, radio, television and other agencies of the mass media shall at all times be free to uphold the fundamental objectives contained in this chapter and uphold the responsibility and accountability of the government to the people. Thus the 1999 Constitution acknowledges that media, being the watch-dog of the society is the main vehicle by which rulers misdeeds. The developmental function and roles of the media include gathering and dissemination of information, verification of news, education and enlightenment of the people, shaping of public opinion, setting of national agenda, safeguarding of right of individuals, interests, groups, advertisement of good and services etc. saddled with this responsibility, the media cannot function effectively without proper legal backing. Chapter two of the 1999 Constitution on which Section 22 rests is filled with laudable provisions which in Nigeria are non justiceable. Since 1960, Nigeria press cannot be said to have enjoyed unrestricted freedom. Freedom of the press is not clearly spelt out in the 1999 Constitution. The situation was not better under military. Till date, Nigeria is yet to enact a law on freedom of information. A media that is not accurate, factual, detailed and authoritative cannot lay claim to holding public officials accountable, because its own sense of accountability can easily be challenged. These form the focus of this paper. Recommendations will be made on the way forward.