

# Patterns of Ownership and Location of Radio Stations in Cameroon. An Empirical Analysis

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## Abstract

*This research is an empirical investigation into the situation of radio broadcasting in Cameroon. A survey of private radio stations in Cameroon in 2012 is the basis of this study. The study had as objective to identify patterns of ownership and location of radio stations in Cameroon. It employs a descriptive quantitative analysis with data collected from secondary evidence and primary data from private radio station managers. It concludes that while there is a multiplicity and plurality of radio stations in Cameroon these stations are also haphazardly located. The location is also skewed towards the urban centres thereby creating media rich and media poor areas. The study therefore recommends a proper legal framework that also determines the location of radio stations.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Cameroon has experienced three political systems: colonial, post-independent autocratic system of Ahidjo and Biya, the period of the 'illusion of reforms' (Takougang & Krieger, 1998) and the period of democratization. Throughout these periods, the various governments have paid particular attention to broadcasting. For just over half a century (1946-2000), ownership, control and the operation of broadcast stations were exclusively a government preserve in Cameroon.

After World War 2, the colonial government took over control of the lone radio station, *Radio Douala* in 1946 from the Free France Movement, and also created two more radio stations in Yaounde (1955) and Garoua (1958) just before independence. Soon after independence another radio station was created in Buea (1963) for West Cameroon, the English speaking part of Cameroon. The legacy of ownership and control of broadcasting continued, as a ministerial department (Ministry of Information and Tourism) was also charged with overseeing the functioning of the state-owned radio stations which were placed under the Department of Broadcasting within that ministry. Many more state-owned regional radio stations were created between 1978 and 1986 in Bertoua, Bafoussam, Bamenda, Ebolowa, Maroua and Ngaoundere.

The launching of the television project in 1985 led to the creation of a state corporation charged with the implementation of broadcast policy. The Cameroon Radio Television (CRTV) corporation is managed by a

board and officials all appointed by the head of state. CRTV is therefore answerable to the Ministry of Communication. The CRTV has since 1998 created several state-owned commercial radio stations in five of the ten regions of Cameroon.

The text setting the guidelines for the involvement of private persons in broadcasting as stipulated by the 1990 law on freedom of mass communication set the scene for private sector radio broadcasting. Twelve years since the Prime Ministerial text of application of April 2000 put into place the audio-visual section of the law on freedom of mass communication, over 100 private radio stations have been created all over the country. While the government has not done much with regards to issuing these broadcast stations with licences or telling the broadcast stations what it can or cannot broadcast, or even setting up an independent body to control broadcasting, it has on the other hand shown its interest in broadcasting by certain measures. Stations have been shut down and some reopened while others have had their equipment seized by security forces. These are measures meant to warn owners of private radio and television stations that the government is still in charge of mass communication in the country even if there are many more private than state-owned stations, and will stop at nothing to sanction those who go against the law.

## Study Objective

The major objectives of this study are to identify the different kinds of radio broadcast institutions that exist in Cameroon, trace the ownership patterns and identify the trends in location.

## Research Questions

(RQ1) What trends in radio broadcast ownership have emerged from the deregulation process?

(RQ2) How is deregulation impacting on the setting up and location of radio broadcast stations in Cameroon?

## Hypotheses

(H1) Broadcast deregulation has led to a multiplicity and diversity of radio stations in Cameroon.

(H2) Broadcast deregulation has led to three scenarios in the setting up of radio stations in Cameroon: (a) the haphazard setting up of local and community radio

stations and (b) the setting up of radio stations in highly urbanized centres.

### **Literature Review and Theoretical Framework**

A major significance of this work is its contribution to knowledge production. This quantitative study, which uses a descriptive narrative style, is grounded by literature from Cameroon. While the four theories of the press (Siebert, Peterson & Schramm, 1956) or six normative theories of media purposes (McQuail, 1983, 1994) will be used as the major theoretical framework for this study, recent literature on the Chinese media system will be invoked. According to Wingfield and Peng (2005) the Chinese system is in a period of transition: Transition from a totalitarian system to market authoritarianism. While allowing for some financial independence, the state continues to maintain its strategic control over the media through licensing, regulating and allocating resources to specific state media. Wingfield and Peng (2005) further suggest that since media transitions are influenced by the country's unique historic, social and economic changes, not all media transitions yield the same outcome (p. 255). The authors further suggest that the four theories of the press have long outlived their usefulness in explaining the current world media systems especially China (p. 256) and why grounded theory could be the most appropriate.

In a study of media influence in the 1976 presidential elections in the USA, Chaffee and Wilson (1977) also sought to find out if some locations were media poor while others were media rich and if this had a bearing on the perceptions about public issues. The researchers sought to find out if in the urban areas where there is an apparent diversity of media resources, there is a corresponding diversity of perceptions about public issues and vice versa. The study was, however, based only on newspapers with radio and TV “ignored operationally in part because it is more difficult to define the level of TV media richness of a local community where distant signals may be received, or where cable service brings in more added channels” (Chaffee & Wilson, 1977, p. 475). These two authors however observed, “media richness and metropolitanism are naturally related to one another though there is also evidence that their respective consequences are not identical” (p. 476). The conclusion is that media rich communities have a diversity of opinions on issues than media poor communities. Though this research is not specifically looking at the content of radio station programmes to look for diversity, it will be useful, through this study to be able to identify the communities in Cameroon which can be regarded as media rich and those that can be regarded as media poor with regards to the availability of radio stations which

is the main source of information for most communities in a developing country such as Cameroon.

According to the African Media Development Initiative (2006) and on the growth of the radio sector the report observed that the possibility of private individuals to set up radio stations has provided for diversity in types of radio stations and also in the choice of programmes.

The African Media Barometer (FES, 2011) is another research carried out on the state of the media in Cameroon. While accepting that there has been growth in the radiobroadcasting sector, the study concluded that the progress is very slow. In addition to the fact that less than 10% of radio stations operating have a license, there are still cases of government authorities shutting down radio stations (FES, 2011, p. 108). On media coverage of the national territory, the research observed that many remote areas go for months without radio signals. On a positive note it observed that there are more training opportunities available for journalists and that media diversity is a reality.

Tanjong (2012) in his review of journalism practice in a fragile democracy paints a picture of the emerging patterns in the media in Cameroon suggesting there are some elements of media imbalance. Tanjong (2012) provides a discourse of inter-media balance, which is ‘looking at the public and private press in comparative terms’ (p. 48) and intra-media balance, which is “balance as it operates within a media institution” (p. 35). He observes that there is imbalance as a result of the following factors: poverty, media owners’ exclusion of political views contrary to their own, increasing commercialization and the “streamlining of media ownership, structure and content in conformity to or parallel to ethnic/regional origins” (p. 30). The increasing polarization of the media Tanjong (2012) observes is not healthy for media balance. To improve on media balance Tanjong (2012) proposes investment in communication infrastructure with the provision of adequate human, material and financial resources.

In the discourse of the media and communication landscape in Cameroon the Open Society Foundations (2012) observes that radio broadcasting in Cameroon takes place across three tiers: State, private and community. It concludes that the state-owned CRTV is the leading radio broadcaster in the country as it covers the entire nation with its ten regional network of stations and five commercial FM stations. However, the fact that CRTV is “a government-controlled corporation, its stations act in accordance with government directives” (p. 08). The research also observes that there has been an increase in the number of radio stations between 2000 and 2005 with the ministry of communication regulating the sector to ensure radio programming is made up of 51%

local content. There is also no private national radio station.

Two more recent studies conducted in 2011 and 2012 (UNESCO, May 2013) surveyed the broadcast media in Cameroon and presents the following characteristics: there are no limitations for cross media ownership; Radio broadcasting has two regulatory authorities: The Ministry of Communication licenses and registers the radio stations while the Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications is charged with authorization; There are no legal provisions for community radio broadcasting. The study further suggests that radio broadcasting is divided along three tiers with a total of 131 radio stations: Community (35), Private (80) and public (16).

### Research Methodology

This study has employed a descriptive approach. The descriptive approach, which is basically quantitative, seeks to describe the present state of affairs. Often referred to as ex post facto in social research, the main characteristic in descriptive research is the researcher's incapacity to control the variables. The researcher can therefore report only what has happened or what is happening.

The survey of managers of private radio stations was carried out to provide concrete information on the empirical situation of private radio broadcasting. The written questionnaire method was therefore employed to collect the quantitative data that was analysed descriptively to simply describe the current situation and make some estimates.

A cross-sectional sample was employed for this research since information had to be collected from a pre-determined population of private radio station managers in Cameroon. These are persons involved in recruitment and the management of the private radio stations and can therefore provide data on the functioning of the radio stations and the problems that these radio stations face. Some preliminary observation and literature provided data on the likely number of private radio stations in Cameroon and their locations. This provided the researcher with information on the

total population of the study. The data collected is descriptive since the research sought to reveal current trends and demographic information.

Berger (2007), a study on media legislation in Africa was also used as a major guide towards designing the questionnaire. This study has borrowed a common template designed for other countries in Africa with similar characteristics as Cameroon.

The period of this descriptive study is 2000 to October 2012. It spans a period of just over twelve years from when the government passed its first legislation liberalising the airwaves to the period when the last radio station manager was interviewed for the study. The law on freedom of communication (Law No. 90-52 of 19 December 1990) was signed in December 1990. Cameroons former Prime Minister, Mafany Musonge signed the text that set the conditions for the setting up of private radio stations (Decree No. 2000/158 of 3 April 2000). From a geographical perspective, the work takes private radio broadcasting in Cameroon as a case study. Its geographical delimitation is therefore the entire triangle called Cameroon. For the quantitative data, the population of the study is all privately owned radio stations in Cameroon. The total number of radio stations is less than 200 and can be classified as such: state-owned, commercial private, religious community private, university community private and rural community private (Tanjong, 2012).

The quantitative data was analysed using the statistical package for social sciences (SPSS version 22.0). The statistical evidence obtained from the questionnaire administered to radio station managers, provided evidence of the total number of stations and for relationships. The study is limited to the broadcast media and specifically radio broadcasting.

### Patterns of Radio Broadcast Ownership

This section has as objective to identify and document the different types of radio stations that exist in Cameroon as well as identify their locations. Table 1 below presents the situation of state-owned radio stations.

**Table 1: State-owned Radio Stations in Cameroon**

S/N	Region	Commercial	Regional	National	Total
1	Adamawa	0	1	0	1
2	Centre	1	1	1	3
3	East	0	1	0	1
4	Far North	1	1	0	2
5	Littoral	1	1	0	2
6	North	0	1	0	1
7	North West	0	1	0	1
8	South	0	1	0	1
9	South West	1	1	0	2

<b>10</b>	West	1	1	0	2
	<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>16</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2012.

According to table 1 there are three types of state-owned radio stations in Cameroon: Commercial, Regional, and National. The state-owned audio-visual corporation, CRTV, owns and controls one TV station and the 16 radio stations. While each of the 10 regions has a regional radio station five regions have commercial radio stations. The lone national radio station is located in the national capital, Yaounde in the Centre region. The commercial radio stations are located in the capital towns of some highly urbanized centres (Douala in Littoral, Yaounde in Centre, Bafousam in West and Buea in the South West) as well as in a town in the Far North region with a high concentration of foreign nationals from Tchad (Kousseri pilot radio station). There are therefore 16 state-owned radio stations in Cameroon.

Historical evidence suggests that before 1990 there were only two types of radio stations, which were all state-owned: Regional radio stations and the lone national radio station. The immediate post-independence period (1960-1972) saw the establishment of four radio stations: Radio Douala, Radio Yaounde and Radio Garoua for East Cameroon and Radio Buea for West Cameroon. As a Federal Republic, the three radio stations (Douala, Yaounde and Garoua) served the francophone part which was referred to as East Cameroon while Radio Buea served English speaking or Anglophone Cameroon (West Cameroon) till 1972 when Cameroon became a United Republic. Between 1972 and 1984 a radio station was created in each of the seven provinces, as the regions were referred to at the time. That is to say in addition to the already existing radio stations (Radio Douala, Radio Yaounde, Radio Garoua and Radio Buea) three others

were created in Bertoua, Bafoussam and Bamenda (Radio Bertoua, Radio Bafoussam and Radio Bamenda) in that order. A constitutional amendment in 1986 led to the creation of three new provinces making a total of ten. Radio Ebolowa, Radio Ngaoundere and Radio Maroua were then created. Each of the ten provinces, now referred to as regions has a state-owned regional radio station. The count by 1990 was 11 state-owned radio stations, including the National Radio station in Yaounde. In preparation for deregulation, the state-owned audio-visual broadcaster, CRTV, set up the first state-owned commercial radio station, Yaounde FM 94, on December 7, 1989. Suelaba FM (105 FM) in Douala on May 5 1992, Mount Cameroon FM in Buea in March 2000, Paola FM in Bafoussam in July 2002 and most recently Kousseri FM, a pilot FM station in the Far North region are the other state-owned commercial radio stations.

The government in 1997 accepted a Canadian government offer and set up five rural radio stations in Oku, Kembong, Foutouni, Lolodorf and Mouturewa. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO) also provided additional assistance for this project. Radio Dana in the far North region was also set up in January 1998 with the assistance of La Francophonie, through its agency, the Agence de Cooperation Culturelle et Technique (ACCT). These “not-for-profit community radio stations”, have “assisted the rural population in getting educational and informational programming on development issues” (FES, 2008, p. 12).

The table below presents a picture of the different types of private radio stations that exist in Cameroon as at the time of data collection.

**Table 2: Private Radio Stations in Cameroon**

S/N	Region	Community			Commercial	Total
		Rural	Religious	University		
<b>1</b>	Adamawa	1	3	1	0	5
<b>2</b>	Centre	7	6	1	9	23
<b>3</b>	East	13	1	0	2	16
<b>4</b>	Far North	4	1	0	0	5
<b>5</b>	Littoral	1	6	1	13	21
<b>6</b>	North	6	1	0	0	7
<b>7</b>	North West	11	4	1	6	22
<b>8</b>	South	7	0	0	2	9
<b>9</b>	South West	5	5	1	5	16
<b>10</b>	West	08	2	2	3	15
	<b>Total</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>139</b>

Source: Fieldwork, 2012.

From Table 2 one can deduce that there are four types of private radio stations in Cameroon: Rural Community, Religious Community, University Community and Commercial Radio stations. The total number of private radio stations stands at 139: 63 are rural community radio stations, 29 are religious community radio stations, 7 are university community radio stations and 40 are commercial radio stations. The Centre region has the highest number of private radio stations with the North West region coming second. The East region has the highest number of rural community radio stations followed by the North West region. The Littoral has the highest number of commercial radio stations as well as the highest number of religious community radio stations.

Rural community radio stations are the highest group of private radio stations in Cameroon. The likely reason for this is the fact that 42% of the population of Cameroon lives in the rural areas and that the state-owned radio stations are not received in most of the rural areas.

The second group are the commercial radio stations, which are 40 in number. These radio stations are located mostly in the urban centres of the country. While we identified three types of private community radio stations (rural, religious and university) some community radio stations are located in urban centres such as Radio Communautaire Yemba in Dschang centre, the capital town of Menoua division of the West region. This radio station is owned by Maurice TADADJEU but referred to as a Yemba community Radio station. Stone FM in Ndop, Rush FM in Bali, Boyo FM in Fundong and Odama FM in Nanga Eboko are other examples of private radio stations, which are referred to as community radio stations. It means there are private radio stations that are neither rural, religious nor university but regard themselves as community radio stations.

The data presented on table 2 above also partly suggests that interest groups with a bias towards political parties and religious groups or persons with private agendas are also owners of private radio stations. Though it was difficult to find out if a radio station is biased towards a political party, it was possible from the data to find out that there is a bias towards religious radio stations. Eighteen per cent of the private radio stations in Cameroon are religious radio stations, the third highest group of private radio stations (29). These religious radio stations are also mostly located in the urban centres. Adamawa region has 3 religious stations out of a total of 5 private radio stations; the second highest numbers of radio stations in Yaounde are religious radio stations although they make up for the third highest group in the Centre region. In the Littoral region they are the second highest group of radio stations and second only to commercial

radio stations. Bamenda, the capital city of the North West region has 3 religious radio stations out of 8 private radio stations. The other 5 are commercial radio stations. The highest numbers of private radio stations in Buea are religious radio stations. There are 3 religious radio stations out of 5 private radio stations in Buea. Plans are on the way to set up two more religious radio stations in Buea. The Centre (06) and Littoral (06) regions therefore have the highest number of religious radio stations followed closely by the South West region (05).

Data from documented media evidence however suggests that persons with private agendas are also owners of private radio stations. Minister Bidoung Mpkat of the Cameroon Peoples Democratic Movement (CPDM) owns Odama FM in Nanga Eboko; A parliamentarian of the Social Democratic Front (SDF), Hon. Awudu Mbaya owns Savanah Frontier Radio in Nkambe; Ndang Denis, the CPDM Mayor of Fundong owns Boyo FM in Belo in Boyo division of the North West region; Lamido Mustapha, a traditional ruler and member of the CPDM owns FM Demsa in Gashiga in Benoue division of the North Region; Chris Fomunyoh, West and Central Africa Regional Director of the National Democratic Institute for International Affairs (NDI), a USA-based institution, owns Foundation Radio in Bamenda. Local councils or non-governmental organizations also own radio stations. Ngoketunjia FM (temporarily closed down for lack of funds) is owned and operated by the Ngoketunjia Council in Ndop. NDEFCAM Radio in Bamenda is owned by an NGO called National Development For Cameroon (NDEFCAM) Inc.

Some radio stations are owned by the Ministry of Communication (CRTV) and seen as state owned but others as private but owned by ministries such as Transport (Santa Meteo Radio), Higher Education (Radio Campus, Chariot FM) Agriculture and Environment (Radio Environment).

However, ownership of radio broadcasting in Cameroon is diversified and plural: State-owned commercial, state-owned regional, state-owned national, private religious community, private rural community and private commercial. Amongst the commercial radio stations there is also a diversity of ownership as persons with different political ideologies or persons sympathetic to certain political parties, own some of the private commercial and community radio stations.

The existing categories of private radio stations in Cameroon also suggest that there is an ideological colour of radio broadcasting. The religious colour is consistent with the upsurge and proliferation of religious denominations and ideologies in Cameroon. According to World Watch Monitor (September 3, 2013), between 1990 and 2009 only 47 permits were

issued to authorize churches to operate in Cameroon but by September 2013, close to 500 denominations exist in Cameroon. This can explain the reason for the multiplicity of religious radio stations in Cameroon. This could also be true for the political colour since there are several political parties in Cameroon and some of the party officials mostly of the ruling party, the CPDM, own radio stations as suggested in the preceding paragraph.

Tables 1 and 2 suggest that there is a multiplicity of radio stations since from a historical analysis only 11 radio stations existed by 1990 and by the time of data collection there are 155 radio stations in Cameroon (139 private and 16 state-owned). The tables also suggest that there is diversity both within the private radio broadcast sector and the state-owned sector.

**Tendencies in Radio Station Location**

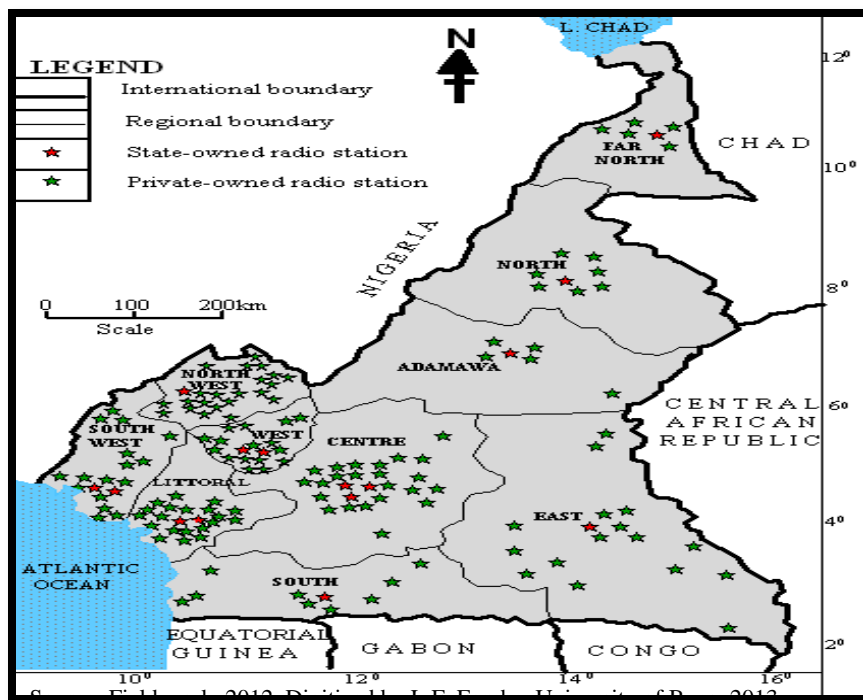
It is clear from the regional representation and distribution as presented on Map 1 that there are media poor and media rich regions. The Centre, Littoral,

North West, South West and West regions are the media rich regions with a high concentration of radio stations. That is to say there is a high concentration of radio stations in these five regions. It is also evident from the map that there is also a high concentration of radio stations in the Mfoundi, Wouri, Mezam, Fako and Mifi divisions. The Adamawa, East, Far North, North and South regions are the media poor regions of Cameroon with fewer stations that are also sparsely located.

Most of the radio stations are located very close to the chief towns of the regions such as Garoua in the North region, Bertoua in the East region, and Maroua in the Far North region and Ngaoundere in the Adamawa region. The reasons are probably that there is a high chance of sustainability in the commercial centred regions. Where the state has one or two private radio stations as is the case in Douala, Bamenda, Yaounde and Bafoussam.

The map below presents a clearer picture on the location of radio stations in Cameroon.

**Map. 1. Regional Representation/Distribution of Radio Stations in Cameroon**



Source: Field work, 2012. Digitized by L.F. Fonbe, University of Dschang, 2013.

In the chief towns of the regions, most of the radio stations be they state-owned or private are located

in the main commercial centres such as Nkwen and Central town in Bamenda and Akwa and Deido in

Douala. The private radio stations that are located in the chief towns are set up away from the state-owned radio stations. Such is the case in Yaounde where there is only one radio station, Sky One FM within two kilometres from the state-owned CRTV. In the North West Regional capital of Bamenda, the closest private radio station to CRTV Bamenda is 2km away and in Nkwen. In Douala the economic capital, the state-owned CRTV Douala and Suelaba FM are located in Bonanjo which is some 2km from the closest radio stations, Radio Veritas in Akwa and RTM in Bali.

With no proper legislation on community radio, radio stations are set up haphazardly as can be seen from the map. The distribution of radio stations most especially within the big cities is haphazard.

Out of 22 radio stations located in the North West region, Bamenda the capital town has 9 radio stations and a majority (06) are located within a radius of 2kms

in Nkwen and Central town-Radio Evangelum, Abakwa FM, Afrique Nouvelle FM, CBC Radio, NDEFCAM radio and Christian Gospel Radio.

In Douala the economic capital of Cameroon and capital of the Littoral there are 22 radio stations out of 23. Nine of the 23 radio stations are located within a radius of 5kms in two major quarters (Akwa and Deido), which are the main commercial centres of Douala.

This supports the hypothesis that the trend is the setting up of radio stations in highly urbanized centres. Most of the radio stations are located in the main cities or the headquarters of the regions such as in Bamenda, Yaounde, Douala, Bafousam and Buea as presented on Map 1.

Table 3 below presents the rank order distribution of radio stations by Region.

**Table 3: Rank Order Distribution of Radio Stations in Cameroon**

S/N	Region		Division		City/Town		
	No of Stations	%	No of Stations		No of Stations		
1	Centre	26	16.8	Mfoundi	18	Yaounde	18
				Lekie	04	Sa'a	03
				Nyong et So'o	01	Efock	01
				Haute Sanaga	01	Mbalmayo	01
				Mefou et Afamba	02	Nanga Eboko	01
2	North-West	23	14.8	Mezam	12	Bamenda	10
				Bui	04	Bali	01
				Donga Mantung	03	Santa	01
				Boyo	01	Kumbo	03
				Ngoketunjia	02	Oku (Elak)	01
				Momo	01	Nkambe	03
				Wouri	22	Belo	01
3	Littoral	23	14.8	Moungo	01	Douala	22
						Bare Bakem	01
4	South-West	18	11.6	Fako	10	Buea	07
				Meme	03	Limbe	03
				Manyu	03	Kumba	03
				Ndian	01	Mamfe	03
				Lebialem	01	EkondoTiti	01
5	West	17	11.0	Mifi	08	Menji	01
				Noun	02	Bafoussam	08
				Menoua	03	Foumban	02
				Nde	01	Dschang	03
				Haute Nkam	02	Bangangte	01
				Bamboutous	01	Bafang	01
6	East	17	11.0			Foutouni	01
				Lom et Djerem	07	Batcham	01
						Bertoua	04

S/N	Region		Division		City/Town	
	No of Stations	%	No of Stations		No of Stations	
			Haute Nyong	05	Betare Oya	01
					Merveille	01
					GarouaBoulai	01
					Ngeleumendouka	01
					Lomie	01
					Mindourou	01
					AbongaMbang	01
					Messamena	01
			Kadey	03	Batouri	01
					Ndelele	01
					Mbang	01
			Boumba et Ngoko	02	Moloundou	01
					Yokadouma	01

**Table 3 Cont'd: Rank Order Distribution of Radio Stations in Cameroon.**

6	East	17	11.0	Lom et Djerem	07	Bertoua	04
						Betare Oya	01
						Merveille	01
						GarouaBoulai	01
						Ngeleumendouka	01
						Lomie	01
						Mindourou	01
						AbongaMbang	01
						Messamena	01
				Kadey	03	Batouri	01
						Ndelele	01
						Mbang	01
				Boumba et Ngoko	02	Moloundou	01
						Yokadouma	01
7	South	10	6.5	Mvila	04	Ebolowa	03
						Nselang	01
				Ocean	03	Kribi	02
						Lolodorf	01
				Dja et Lobo	03	Sangmelima	01
						Meyomessala	01
						BengBis	01
8	North	08	5.1	Benoue	07	Garoua	03
						Bidemi	02
						Bascheo	01
						Gashiga	01
				Mayo Rey	01	Tcholiire	01
9	Far North	07	4.5	Diamarre	01	Maroua	01
				Mayo Danay	02	Yagoua	01
						Maga	01
				Mayo Tsanaga	01	Mokolo	01
				Mayo Kani	01	Kaele	01
				Mayo Sava	01	Mora	01
				Logone et Chari	01	Kouseri	01
10	Adamawa	06	3.9	Mbere	06	Ngaoundere	05
						Meiganga	01
	<b>Total</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>100</b>				

The rank order distribution of radio stations, presented on table 3 above, also paints another picture of the regional representation and distribution of radio stations in Cameroon.



The Centre Region has the highest number (26, 16.8%), of radio stations followed by the North West and Littoral Regions with 23 (14.8%) radio stations each. The Adamawa region has 6 radio stations (3.9%), the region with the lowest number of radio stations. As concerns divisions, Wouri division is first with 22 radio stations followed by Mfoundi division that has 18 radio stations and Mezam with 12 radio stations. In terms of cities, Douala has the highest number of radio stations at 22 followed by Yaounde with 18 and Bamenda with 10. Maroua is the regional headquarter with the lowest number of radio stations (01).

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### ***Conclusion***

We set out to identify the different kinds of radio broadcast stations in Cameroon. The data presents us with a multiplicity and plurality of radio stations. The descriptive narrative presents a picture of the existence of only state-owned radio stations before the year 2000. Currently there are close to 160 radio stations with only 10% of the radio stations state-owned though the state-owned radio stations still dominate the radio broadcast scene. The evidence is however conclusive that there is some diversity in the ownership in the radio broadcast sector in Cameroon. There are currently three types of state-owned radio stations (national, regional and commercial) and four types of private radio stations (commercial, rural community, religious community, university community). There is most certainly a diversity of radio stations though the diversity might be skewed towards rural community and religious community radio stations.

It is also worth noting that a phenomenon common with print media in the early period of press history in Cameroon where newspapers had a utilitarian purpose is increasingly the practice amongst private radio stations in Cameroon. People have private agendas for setting up radio stations. Primary gains are not commercial. While some are crusaders of change, crusaders of political parties, and crusaders of environmental issues, others use it as public relation tools for their religious organizations and most especially the new Pentecostal churches. In the same way as a religious newspaper was the first mass communication organ to circulate in Cameroon, a religious radio station was strictly speaking, the first private radio station to go operational in Cameroon. All the major religious denominations own radio stations with the new Pentecostal churches getting increasingly interested in radio broadcasting. Major religious denominations have institutional religious radio stations (PCC, Baptist, Catholics, Full Gospel, and Islam in North) yet the religious still go to state-owned radio stations to broadcast their programmes. This shows that

the state-owned CRTV is still the dominant partner in the broadcast sector as it has wider coverage than the private radio stations.

With regards to location, Cameroon has over 150 radio stations located in all the administrative regions of the country. In the commercial centres where it would be expected that a majority of the radio stations would be commercial stations, there is an increasing number of religious community radio stations. The religious radio stations follow areas with a high population concentration.

The location of radio stations especially in the commercial-centred regions is not controlled, as was the case in the United Kingdom after the 1990 White paper on broadcasting. It is apparent from the study that in some commercial centres radio stations are located haphazardly with a majority concentrated in the highly commercialized parts of the city. The situation is however different for rural communities where a majority of the radio stations are located in areas where there is an urgent need, where the state-owned radio station signals are not received such as in the East, Far North, some parts of South West and North West as well as South regions of Cameroon.

Superficially, empirical evidence on the situation of Radio broadcasting in Cameroon would suggest that the normative theory of libertarianism best explains media practice since there is a multiplicity and a diversity of radio stations. On the other hand the continuous intervention of government agencies to control the broadcast sector demands that one looks more at development theory or social responsibility theory. Development theory, because only good news is accepted and social responsibility because the media are required to be socially responsible while given the opportunity to freely operate without government intervention. The conclusion here is that no single normative theory can explain current media performance in Cameroon.

One other major objective of this study was to look at the situation of radio broadcasting in Cameroon, using media rich and media poor theories as another framework. The highly urbanized centres such as Yaounde, Douala, Mfoundi division and Wouri division, are the media rich areas with several radio stations while a majority of the rural areas such as the Eastern region of Cameroon and the Far North region are media poor areas.

The discussion of media richness might also require that this research also delve into niching a new theory that we refer to as media density theory. The population of an area can be a major determinant for the existence of several radio stations. That is to say a high population density attracts a larger number of radio stations. Communities that are not metropolitan but have a high population density have a high propensity

for the setting up of radio stations, and to be more specific, community radio stations.

### **Recommendations**

It is therefore recommended that there should be proper rationalization in the licensing of radio stations, paying attention to the type of radio station, its target audience and its service area and locality and the particular service it has to provide is a necessity. As far as funding is concerned, there should be no adverts on state owned media. Half of the audio-visual tax should also go to private media organs. This will alleviate the poverty syndrome of private radio stations and prevent them from concentrating in the urban centres.

This research is limited by the focus on radio broadcast regulation. Nevertheless, it is an important research topic that could contribute greatly to our understanding of broadcast deregulation in Africa as a whole and Cameroon in particular. We also recommend research on the impact of deregulation on the content of broadcast programmes, most especially news and current affairs programmes on private radio stations. Another research could look at the impact of deregulation on TV broadcast ownership trends. This will provide a good foundation to further strengthen the policy recommendations outlined above.

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