

Impacts of the Media on African Socio-Economic Development

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[Top](#)

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Preface

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The idea of using communication for the purpose of advancing the goals of development received a boost when it was realised that development has to do with the generation of psychic mobility and changing of attitude. It was also realised that the failures of certain development projects had been due to the absence of communication component in the development calculus (Salawu, 2008).

Since this realisation had dawned on development agencies, communication has remained an integral but indispensable part of the development process. And, this has been made manifest in the various Information, Education and Communication (IEC) documents that have been produced for the various development projects.

Sustainable Human Development is development that is participatory and pro-people. The question is how do we get the people informed and, therefore, mobilize their informed capacities? The answer lies in communication. Development communication is the application of the process

of communication to the development process (Moemeka, 1991). In other words, development communication is the use of the principles and practice of exchange of ideas to fulfill development objectives. It is further said that development requires that a mass of people with a low rate of literacy and income and the socio-economic attributes that go with it, first of all be informed about and motivated to accept and use a sizeable body of hitherto unfamiliar ideas and skills in very much less time than that process would normally take. Thus, the job of development communication is to inform and motivate at the national, sectoral and project levels. The job of development communication is the process of development itself. The ultimate aim of communication for development is the facilitation of the exchange of information for increased productivity and development (Goldhaber, 1983).

In concise terms, the purpose of development communication is to understand the needs and social realities of the people and mobilise them towards the development goals. In other words, development communication is one with a “social conscience”, having the people as its focus. Development communication involves the generation of psychic mobility or empathy, raising of aspirations, teaching of new skills and encouragement of local participation in development activities. The point to note here is that no amount of investment or provision of technology and inputs will bring any lasting improvement in the living standards of people unless they, themselves, change their attitude and behavioural patterns. In essence, it is people who will bring about development, and there can be no change for the better without their informed participation, without mobilising their capacities and energies, and without increasing their knowledge and skills. This is where communication comes in because it caters to these human dimensions.

Precisely, this is what this book, *Impacts of Media on Socio-Economic Developments*, has done in its various chapters. Contributions in this book have variously considered the use of different kinds of media – print, broadcast, digital and edutainment – for development purposes.

The book is divided into four sections, namely, Section 1: ICT and Development in Africa – The role of ICTs in promoting socio-economic development in Africa; Section 2: Gender, Children, and the Media – The role of the media in promoting gender and children issues in Africa; Section 3: Issues in African Mass Media – Discourse on the prevalent issues affecting the African mass media; and Section 4: Media, Health Behaviour and Development – The role of the media in promoting health issues in Africa.

Section 1 contains seven chapters. In Chapter 1 (Role of ICT in Socio-Economic Development in Kenya: Demystifying Gender Empowerment Through Mobile Telephony), Juliet Macharia discusses the magic revolution of mobile telephony in Africa and specifically in Kenya. She argues that innovations such as MPESA have transformed people’s lives in Kenya and in other emerging economies. She also discusses the role of gender socialization in relation to how the ICTs have eliminated the long held belief that females are not participants in societal development.

In Chapter 2 (Modern Information Technology, Global Risk and the Challenges of Crime in the Era of Late Modernity), Ajibade Ebenezer Jegede looks at the other side of the coin of ICTs. The chapter considers the nature of risks and vulnerabilities affecting e-connectivity from a modernist theoretical perspective. It specifically dwells on cybercrime. Brian Pindayi Rusangu’s Chapter 3 (Social Media Uses and Effects in Africa: The Case of WhatsApp in Africa) analysed effects of social media on African society by focusing on WhatsApp. In the chapter, he also introduced two concepts: *medium veracity* and *social media domino effect*. Ogbari, Ejimofor, Akanbi and Suleiman were also concerned with social media effect, but on international business venturing in

Nigeria. In Chapter 4 (Social Media Effect on International Business Venturing in Nigeria: A Conceptual Review), they concluded that since technological products provide ample benefits for international entrepreneurs, organizations should endeavour to provide indispensable technologies that support international transactions.

Anusharani Sewchurran said his chapter (5) was an attempt to build a theoretical framework for new media within the African context. The author asserted that the digital divide offered a key entry point into ICT discourses and the opportunities and challenges presented by new media technology within the context of Africa. In the chapter titled “Digital Divide, Data Trash, and the Commodification of Information: Discourses around the Digital Divide,” Anusharani attempted a review of the theoretical concepts of the digital divide within the larger context of global constructions of information wealth and information poverty. Democratization of communication and media space engendered by Web 2.0 was the focus of Chapter 6 (Discourse and Multimodal Analysis of Netizen Reactions to the Nigerian 2015 Presidential Elections: Case Study of *Osun Political Parrot* Facebook Site) authored by Aretha Oluwakemi Asakitikpi and Samuel Oluwafemi Adeyeye. They specifically looked at readers’ comments on the Facebook page of the *Osun Political Parrot*. Focusing on the #NoToSocialMediaBill Twitter protest against the introduction of The Frivolous Petitions (Prohibition, etc.) Bill 2015, in Nigeria. Chapter 7 (Nature and Outcome of Nigeria’s Twitter Protest against the Frivolous Petitions Bill 2015), authored by Oyewole Adekunle Oladapo and Babatunde Raphael Ojebuyi, examined the composition of the loudest voices that framed the protest, explored the level of engagement of those voices with the content of the bill, and analysed the nature and outcome of the protesters’ reactions to the bill. The authors came up with the finding that a combination of hashtag and retweet features of Twitter functioned effectively as collective framing tools in the #NoToSocialMediaBill Protest. Though the frames drew global media and human rights activists’ attention in support of the protesters’ goal of resisting an attempt to restrict freedom of speech, they did not achieve the same with the recall of the initiator of the bill.

Section 2 of the book begins with Chapter 8 (Portrayal of Women in Nollywood Films and the Role of Women in National Development). In this chapter, Suleimanu Usaini, Ngozi Chilaka and Nelson Okorieaimed show how the images of women were reflected in Nollywood films, with a focus on investigating the influence of such portrayals on their role in national development. They discovered that over two-third of major female characters in the films analysed were portrayed as dependent, 80% were depicted in situations of physical, sexual, and emotional abuse, while only 30% of the major female characters were portrayed as career professionals and intellectuals. They concluded that portrayals and representations of women have negative influences on their contributions towards national development. Chapter 9 (Education, Gender, and Child-Rights: Salient Issues in SDGs Years in Ado-Odo/Ota Local Government Area of Ogun State, Nigeria) examined the place of education, gender and child rights within the United Nations’ Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) in Ado Odo/Ota local government of Ogun State, Nigeria. Taiwo Abioye, Kehinde Oyesomi, Esther Ajiboye, Segun Omidiora and Olusola Oyero found out that there was a limited awareness about child rights among children in primary schools and secondary schools; teaching materials and instructors were grossly inadequate in many of the schools sampled and basic needs such as water and electricity were unavailable. They also observed that enrolment of male children in the schools was 24% higher than the females. They recommended that these challenges should be put into consideration when formulating policies for education in developing countries.

Chapter 10 concludes Section 2 of the book and it is titled “Women Entrepreneurs in Nigeria: Where Is the Mass Media?” In the chapter, Tolulope Kayode-Adedeji, Oyinkansola Ige and Thelma Ekanem attempted to identify instances of gender inequality against women, and explore the role of the media in promoting woman entrepreneur and achievements in Nigeria. They recommended that the mass media should promote women entrepreneurs in Nigeria; give more voice to their businesses and activities to pave way and encourage the younger women in the society.

Section 3 takes off with Chapter 11 (Nigerian Government’s Attempts at Removing Fuel Subsidy and the Attendant Mass Protests: A Content Analysis of National Newspapers’ Coverage). Coverage of petroleum subsidy removal in three national dailies of Nigeria was the concern of Adeyemi Aderogba and Olanipekun Gbenga in this chapter. They observed that over years attempts by Nigerian governments to remove petroleum subsidy had been resisted by Nigerians. In their study, they observed that a considerable number of the stories sampled were not in support of the subsidy removal. They therefore recommended that government should endeavour to carry Nigerian citizens along ever before introducing such kind of policies.

The chapter by Nelson Okorie focused on Press Freedom and Socio-economic issues in Nigeria and Uganda Democratic Landscape. Using Nigeria and Uganda as examples, the chapter explored press freedom and socio-economic issues in a democratic media landscape. Nelson concluded that press freedom promotes transparency and flourishes more in countries with democratic principles and ideals. Nneoma Anozie’s Chapter 13 is “A Discourse on Mass Media and Society.” The chapter examines the relationship between mass media and society and suggests ways in which mass media can facilitate a peaceful society. In Chapter 14, Seamogano Mosanako examined Broadcasting Policy in Botswana: The Case of Botswana Television. She observed that there is a broadcasting policy vacuum in Botswana in that there is no formal media policy to guide the operations of the media. She argued that this lack of media policy in Botswana and possibly other developing countries is generally responsible for poor performance of the broadcast media regarding its role in national development. According to her, such poor performance of the media is reflected by domination of government originated content, domination of foreign content on local television, state control of the media as well as increasing pressure on the media to be more accessible to opposition political parties.

Section 4 contains the rest of the chapters (15, 16, and 17). Paul Bigala, in Chapter 15 (Examining Sexuality in the Context of HIV/AIDS Knowledge among Students of the North-West University Mafikeng Campus) examined gender differences in attitudes towards sexuality in the context of HIV/AIDS among undergraduate students. The study underscored the need to strengthen HIV/AIDS programmes to include issues on sexuality and encourage undergraduate students to attend these programmes. In Chapter 16 (Awareness and Education on Viral Infections in Nigeria Using Edutainment), Suleimanu Usaini, Tolulope Kayode-Adedeji, Olufunke Omole and Tunji Oyedepo examined why edutainment should be used and how it can be used to educate media audience in Nigeria on some viral infections that pose serious health risks and how they can live healthy lives. The last chapter (An Assessment of Media Contribution to Behaviour Change and HIV Prevention in Nigeria) written by Olugbenga Elegbe explored media influence on behaviour change and its implication for HIV prevention programmes in Nigeria. The chapter concluded on the positive influence of media intervention in sexual behaviour change programmes but notes that behaviour change still is a personal decision. Therefore it recommended other forms of

communication like interpersonal communication, community mobilization and advocacy to support media strategies for effective HIV prevention initiatives in Nigeria.

Chapters in this book have looked at development in its socio-economic dimensions and have outlined how media of all sorts have been applied to advance the purposes of development.

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Chapter 1

Role of ICT in Socio-Economic Development in Kenya: Demystifying Gender Empowerment through Mobile Telephony

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ABSTRACT

The growth of Information Communication Technology (ICT) has empowered communities in diverse ways. Both males and females use ICTs to transact businesses and carry on relationships. Access and use of mobile phones have changed people's lives. This chapter discusses the magical revolution of mobile telephony in Africa and specifically in Kenya. Innovations such as MPESA have transformed people's lives in Kenya and in other emerging economies. Both males and females have used the innovations to bring about development that has enriched their lives. Secondly, the role of gender socialization is discussed in relation to how the ICTs have eliminated the long-held belief that females are not participants in societal development. Thirdly, the role of the media in development is examined because they socialize people into the gender roles. Through mobile telephones, females perform diverse roles. Positive portrayal of men and women in development acknowledges that men and women must be active members of the process.

Author(s)/Editor(s) Biography

Okorie Nelson is one of the notable lecturers in the Department of Mass Communication, Covenant University. Okorie has more than eight (8) years teaching experience at the higher institution level. In addition, Okorie has obtained a Ph.D degree in the field of Mass Communication. Currently, Okorie has 29 publications comprising of 24 Journal articles, 3 Chapters in peer reviewed books, and 2 published books. Okorie's research goal is aimed at creating knowledge via employing innovative, leading edge teaching and learning methods that promote integrated, life-applicable and life-transforming education relevant to the context of human capacity building.

Babatunde Raphael Ojebuyi is a full-time lecturer in the Department of Communication and Language Arts, University of Ibadan, Nigeria. Ojebuyi's teaching and research focus is on media studies in the areas of media theories, media and ethics, and new media. He has written books and published well researched articles in reputable local and international journals.

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