

Variations in Media Systems and News Values of the Three Worlds: An In-Depth Analysis

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Abstract

Differences and inequalities characterize the social, political and economic structures and institutions of the world. These disparities vary from region-to-region and from one country to another. The same way these differences and inequalities exist in the structures and institutions around the world, so there are differences in the social, political and economic strengths of nations. The unequal strengths of nations result to domination of the less powerful nations by the powerful ones. The less powerful countries or regions of the world depend on the powerful ones for survival politically, socially and economically. In fact, the world (global system) is characterized with imbalances and inequalities. How this imbalances and inequalities affect international news and information flow among other issues, is the thrust of this paper.

Introduction

The mass media, being one of the active players in the social institutions of countries of the world, are not isolated in the discussion of differences, imbalances and inequalities among nations. The media also have variations in their operational philosophies, news ideologies tailored to suit their audiences need for information. In essence, there are differences in the factors considered in news evaluation and judgment among the countries of the world – the First, Second and Third World countries. MacBride (1980) asserts that it has become increasingly clear that the effects of intellectual and cultural dependence are as serious as those of political subjection or economic dependence. There can be no genuine, effective independence without the communication resources needed to safeguard it. The argument has been that a nation whose mass media are under foreign domination cannot claim to be a nation. Unfortunately, in today's world, communication has all too frequently become an exchange between unequal patterns, allowing the predominance of the more powerful, the richer and the better equipped. Discrepancy in power and wealth, by its own weight or by deliberate action, has an impact and influence on communication structures and information flows. Herein lie many of the underlying causes of inequalities, disparities and imbalances so characteristics of international communication, in particular between the developed and the developing countries.

The operations of media around the world differ. The political and economic systems and structures of different nations influence the media systems in which such societies operate. These differences are also evident in the criteria for news evaluation by the media in different countries. In spite of the basic criteria for news evaluation that are widely spread across countries of the world, there are still differences in news values of the First, Second and Third World countries. What is considered news in First World countries may completely differ from what the Second and Third World countries perceive as news. This is due to the variation in the levels of growth and development of the different parts of the world. MacBride (1980) notes that doubtless there is no single, universal criterion by which one can measure the imbalances and disparities, since news values differ from one country to another and from culture to culture, and even sometimes within a single country. Hence any generalization on news values is bound to remain rather loose, even if professional communicators do frequently agree on a number of factors considered to make for news.

Media Systems in Different Parts of the World

The mass media are saddled with so many responsibilities – to inform, educate, entertain, sensitise and enlighten the general public on topical issues and occurrences in the society. The mass media carry out these functions distinctively in different parts of the world. The different modes of operation of the media across the world clearly explain what media systems connote. Ekeanyanwu (2010:17) observes that “media systems reflect the uniqueness and the diversity inherent in the different countries’ levels of development in the socio-cultural, economic cum political sectors of their lives. Different nations’ media systems are also reflections of their different levels of material wealth both in human and natural resources, in values and some other geographical and cultural factors.” Baran (2002) cited in Ekeanyanwu adds that “the level of diffusion of different communication technologies in different countries offers a clear example of the differences in media systems in different nations.”

According to Nwabueze (2014), a media system refers to the nature and operations of the media in a country, including the media landscape, relationship between and among the media in a system and with other institutions in the society. He adds that the nature of the audience, media economics, media ownership, control and regulation, and to some extent journalism training and professionalism also make up a media system. A

media system does not operate in isolation. It influences and is influenced by various structures, systems and institutions in the society. Media systems reflect the nature of the society within which they exist. Politics, culture, religion, and the economy are among some basic societal factors and forces that influence a media system. Nwabueze further argues that the single most influential factor on a media system is the political system. Ekeanyanwu (2008) supports Nwabueze's assertion when he notes that a nation's political ideology and system in operation will also be reflected in the type of media system it operates. Authoritarian press systems are found in societies operating dictatorial governments; this is because such governments need to control the media of communication to maintain power. The same way a capitalist oriented and democratic nation will operate the libertarian or its modified social responsibility media systems because they are already used to freedom and free enterprise (cited in Ekeanyanwu, 2010). Correspondingly, Asemah (2011b:140) posits that "the way the media in a society operate depends on the kind of political dispensation in place. The political structure of a particular society determines how the media will operate. This implies to a large extent, that the political system of a society determines its media system."

On this basis, it is imperative to note that media systems are perceived and conceived in two ways. The first is based on theoretical precepts (normative theories of the press) and secondly, based on ideological concepts or philosophy. Certain theories have been used by researchers and media experts to explain the structures and nature of media operations in different societies around the world. The four theories of the press also known as the normative or classical theories which include the Authoritarian, the Soviet-Communist, the Libertarian (free press) and Social Responsibility theories, have been used to explain media systems. In addition to these, two other theories – Development and Democratic-Participant theories were propounded and incorporated as part of the normative press theories by Dennis McQuail in 1987 to reflect the media systems in developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America – the Third World nations. These theories explain the relationship between the media and government, the nature of ownership, control and regulation of the media, as well as their relationship with the public in different societies. As Okunna (1999) rightly affirms, the relationship between the mass media and the political institutions revolves around the concepts of power and freedom in the society. The existence of this relationship under varying political systems has been documented, and four theories of the press have traditionally been used to explain the nature of this relationship. She notes further that these theories spell out the norms which should guide mass media operation; they also stipulate the nature of the social values which should be observed or attained when the media operate in the prescribed manner. Nwabueze (2014) writes that the basic theories that explain media systems across the world over the years are the four theories of the press. These theories explain the relationship between the media, government, and the public, the responsibilities of these stakeholders in shaping the society and how the nature of media ownership, control and regulation define the media system in any nation.

Media systems are usually derived from theories about how the mass media operate or should operate under certain conditions. These different systems are dynamic in nature because they change with the changing fortunes of its operating society. Therefore, if the society is dynamic and because the mass media of communication is a mimesis of the society, the mass media naturally will also be dynamic. Accordingly, the normative theories capture the fundamental philosophy which influences how and why media systems of different societies differ. The basic systems that reflected in the normative theory also change with time and sometimes one is a modification of the other (Ekeanyanwu, 2008).

The normative theories (authoritarian, soviet-communist, libertarian, social responsibility, development and democratic-participant) explain how the media operate or are likely to operate in any society. These theories were the outcome of a research conducted by Siebert, Peterson and Schramm in 1956. The research was conducted to find out how the media operated in every political dispensation. It was discovered that two systems – political and economic, influence media system in every society. According to Asemah (2011b:140), "the theories are called normative theories because they talk about the relationship that should exist between the government and the media in any given society. The theories describe, explain and set standards or rules of language or behaviours which should be followed for the media practitioner." McQuail (2005) asserts that the normative theories are concerned with examining or prescribing how media ought to operate if certain social values are to be observed or attained. These theories basically reflect the political ideologies and prevailing social and economic conditions in nations where they are in operation (cited in Nwabueze, 2014).

This chapter will discuss the normative theories of the press and the ideological conceptions, as bases for the explanation of media systems around the world.

Authoritarian Theory

The basic assumption of the authoritarian theory is that, every institution in the society; including the mean of communication (mass media) are to be controlled by the government or the ruling elites. Free and independent journalism are non-existent. Asemah (2011b) explains that the authoritarian theory is widely acknowledged to have evolved in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and became widespread in Europe in the seventeenth

century. He explains further that in this era, the Monarch had absolute power and the subordinates were not permitted to question the authority of the Monarch. Criticizing the leader is forbidden. Certain measures were used by government to restrict the press from freely carrying out their activities. Asemah argues that the general view of the authoritarian theory is that of the nature of man and truth. As regard man, not everybody is wise and therefore, the society needs wise men to direct and guide the masses. In the authoritarian theory, man is considered to be an irrational human being; man lacks knowledge and wisdom and that man is not intelligent thus, there is the need to direct and guide him. Also, it is believed that truth is centered on power. That is, only those who have power that knows the truth. So, if you do not have power, you do not know the truth.

Okunna (1999) notes that the authoritarian theory views the press as the mouth-piece of the government, to be used by it to tell the people what government's stand is on any issue, and to achieve government's objectives. At no time is the press expected to criticize the government in an authoritarian system. In fact, it is considered a taboo. The people are not even allowed to offer constructive suggestions on how the state should be governed since it is believed that they are not intelligent enough to do that. This theory is still applicable to the press systems of many countries in the modern world. Because governments in a large number of Third World countries still maintain authoritarian controls over both their people and the press, the theory is still very much with us. Okunna adds that in countries ruled by non-democratically elected leaders, such as military dictatorships, one-party states, and other types of dictatorial and repressive regimes, the mass media operate under the principles of the authoritarian theory, and it is these principles that determine the nature of the relationship between the government and the mass media.

According to McQuail (1987), the basic assumptions of the authoritarian theory include: media should not do anything that will undermine established authorities; media should always be subordinate to established authorities; media should avoid offence to majority or dominant moral and political values; censorship can be justified to achieve these principles; and unacceptable attacks on authority, deviation from official policy or offences against moral code should be criminal offences.

Authoritarian system is the oldest press system. The theory stresses the absolute right of a ruling monarch or government to use and control the press to maintain power and social stability. The basic function of the mass media under the authoritarian system is to support and advance the policies of the ruling elite. This is achieved by various means of control put in place by government. Under this system of the press, there is lack of press freedom. The media are regarded as government instrument of propaganda and therefore disseminating voices and opinions are rarely tolerated. This press system mostly operate in Latin America, Africa and Asia – countries of the Third World (Ekeanyanwu, 2010).

Soviet- Communist Theory

This system is designed around communism as an ideology. The system sees the media as instruments of the party or government to use for social improvement and other policy objectives. All means of communication are owned and controlled by the state rather than individuals. Like the authoritarian media system, there is a complete absence of press freedom in countries where this system has been practiced. This is anchored on the singular reason that the media is part of the structures of government in power and must be used to achieve government objectives. This system largely operates in Eastern Europe, China and a few Third World nations that embraced communism or socialism. The functions of the media under this system include: to extol, defend and enlighten the populace about communism; to repress individual dissent; to guide individuals towards state support based on the teachings of Max and Lenin; and to use the media as propaganda machineries (Ekeanyanwu, 2010).

The soviet-communist theory is also called soviet media theory. This theory is similar to the authoritarian press theory. Both theories are based on the principle of absolute control of the mass media. According to Okunna (1999), the mass media under this theory are part of the government. The government controls the day-to-day operations of the press, and censorship is a very strong weapon of state control. In societies where the soviet media theory is in operation, all mass media – newspapers, magazines and broadcast stations are owned and operated by the government. This means that private ownership of the press is forbidden in the soviet-communist media system or theory. In contrast, the authoritarian theory allows private ownership. Okunna argues that from its name, the soviet-communist theory originated in the former Soviet Union, following the Russian Revolution of 1917.

The soviet-communist theory explains the media system in communist nations whereby the state owns and controls every institution and the mass media exist to promote the communist ideology. This theory was in place in the Soviet Union (now disintegrated), including nations which practiced communism during the cold war. Today, communist nations such as China and South Korea still have media systems that reflect this tradition (Nwabueze, 2014).

Libertarian (Free Press) Theory

Contrary to the views of the authoritarian theory, the libertarian theory simply suggests that the media should be given total freedom to serve the interest of the society. This theory is also referred to as the “free press” theory. The theory regards man as a rational, intellectual and a reasonable being. According to the proponents of this theory, if the media must function well, they must be free from government control, interference and influence. The libertarian theory is the exact opposite of the authoritarian theory. Okunna (1999) sees libertarianism as a philosophy. According to her, this philosophy believes that people are rational beings capable of thinking for themselves, and of distinguishing truth from falsehood. This philosophy, therefore, advocates that people should be left free and given access to all types of ideas from which they should freely choose. Also known as the free press theory, the libertarian theory advocates that the mass media should be liberated from government control so that they can provide a free market place of ideas for the enlightenment of the people. Nwabueze (2014) notes that the libertarian theory suggests that the press should be free to provide accurate information for the public made up of rational individuals capable of discerning accurate or distorted information. He opines that governments should not interfere with the media since this could infringe on the rights of individuals to get accurate information. The media serve as free market place of ideas, providing diverse, varying, and undistorted information on issues for the public to make informed opinions and decisions.

According to Ekeanyanwu (2010), libertarianism has to do with liberty, rationality, independence of thought and action. It also focuses on the respect for the individual’s right to choice, opinions and views. In this system, the media are seen to base their existence on engendering and enhancing the truth and presenting that truth for rational judgment. The functions of the media under this press system are summarised thus: to enlighten the general public; to ensure individual freedoms and report the violation of such; making profit as a normal business organisation would do; servicing the political system through the education, enlightenment and mobilization of the leadership and citizenry; servicing the economic system; entertainment; and to act as a purveyor of culture. The libertarian press system operates in advanced Western countries of Europe, North America and Australia, also known as the First World nations.

Social Responsibility Theory

The social responsibility theory according to Asemah (2011b), is an offshoot of libertarian theory. The theory rests on the notion of free press acting responsibly. The essence of the social responsibility theory is that, media have an obligation to behave in certain ways. He argues that the journalist who enjoys certain measures of freedom should remember that such freedom also carries correspondent responsibility. So, freedom without responsibility is dangerous.

The underlying principle of the social responsibility theory is that the press should be free to perform the functions which the libertarian theory had granted it freedom to perform, but that this freedom should be exercised with responsibility. Therefore, the theory believes that if journalists cannot control themselves and act responsibly, then the government should control them (Okunna, 1999).

The social responsibility theory emphasizes on “self-control or self-regulation” by journalists and the media. This implies that the mass media should control and regulate their activities internally, in such a way that they will act socially responsible; contributing to public and societal good. This can be achieved through professional ethics. According to Okunna (1999:131), “self-regulation entails that journalists should put in place certain measures that are designed to make them responsible in the discharge of their professional duties. Known as self-regulation mechanisms, these measures revolve around the concept of ethics in journalism.”

Development Media Theory

The lack of theory that explains media operational systems in developing and underdeveloped countries of the world led to the creation of the development media theory by Dennis McQuail in 1987, to appropriately explain the media situation of developing countries, as well as their expectations. Okunna (1999) explains that this theory emerged in the 1980s to fill a void which became increasingly noticeable as the gap between the developed and developing countries widened. As this gap widened, it became apparent that none of the classical theories of the press was strictly applicable to developing countries, even though the mass media in these countries were operating according to some of the principles of the classical theories. Consequently, there arose the need for an alternative theory that could appropriately explain the media situation in developing countries. The fundamental purpose of the theory is to use the press to serve the general good of a nation by making the mass media function as government instruments for achieving economic growth, political stability, national sovereignty, cultural development, and so on. This is why it is peculiar to developing countries where the need to achieve all these goals is very urgent. According to Okunna, the development media theory accepts that economic development and nation-building should take precedence over some freedom of the press and of individuals. The theory advocates that the mass media should assist government in the task of nation-building, and that the government could control the media as well as journalists to achieve this goal. In this theory, it is

assumed that the mass media and other means of communication have the power to positively influence the development process. Ekeanyanwu (2010:23-24) notes that “the mass media under this theory or system are expected to carry out positive development tasks in line with nationally established policy trust of government. The freedom of the media to operate in this system is open to restriction according to economic priorities and developmental needs of the society.” In essence, the development media theory suggests that the media in developing countries should pursue development goals in the society. This task is usually accomplished through “development journalism” or “development communication” as evident in many Third World countries. In fact, the media play significant role in facilitating the process of development in the developing countries.

Democratic-Participant Theory

As this theory suggests, the media should be decentralized and democratized; allowing individuals to have access and partake in the process of information sharing. The principles of the democratic-participant theory emphasize on popular participation of the public in the media and de-emphasize centralization or monopoly of the means of communication and information sharing in the hands of few individuals. Asemah (2011b) puts it more succinctly when he notes that the theory simply lays emphasis on the need for popular participation and plurality in the ownership and access to the media. The bottom line of the theory is that, every individual and every part of the society – religious institutions like churches, mosques and many others in the society should have access to the media so that they too can air their views about happenings in the society. Through this, they are automatically exercising their rights to self-determination. The theory calls for “democracy in the ownership of the media.” It also calls for the establishment of local media by local communities and groups so that they can meet their own needs and those potential users of the media can have access to them.

Media Systems: The Ideological Perspectives

Having discussed media systems from the theoretical aspect or from the angle of the normative theories of the media, it is imperative to take a look at the different types of media systems around the world. Essentially, Western media system, authoritarian media system, revolutionary media system, communist media system and development media system, encompass the types of media system based on ideological, political, cultural and other differences that characterize the countries of the world. Ekeanyanwu (2014:25) asserts that “this aspect or category of media systems is based on the prevailing ideological philosophy in place.” In other words, this aspect of media systems explains the operational philosophy of mass media based on the ideological significance of the societies in which they operate. As Nwabueze (2014) remarks, there are three fundamental questions that explain the ideological aspect of media systems. Within what environment do journalists do their work? What level of freedom do media organisations enjoy within a given political system? Who or what determines news content – government or market forces? These are among other factors that shape the various types of media systems. He states further that, “types of media systems here refer to the nature and operations of the media in a country, including the relationship between the media and government, as explained by the press theories.”

Western Media System

Western media system is operated in countries with free-market economies (capitalist) and democratic system of government. Basically, this media system is rampant in the developed Western countries also known as the First World nations. The major flaw of this system, just as in everything in a capitalist society, is that the media place so much attention on profit-making at the expense of their social responsibility to the society. Despite this flaw, the Western media system remains one of the media systems characterized by press freedom, responsibility, free and independent journalism. In fact, countries of the West, like the United States that operates the Western media system, has the most highly-developed mass media in the world. According to Ekeanyanwu (2010), the Western media system is run along capitalist or free enterprise orientation and is an amalgamation of the original libertarian and social responsibility models. He adds that the Western media system is very practical in its ideological foundation. This media system is mostly practised in North America and other Western European nations.

A number of nations in Africa, Asia and Latin America also practice this system at least on paper. The Western media system operates within the libertarian and social responsibility tradition which upholds a free and responsible press. The basic tenets of this system are as follows: the media landscape is highly democratic with predominance of privately owned media organisations thriving basically on advertising revenues; the mass media serve as a free market place of ideas, providing diverse and divergent views for the public to make informed decisions on various issues; the media in this system are independent, free from government control and enjoying the freedom to operate but with a level of responsibility; through unbiased provision of information, the press facilitate governance by assisting other arms of government as fourth estate of the realm; the audience in a Western media system are literate, educated, rational and of relatively high income when compared with media audience in developing nations; formal regulations through press laws are used to guide journalists in the

line of duty; the political system in the society that has this type of media system operates multi-party democracy which facilitates a pluralistic media system (Nwabueze, 2014).

Authoritarian Media System

Authoritarian media system exist in countries that are ruled by non-democratically elected government or leaders, such as military dictatorships, one-party states, and other types of dictatorial and repressive regimes. Here, the mass media operate under the principles of the authoritarian theory, and it is these principles that determine the nature of the relationship between the government and the mass media. Nwabueze (2014) observes that this media system is characterized by one-way, top-down information flow from the rulers to the people largely because editorial content of the media is determined by the rulers. The traces of this media system are functional in communist nations such as China and North Korea particularly due to the relationship between the authoritarian and communist media systems.

Revolutionary Media System

The underlying ideology under this media system is change. Therefore, the media organisations and firms are necessary part of a revolutionary or libertarian movement aimed at displacing the existing order of governance or system inimical to the people's aspirations. The aims of revolutionary media system include: ending government monopoly over information; facilitating the organisation of opposition to the incumbent powers; destroying the legitimacy of a standing or an incumbent government; and bringing down a standing or an incumbent government. It must be noted that no country officially practice the revolutionary media system as a permanent ideology. Nations adopt this media system whenever the need for revolution, liberation or change arises (Ekeanyanwu, 2010). The revolutionary media system exists in nations where the citizens are engaged in struggles against dictatorships or any form of repressive regime.

The revolutionary media system consists of journalism practice targeted at either pulling down and forcing out a government or providing alternative sources of news for the public with a view to publishing information which government owned and moderate private media cannot provide. A revolutionary media system is characterized by the following features: a number of media organisations operate illegally basically because they are not registered with the official government agency in-charge of media registration; these media organisations are owned by people who are opposed to the government; the style of reporting is "guerilla journalism" which is a form of citizen or public journalism whereby journalists operate under government radar to avoid being apprehended; editorial content of media organisations is basically anti-government and most of the stories are on sensitive issues which moderate media organisations will be apprehensive to publish; after the government they are against leaves power forcefully or willingly, revolutionary media organisations often pack up or get registered as legal organisations with a change in tactics; media organisations operating "underground" in a revolutionary media system serve as alternative information sources which the public resort to for what could be called "the other side of the story" (Nwabueze, 2014).

Communist Media System

This system operates in communist countries such as China and North Korea. The communist media system projects the supremacy of the communist party and the communist ideology (communism). In this setting, private ownership of the media is not allowed. All means of communication and information sharing are owned and controlled by the government or communist party. The Eastern European nations that were under the defunct Soviet Union operated this media system. Few among these nations are Ukraine, Moldova, Russia, Czech Republic, Slovenia, Slovakia, Poland, Bulgaria and Hungary. These nations are called the "Second World countries." According to Nwabueze (2014), the basic characteristics of this media system are that the media are instruments of the state, owned and controlled by the state, used by the state to promote communist ideology and rule the country; news content is determined by the state and communist party; private media ownership does not exist except illegally or underground; independent journalism does not exist largely because of strict state ownership and control of the media landscape.

Development Media System

In the developing and underdeveloped countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America (the Third World nations), the media are seen as instruments that facilitate and promote development processes.

This media system basically functions to mobilize a nation for nation-building. It operates in developing nations with limited democratic space in the political system. The media are used by the government to promote development ideas giving little room for criticism or opposition of such policies. Countries which claim to be practising democracy but have dictatorship regime reflect this media system. Examples include Zimbabwe, Venezuela (under Hugo Chavez) and Cuba (under Fidel Castro). There is hardly any country that overtly practices this media system. It is basically a covert expression in countries that claim to be democracies

practicing the Western media system (Nwabueze, 2014).

Having discussed the different media systems (media operational philosophies) around the world, it is apparent to examine the news values or criteria for news evaluation in the three worlds – First, Second and Third. As a background to the subsequent discussion, it will be germane to define some key concepts such as the “world system,” “news” and “news values,” before examining the news values in different parts of the world.

World System: The Three Worlds

The world is divided into three groups in terms of political and economic development. These classifications include:

- i. The developed Western countries (First World);
- ii. The developed Eastern (socialist) countries (Second World); and
- iii. The underdeveloped or developing countries (Third World).

Additionally, the political division of the world led to the following economic relationship:

- i. Interdependence (relationship among equal partners);
- ii. Dependence (among the more powerful and less powerful); and
- iii. Independence (no relationship among partners).

These three systems characterized the nature of international economic conflicts, co-operation and their management.

The Western system of interdependence comprise of North America, Western Europe, Japan, among others. These countries are usually highly developed and capitalistic. They have major international economic interaction with each other in a dense system of mutual economic interaction.

The North-South system of dependence exists among the developed market economies of the Third World, the less developed countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. Unlike the Western system which composed of relatively similar and equal actors, the North-South system is of disparity and inequality. The major problem of this unequal system is dependence. Interdependence involves the high level of mutual sensitivity, dependence and unequal economic interaction.

The East-West system of independence; wherein partners in the system have few interactions and little impact on each other. Such had been the case in relations between the developed market economies of West and the planned economies of the Communist states of Eastern Europe. Examples include Poland, Bulgaria, Romania, Yugoslavia, and so on. The Cold War led each side to isolate its system from the other. Led by the United States, the West established a set of legal and administrative barriers with the East which followed the policy of economic and political isolation within a Socialist common wealth. Socialist states and capitalistic states developed their own separate economic institutions. The Socialist states did not participate in the World War.

In the arena of news services for example, the stronger states use large news agencies called the “Big Four” in the Western countries. These include:

- i. The Associated Press (AP) in New York;
- ii. The United Press International (UPI) in New York;
- iii. Reuters in London; and
- iv. Agence France Presse (AFP) in Paris.

MacBride (1980) vividly explains that the imbalance in news circulation is a complex and varied phenomenon. Alike quantitative and qualitative, it may occur at different levels and in different forms: (a) between developed and developing countries, in so far as the information flow is governed by the existence or non-existence of appropriate infrastructures; (b) between countries having different political and socio-economic systems; (c) between developed countries belonging to the same political system, particularly between smaller and bigger ones; (d) between the Third World countries themselves; (e) between political news and news concerning the social, economic and cultural life of countries battling with the ills of underdevelopment; (f) between what is conventionally called ‘good’ news and ‘bad’ news, i.e. news of catastrophes, failures, conflicts, set-backs, follies and excesses; and finally (g) between topical news of current events and information dealing in greater depth with issues important in the daily lives of people and nations.

First World

First World nations are industrialized Western countries. The term First World originated during the World War II, a term used to describe the countries that were aligned with the United State. First World countries are democratic and capitalistic. In fact, the developed countries of the West are countries being referred to as the First World. They are countries with industrialized and advanced economies and very high Human Development Indices (HDI). These include most of the countries of North America, Western Europe, Australia and Japan. Today, the First World nations are seen as countries with the most advanced economies, the greatest influence, the highest standards of living and the greatest technology.

Second World

The Second World nations are the totalitarian remnants of the Soviet-era Marxist bloc – such as China, Cuba, Vietnam and other dictatorships (Robie, 2005). Second World is a phrase used to describe the Communist states within the Soviet Union's sphere of influence or those countries with centrally-planned economies. The term "Second World" was a construct of the Cold War and the term has largely fallen out of use since the revolutions of 1989. This term is still being used to describe countries that are in-between "poverty and prosperity."

Third World

Third World is a term originally used to describe those nations that neither aligned with the West nor with the East during the Cold War. These countries are also known as the "Global South," "developing countries" and "least developed countries." Third World countries are the economically underdeveloped countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America, considered as entities with common characteristics such as poverty, high birthrates and economic dependence on the advanced countries. Third World nations are generally characterized as poor, having economies distorted by their dependence on the export of primary products to the developed countries in return for finished products. "These countries also tend to have high rates of illiteracy, diseases, population growth and unstable government, among others" (Chaliand, 2015:1-2).

Historically, the term "Third World" was coined during Cold War to distinguish those nations that were neither with the West – North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO) nor with the East – the Communist bloc or Soviet Union. Today, the term is often used to describe the developing countries of Africa, Asia and Latin America. During the Cold War, the Third World countries were neutral and non-aligned.

Precisely, the United States, Western European nations and their allies, represent the "First World." The Soviet Union; China, Cuba and their allies in Eastern Europe, on the other hand, represent the "Second World." The "Third World" is seen to include many countries with colonial pasts in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Specifically, these are group of developing nations that do not align themselves with the policies of either the United States or the former Soviet Union. In the so-called dependency theory of thinkers like Raul Prebisch, Walter Rodney, Theotinio dos Santos and Andre Gunder Frank, the Third World has also been connected to the world economic division as "periphery" countries in the world system that is dominated by the "core" counties. According to Alao, Uwom and Alao (2013:24), "core notations are capital-intensive, high-wage, high-technology production involving low labour exploitation and coercion." Most of the Third World countries were former colonies. Having gained independence, many of these countries especially the smaller ones, were faced with the challenges of nation and institution building on their own for the first time.

In essence, this terminology (of the world system) provided a way of broadly categorizing the nations of the world into three groups based on social, political, cultural and economic growth, development and the structures or systems in place and based on their economic and political strengths and status.

The Concept of News

News is the nucleus of journalism, yet it has no universally accepted definition. This is not surprising because for a concept like news, perception is bound to differ among scholars and practitioners of journalism. This lack of consensus on the definition of news made Akinfeleye (1997) cited in Michael and Kayode (2014:8) to remark that "the definitions of news are as numerous as those that write news."

Over the years, efforts have been made by different scholars and media practitioners to define news, but there has not been consensus among them on a universally accepted definition of the concept. Different points of views have been provided on news. This is as a result of the elusive nature of the concept. Woleseley and Campbell (1957) cited in Auwal (2014:2) observe that "whole books have been written in the effort to explain news but there still is no concept or description of it that satisfies the world of mass communication." Woleseley and Campbell's assertion clearly explains the wide-ranging perspectives that exist on the concept of news. This chapter will discuss few among the numerous definitions of news provided by scholars and media experts.

Mencher (2010:58) defines news as "information about a break from the normal flow of events, an interruption in the expected. News is information people need to make sound decisions about their lives." Similarly, Jarney cited in Michael and Kayode (2014:9) sees news as "something that happens today that was not the case yesterday. It is a snapshot of how the world changed." Rabi (2014:294) asserts that news is "the report which is timely, truthful and of public interest. News is the presentation of information that is up-to-date, important, interesting and pleasurable to its audience."

To Agee, Ault and Emery (1982), news is information people urgently need in getting their bearings in a rapidly changing world. News, in its broad sense, is that which is of interest to the readers – the public. They further clarify that a news story may not be of interest to every reader but its importance or values is proportionate to the number of readers in whom it incites interest and to the degree of that interest (cited in Rabi, 2014).

Coates (1980:125) notes that "news is what interests the readers, the viewers, the reporter, the editor,

the producer, their spouses and their neighbours. News is what affects their diets and their lives.” Okoye (2006:3) affirms that “news is the timely and factual account of an interesting event which the public must know because it is important, as it helps them to live their lives meaningfully.” Akinfeleye (2011:9) states that “news is an account (story) of what the public wants to know, what they ought to know, what they must know and have the right to know.”

Varying points of views have been provided on the concept of news. From the definitions above, some elements and keywords such as: “a break, an obstruction or interruption from the normal flow of events,” which also signifies unusualness; “timeliness and truthfulness” and “public interest,” are found, if not in all, in most of these definitions.

Anything that interrupts the normal flow of events in the society is said to be unusual. In many parts of the world, unusual occurrences make news. Also, for an occurrence to be published or broadcast as news, it must be timely and truthful. Timeliness has to do with the period of time within which the event took place and the time such event is reported or presented to the public as news. Breaking the news of events as they happen is usually considered the best because, like vegetable, news is perishable. The news of an event that took place two days ago is no longer current but stale news. News is meant for immediate consumption by the public. As such, any delay in conveying it across to them makes it stale news. Auwal (2014) explains that good news must be current; it must be something new and an event that has just happened or that has just taken place. In addition, news reports ought to be factual. Truthfulness in news connotes that the story (account of the event given) must be based on objective and unbiased coverage. Public interest and relevance are other keywords used by in some of the definitions cited earlier. The account of any event reported as news must be of interest to the audience and must be important and useful to their lives.

From the foregoing, it is evident, that news has no universally accepted definition. This is why Ogunsi (1989:23) posits that “the definitions of news are as many as the thousands of journalists we have in every country.” He adds that “in general, news is very relative and depends on what one thinks news is.”

Every society has its own perception about news. In the Nigerian setting, news is about promoting national unity, educating people on political and economic activities and informing them of government programmes, projects and policies.

Traditional News Values: Criteria for News Evaluation

“News values,” “news determinants” and “news elements” are terms used interchangeably to describe the criteria for evaluating newsworthy events. There are certain criteria common to all media professionals in determining what events are newsworthy and how to treat such events either on the pages of newspapers and magazines, on the newscast or on the Internet. Metz (2009) reinforces that “news values are defined as factors that every experienced reporter or editor considers, consciously or unconsciously, in deciding what to include in a story or in newspaper or newscast. They are qualities of news but they do not directly define news itself” (cited in Michael and Kayode, 2014:15).

News values, like the definitions of the concept of news, exist in varying perspectives. News values, sometimes called news criteria, determine how much prominence a news story is given by a media outlet, and the attention it is given by the audience. Over the years, scholars have argued on the traditional or basic criteria for news evaluation. In words of Boyd (1994), “news journalism has a broadly agreed set of values often referred to as ‘newsworthiness.’ News values are not universal and can vary widely between different cultures.” Ryan (1991:31) argues that “there is no end to the lists of news criteria.” Also, Akinfeleye (1997) cited in Michael and Kayode (2014:9) corroborates that “an event makes news because of one or a combination of the following imperatives: timeliness or immediacy; proximity or nearness to the place of the event; prominence; human and/or animal interest; magnitude, as well as consequence of the event.” Stovall (2011) cited in Rabi (2013:106) says “news values are the characteristics of information that make an event or subject newsworthy. They include timeliness, conflict, currency, prominence, proximity and unusualness.” Overbeck and Pasqua, cited in Rabi add that “five characteristics make an event newsworthy – proximity, prominence, consequence, timeliness and human interest.”

In many parts of the world today, these are some of the basic criteria used in determining the newsworthiness of events before they are reported or presented to the audience as news. Some of these news values or determinants have been outlined for discussion, thus:

- i. **Timeliness:** For an event to be considered as newsworthy, it must be timely. This implies that the event must be something that has just happened recently or not long ago. As it is often said, “news like fish, is better fresh.” Bawul (2008) cited in Asemah (2011a:93) explains that “news is meant for immediate consumption by the readers. Any delay in getting the story across to the reader may make it stale or useless.”

Timeliness or immediacy as news value explains how recent an event is. This news value qualifies the event as newsworthy. Dominick (2007:285) notes that “news is new. Yesterday’s news is

old news.” According to him, a reader who picks up the evening newspaper or tunes to the afternoon news expects to be told what happened earlier that same day. He explains further that “news is perishable and stale news is not interesting.” Nwabueze (2009:6) points out that “how current an event or occurrence is, gives it an edge over other events. Breaking news gets attention in news reporting. Journalists give priority to what is happening now, what is current, which is more current than competing stories, not what is old and no longer fresh.” In almost every part of the world, the timeliness and recency of an occurrence qualify such event as news.

- ii. **Human Interest:** Editors select many stories not so much for their impact but because such news items have the potential of arousing in us, emotions of sympathy and empathy with people involved in the event. Either sadness or happiness may characterize human interest (Esimokha, 2013). Human interest stories are stories of events that are ironic, bizarre, uplifting or dramatic. Asemah (2011a) observes that as a determinant of news, there are events that concern the lives of other human beings; stories that bother on the ridiculous account. Events that affect the lives of men and women – be they calamities or achievements, draw a wide attention or wide readership since these are matters that could affect anyone else. Auwal (2014:15) notes that “human interest stories are sometimes humorous, sensational and breath-taking.” He explains further that most of the reports presented by the news media are in one way or the other, human-related, human-oriented and human-centered because all round the world, human beings are curious to know about happenings involving others within and outside their environments.
- iii. **Proximity:** Proximity as news determinant has to do with distance. This could be either geographical or psychological proximity. The nearer an event is to the audience; the more interested the audience becomes to know about such event. Esimokha (2013) avers that proximity refers to nearness or otherwise of the place of the event to the audience. An event that takes place nearby is usually of more interest to the audience than a similar event occurring far away. The audience develops more interest and high curiosity in a minor event close at hand than in more important events miles away. Rabi (undated) throws more light on proximity when he explains that generally, man is self-centered. His primary concern is himself. Beyond that, he is interested in his neighborhood. He argues that the nearer an event is to a locality, the more newsworthy it is to the local people and thus, to the local media. People are curious about what is happening to them and their neighbours.

Explaining proximity in its geographical and psychological forms, Sambe and Utor (2005) cited in Asemah (2011a) note that stories about events and situations in one’s home community are more newsworthy than events that take place far. They explain further that geographical proximity means the nearness of the event to the reader in terms of physical distance. According to them, psychological proximity refers to the emotional attachment a reader has to the human beings involved in the event. The authors exemplify that, Nigerians living within or outside the country will naturally show utmost concern to the news about the recent Jos crisis than the one in far away Liberia or Somalia.
- iv. **Prominence and Eminence:** This refers to the degree of importance of a personality or the place involved in an event. Auwal (2014) posits that even though men are created equal, some end up becoming more newsworthy than others. The author made reference to the local adage that says “man pass man.” He states further that an event that happens to a poor man may not draw the attention of journalists but if similar event happens to a prominent person, it becomes newsworthy. Esimokha (2013) reveals that stories involving prominent individuals, groups or organisation have a higher news value than stories about persons who are relatively unknown. Prominent persons such as the President of a country, famous politicians, movie stars, human rights activists, etcetera all make news because they are very well known and people are interested in what they are doing.

The involvement of outstanding people in an event adds to its news value. The more important a person is, the more news worthy he is. Eminent and prominent people are notable. They are like houses upon a hill: visible to all but not accessible to all (Rabi, undated).
- v. **Significance, Impact, Magnitude or Consequence:** Significance implies the importance of an event. Issues and occurrences that affect or are likely to affect a large number of people are considered newsworthy. Stories concerning epidemics, disasters and the likes will certainly be of interest to the people who will be affected directly or indirectly (Uwakwe, 2005 cited in Asemah, 2011a). In other words, significance relates to the number of people affected or involved in a scandal or the number of people likely to be affected. Terms such as significance, impact, magnitude and consequence are used interchangeably to explain this news determinant.
- vi. **Unusualness:** This has to do with events that are extra-ordinary. Unusual events are unexpected and they make big news. According to Asemah (2011a:94), “another name for unusualness is novelty.” Strange things or events normally draw wide readership. Anything that makes somebody to stop and stare is likely to be unusual and therefore, makes news. Asemah epitomizes that “if a man of twenty years old rapes a woman of seventy, it is strange and will draw attention.” Nwabueze (2009:11) opines

- that “people get excited when they read news about unusual events. Events that are unusual or different from routine experience also get classified as newsworthy.”
- vii. **Conflict or Controversy:** By its nature, conflict holds a forceful attraction for the mass media. According to Esimokha (2013), mankind’s relationship seem to abound with conflict and competition. When people struggle, disagree, fight, debate or argue, it is newsworthy particularly if those involved are important or prominent. Many types of stories have conflict as their underlying element. These elements are found in many daily situations such as sports event, elections, strikes, contests, campaigns, struggle against odds, court cases, among others.

From the foregoing, it can be deduced that in selecting newsworthy events for publication in newspapers and magazines or for broadcast in radio and television, some criteria or standards often referred to as news determinants or values, are considered by journalists and media organisations around the world. It is important also to note that not all of the traditional news determinants or values were discussed in this chapter, but the most commonly used ones. In spite of the differences in the media systems and news values of the First, Second and Third World countries, these traditional news values are characteristics of events or happenings that make news around the world.

News Values across the Three Worlds

News means different thing to different people. Rabi (2013:116) notes that, “like beauty, news is in the eyes of the beholder.” Howell (1986) in Rabi, comments that the First, Second and Third Worlds have had difficulty agreeing upon what constitute news.

In an attempt to provide a more constructive analysis of comparative news values, Lule (1987) developed a “Three Worlds” news model in the late 1980s showing that a “dramatic difference” in global news values was a “function of political, economic and philosophical developments of the past three centuries.” However, by the late 1990s, the appropriateness of this model was becoming somewhat stretched in a global media world. In post-Cold War politics, news values definition boundaries were becoming blurred, and it was no longer easy to slot some countries into three neat categories (Robie, 2005).

Across the three worlds, there is ongoing controversy over what constitute news. As Lule (1987) explains, Third World countries express dissatisfaction not only with the quality of First World news coverage of their nations, but also with the values underlying the news. The Third World wants different news values. The Second World offers its own versions but these are unacceptable to the First World and may not apply to the Third World. Lule explains further that for a practical study of today’s concerns, news values manageably can be categorised into the accepted political and economic slots of a First, Second and Third Worlds. However, the First World news values were formed by 17th century entrepreneurs and continue to be driven by economic factors. Such elements were almost nonexistent, indeed repugnant in the Second World, where another set of philosophical and economic factors formed different news values. And as the Third World began to break free from colonial domination, news values became even more diverse. With fettered pasts, with fragile futures, Third World nations established their own press systems with values appropriate to their own lands and people.

At this juncture, it is indispensable to examine the news values across the First, Second and Third World countries.

First World News Values

By definition, news in the Western (First World) sense of the word is an accurate, fair, balanced and objective report that must have certain news values based on such criteria as impact, prominence, proximity, timeliness, human interest, conflict and oddity. Westerners also conceive news as a commercial product that is sold to them by information brokers (the mass media) for profit. Audience tastes and the profit motive therefore, influence the criteria for selecting news in First World countries (Howell, 1986 cited in Rabi, 2013).

Robie (2005:73) affirms that “objectivity is espoused as a dominant ideal for First World media. News values reflect timeliness, proximity and personality for the First World.” The news values identified in the First World will be discussed as follows:

- i. **Timeliness:** In the First World, news is now. News is new. According to Rabi (2013:118), because news of events in the West is generally accessible to all, the only way one reporter can scoop another is by being first with the story. He argues that the more competitive a country is, the more refined the measure of timeliness. Rabi adds that timeliness is emphasized more in economically advanced societies because they have the economic means to utilize the technology of rapid communication. Lule (1987) asserts that in the First World, news is now. News is new. News is recent, ongoing and often a continuation of the day or the moment before. Rubin, cited in Lule says, news in the First World is “something new, out of the ordinary and immediate.” News, literally something new, gives a sense of change and momentum. Timeliness is an important distinction on information necessary for current adjustment.

- ii. **Proximity:** Lule (1987:27) notes that “in the First World, news is near. Readers want to read about their continent, country, state, county, town, neighborhood, street or, most preferably, their next-door neighbour.” Similarly, Rabiou (2013:117) posits that “the nearer the news event is to the audience of a media house, the more newsworthy the event is to that particular media house.”
- iii. **Personality:** News is about prominent people in the First World. Politicians, royalties, sports heroes and heroines, hip hop artists, and movie stars make news in the First World. Personality creates news.
In many Western countries, the personal as well as the public lives of prominent individuals are kept in the limelight because it is felt that people have a right to know about their leaders. In the United State, the political news coverage preceding an election frequently focuses on the personal characteristics of the candidates (Rabiou, 2013).
- iv. **Unusual event:** In the First World, news is weird. News is something strange, something that is odd and unusual. News is bizarre and therefore, regarded as something to be looked with many eyes.
- v. **Human Interest:** According to Lule (1987), news is about ordinary people, their peculiarities, similarities, huge kindnesses, petty meannesses – all the glory and shame of the human spirit can be news in the First World. Lippmann, cited in Lule, comments that a reader wants a sense of personal identification with the story he is reading. News which does not offer this opportunity to introduce oneself into the struggle which it depicts cannot appeal to a wide audience. The audience must participate in the news, much as it participates in the drama, by personal identification.
- vi. **Conflict:** Fights and disagreements are news in the First World. When people struggle, disagree, fight, debate or argue, it is newsworthy.

Second World News Values

News in the Second World, according to Lule (1987:32), is defined as “that news from within nations aligned with the Soviet bloc. To some, news in the Second World is purely Communist party propaganda or government controlled messages that have little to do with the concepts of news.”

In the Second World, news is perceived as a “collective agitator.” However, ideological significance, party concern and social responsibility constitute the news values of Second World nations.

- i. **Ideological Significance:** News is correct ideology. Certainly, this is the overriding factor in determining news in the Second World. Every decision in the news process, from story selection to presentation on the page or screen, is made with considerations of ideology. *Pravda*, a newspaper published in St. Petersburg, devotes a number of front page stories annually to a discussion of the press’ role in a Socialist society. Hammered home is the importance of ideology. On page one of September 17, 1983, *Pravda* said journalism is rightly called “life’s renaissance worker.” The potential of its active participation in molding contemporary man’s outlook and life stance and in asserting the moral and spiritual values of the Soviet way of life is today greater than ever... Ideological commitment and skill are the two wings that lift journalism to the level of the demands made on it by our complicated time (Lule, 1987). In the Second World, news is the interpretation of the “way of life” in ideological terms.
- ii. **Party Concern:** In the Second World, the only state party that exists was the Communist party. What this party says, what it does and what it thinks constitute news in the Second World. According to Lule (1987:34), “the predominance of the party in Second World life is the reason behind this news value. These are societies where most of life’s activities are controlled by the party. Therefore, such a news value makes great sense and is of real help to a media public.”
- iii. **Social Responsibility:** News is responsible to the society in Second World. News is constructive and positive, active and vigilant. *Pravda* observed that the duty and vocation of the press is to submit to the public’s verdict the questions which worry people and to make bold use of criticism in the struggle against impediments to our progress (Lule, 1987).
- iv. **Education:** In the Second World, news is instruction. News teaches and preaches. Lule (1987) comments that inherent to its function as propaganda, Second World news does not exist of itself but for a purpose. That purpose often is education. Such education may take many forms such as articles on agricultural innovations; healthcare tips; televised language instruction; pamphlets and books on Lenin, and ever-present explanations and denunciations of Western imperialist doings. The plentifulness of educational news is a clear indication of its values in the Second World news system.
- v. **Human Interest:** News is of, about and for the people. In the Second World, this value of human interest is given an ideological touch. News is not so much about people as it is about the people. Lule (1987) points out that when Second World news media highlight “ordinary” works, such as when *Pravda* displays a large photograph of a worker on the front page, this is not meant to elevate or extol a particular person but to elevate all workers.

Ideology is stressed, examined and interpreted for readers in the Second World. News is subjective and personal in the Second World. It attempts to create a sense of passion and commitment. The Second World news

style is not objective or sensational. It does not investigate the private lives of its public figures. Things that do not serve any ideology are not part of the news in Second World.

Third World News Values

Over the past few years, efforts have been made in the Third World to develop some sets of news values as alternative to those of the First and Second Worlds. Although, some journalists and media experts consider some of the Third World's news values as threats to press freedom. In the same vein, Lule (1987:38) states that "the development of the Third World in modern terms of technology and economics has been relatively recent. News values of the Third World are broad and varied. The great diversity of Third World countries from China to Chile to Liberia, guarantees a great variety of news."

The Third World news values prioritise development, national integration, social responsibility and education. Ochs (1986) cited in Rabiun (2013:117) observes that "news in the Third World, is used to mobilize citizens for national development. Here, news should educate, instruct and integrate the different tribes towards national unity and orderly progress."

i. **Development:** As stated earlier, the Third World countries are the non-aligned nations with colonial pasts in Africa, Asia and Latin America. Most of the Third World countries were former colonies. Having gained independence, many of these countries were faced with the challenges of nation and institution building. For this reason, news in the Third World is seen as a means (or tool) used to promote nation growth and development. Lule (1987:40) notes that "in Third World, news is growth. News is progress. News is new dams, new buildings, new roads and new countries."

Information about new trends and developments in the society constitute news in the Third World. In fact, the development media theory clearly explains what is expected of the mass media in Third World countries. The theory holds that the mass media have significant role to play in facilitating the processes of development in the developing countries. According to Okunna (1999:138), "economic development and nation-building should take precedence over some freedoms of the press and of individuals." In addition, the theory advocates that the mass media should assist government in the task of nation-building, and that the government could control the media as well as journalists to achieve this goal.

ii. **Social Responsibility:** In the Third World, news is responsible. This value probably holds sway throughout the First, Second and Third Worlds. Within the fragile structures of Third World nations, responsible news is considered imperative. This is the flip side of positive, developmental journalism. Not only are journalists asked to concentrate on the good, the positive, the building, but they are asked to ignore or downplay the bad, the negative and the failures. In the Third World news, social responsibility is espoused. The press, which enjoys a privileged position under the government, is obliged to be responsible to the communication in contemporary society. This is also in line with the social responsibility theory of the press. It is no doubt, that the mass media need freedom to perform their duties effectively in the society. The libertarian (free press) theory advocates for such freedom. The social responsibility theory, on the other hand, stresses on the need of the media to be socially responsible in the discharge of their expected responsibilities in the society. This simply connotes that the mass media ought to downplay or ignore anything that is capable of causing immorality or social tension. For instance, the journalists in this part of the world are discouraged from promoting ill-feelings among ethnic groups and adherents of the different religious faiths.

iii. **National Integration:** In the Third World, news is positive. News is on achievement, pride and unity of the nation. Lule (1987:41) remarks that "this value is the logical extension of development and socially responsible journalism. By concentrating on positive achievements of a nation, news might serve as a stimulus to national pride and unity."

As the Kenyan Editor, Hilary Ng'weno observes, in Third World (countries with new governments), the first duty of a press, as indeed of any other institution or individual, is to encourage greater national unity; for without a minimum amount of national unity, achieving and sustaining all other human values in the society become impossible. Freedom and justice become meaningless. Life becomes insecure. Where there is not enough national unity, it is my view that the press should confine itself to the difficult task of helping to unify the nation and removing mistrust between communities or tribes.

iv. **Education:** One of the primary functions of news and indeed the mass media is to educate members of the society. In the Third World, news is conceived as a means of educating the society on contending issues in the economic, political and social endeavours. In the Third World, news teaches, news passes on knowledge. News can be used to pass on knowledge on healthcare, to aid in agricultural works, and to spread cultural works. In rural villages, where one radio might be the sole source of communication with the country at large, such use of the media seems a necessity. As an educational tool, news can be

used to set the agenda of the nation. Mahatma Gandhi stressed that “one of the objects of newspapers is to understand the proper feeling and give expression of it. Another is to arouse among the people, certain desirable sentiments; the third is fearlessly to expose popular defects.” Similarly, Indira Gandhi voiced that “if information is power to resist, the non-aligned should view communication in this sense.” According to her, “for us it is a major resource in enlarging our people’s awareness, and in securing their participation in national and international affairs” (cited in Lule, 1987:41-42).

In spite of the differences and inequalities that characterize the economic and political structure, relationship and developments of the First, Second and Third World countries, there are some similarities in their news values. Lule (1987) argues that it would be incorrect to assume that traditional First World news values, such as timeliness, proximity and prominence are absent from Second and Third World news. For example, when Pope John Paul II returned to his homeland of Poland in 1982, the event was treated as a major news story because of news values such as proximity and prominence. The difference between First and Second Worlds, however, is that such news values always would be subservient to primary ideological concepts.

From the foregoing discussion, one of the most significant and striking news value that is common in the First, Second and Third Worlds is human interest. Lule (1987) explains vividly that in Second World, human interest is a close relation to similar values in the First World. Human interest is indeed, a widespread news values that is found in the three worlds. News is people; it is about people, their actions and reactions to happenings around them. The activities of people in any society constitute news. In the First world, it is said that news is about ordinary people, their peculiarities, similarities, huge kindness, petty meannesses – all the glory and shame of human spirit. In the Second World, human interest is one of the most significant news values, even though it is given an ideological perspective or touch. In the listings of the Third World news values, human interest was not captured, but notwithstanding, news interests people in the Third world. Development, national integration and education are activities that concern and affect human beings. As such, these activities touch the lives of people in the Third World. In fact, human interest is an indispensable news value as it supersedes and hegemonises all other values across the three worlds.

In the Second and Third Worlds, news is responsible. News is constructive, positive and vigilant. Responsible news is considered worthy and necessary in the Second and Third Worlds. For example, the Code of Ethics of the Indian Press Council states that journalists and news papers shall endeavour to highlight and promote activities of the state and social progress. In line with the Second World’s news value of social responsibility, journalists in the Third World are not only required to focus on the good, the positive, the building, but are also encouraged to ignore or downplay the bad, the negative and the failures. This is also applicable in the First World because “objectivity is espoused as a dominant ideal for First World media. This is attributed to the fact that only a socially responsible press can disseminate news and information objectively, devoid of subjectivity and sensationalism and all other tendencies that are unethical.

Generally, it can be said that many Third World countries’ press systems bear similarities to those of the Second World. Governments are involved with the news. News is employed in pursuit of national goals. Much of the First World’s negative reaction to call for a new world information order is based upon the Third World embrace of such news values (Lule, 1987).

Education is another news value that shares similarity in the Second and Third World countries. Unlike in the First World, the Second and Third Worlds’ news are not meant simply to inform or entertain. News may be informative and entertaining, but only in the process of education. In the Second World countries, news is instruction; it teaches and preaches. It is used to impart knowledge of healthcare, agricultural innovations, and so on. As an educational tool, news can be used to set the agenda of the nation in the Third World. Accordingly, education is considered common in the Second and Third World news values.

The news value of timeliness also shares similarity across the First, Second and Third Worlds. News is the account of new events or happenings in either parts of the world. Whether it constitutes objectivity as in the First World, ideology (collective agitator) in the Second World or nation building as in the Third World, news cannot be the account of events that transpired or took place long time ago. News is now. News is new. News is recent, ongoing and often a continuation of the day or the moment before. As stated by Rubin, cited in Lule (1987:26), “news is something new, out of the ordinary and immediate. Another way to put it is an important distinction, the priority on information which is timely and necessary for current adjustment.”

Considering their poor and underdeveloped economic structures, the overriding factor or element that makes news in Third World countries is development. This is the foremost and primary news value in the developing and underdeveloped countries of the world. In this part of the world, news is about progress, news is about growth; news is new dams, new buildings, new roads, new states or new countries on the continents. The major concern of Third World news is to focus on development and improved standards of living.

Timeliness, proximity and personal interest are “intrinsic qualities” of news in the Third World. Although they play secondary roles in the Third World, but some of these values are quite similar to those found in the First World news.

In the First World countries, news is determined by its “objectivity.” In the Second World, it is perceived as “collective agitator” and in the Third World, news is perceived as a tool for “nation building.” Robie (2005:73) points out that news values reflect timeliness, proximity and personality for the First World, in contrast to “ideological significance,” “party concerns” and “social responsibility” for the (totalitarian) Second World. Third World news values prioritise “development,” “national integration” and “social responsibility.”

In the First World, the major concern with regards to news values is presenting first and fastest (immediately) to the audience, the story about what has happened, what is happening and what will happen. Objectivity is the hallmark of First World news. In the Second World, news is shaped by ideological factors. Here, news is subjective and personal. Unlike the “consensual” nature of First World news, there is often a tone of unity to the news in the Second World. These elements form the basis of news values and also affect the structure and style of presentation of news in the Second World. However, Lule (1987) observes that the ideological component of a news story is not hidden subtly within the body. Ideology is stressed, examined and interpreted for readers. News is not objective or sensational in the Second World. It does not contain many negative events nor does it probe the private lives of its public figures. These concepts, staples of First World news styles, serve no ideological purpose and thus for the Second World, they are not a part of the news. Lule explains further that the First World is changing; its values, structures and styles have been affected by the changing readership, the demands of increasingly complex societies and the development of alternative press systems in the Second and Third Worlds. The change is affecting news values and news styles. First World journalists are learning that education sometimes can be accomplished not through the objective reporting of events but through the interpretation and explanation of these events. By their very nature, Second World news values have been resistant to change. Designed to defend, protect and extend the legitimacy of the Communist party, the press is the righteous defender of a revolutionary status quo. Change under such conditions (in the Second World) is difficult.

Robie (2005:73) notes that “education is important for the Second and Third Worlds, but is not crucial for First World news/media values.” As in the First and Second World countries, the presentation of news in the Third World is a function of the primary news values. Construction and style of news are consistent with the values of developmental, socially responsible and educational journalism. Lule (1987) argues that as elements of First and Second World news values move closer, as Third World journalists continue to select from each in creating values of their own, there may appear a common ground among news values. Some differences always will remain because nations always will differ. Yet some similarities may become apparent, similarities that may reveal the universal values of news.

Conclusion

The differences and inequalities that characterize the economic and political structures, growths and developments of the First, Second and Third World countries account for the imbalances and disparities in the international communication structures and information flows. However, these disparities are increasing on daily basis, rather than diminishing. MacBride (1980) corroborates that despite these disturbing figures, the most striking picture comes from direct comparisons between developed and developing countries, indicating the relationship between economic development and the level of communication infrastructures and activities. Therefore, the higher the level of technology, the greater the disparity; it is greater in television than in radio, greater informatics than in television. Available data indicate that developed nations possess over 95 percent of the world’s computer capacity, measured by the value of equipment. Disparity in this sphere is increasing rather than diminishing, because each new step forward in sophisticated technology accentuates the advantages of a small number of countries.

Okunna (1999) supports MacBride’s assertion when she affirms that the much-vaunted notion of the ‘global village’ has obviously not had much impact in the economic sphere, as globalization has continued to worsen the disparity between the ‘have-not’ countries of the Third World and the ‘haves’ in the developed Western world. She explains further that despite ideological, political, cultural and other differences which divide the countries of the developing world, one feature that has continued to unite them is the extremely low level of economic development in comparison to the developed countries. As Pearson (2013 cited in Robie (2013:92) asserts, “however, by the 1990s, the appropriateness of the ‘Three Worlds’ news model developed by Jack Lule had become somewhat outdated in a globalised world.” Robie (2013) further lends credence to this point when he mentions that in the post-Cold war politics entering an era so-called ‘war on terror,’ news values definition boundaries became blurred and it was no longer easy to position some countries into three simplistic categories of West “objectivity,” East “collective agitator” and Third World “nation-building.” In the mid-1990s, while teaching Journalism at the University of Papua New Guinea, David Robie modified Lule’s model into a “Four Worlds” news values approach, which could be more readily applied to independent Pacific post-colonial states and indigenous minorities amid developmental and media transition.

While news values are crucial in the paradigmatic selection of events, they play only a part in the

syntagmatic construction of those events into stories. In addition, four basic assumptions underlie the journalist's transformation of news values into convenient categories not-so-coincidentally conforming to the sections of a Sunday newspaper, such as politics, international affairs, sports, leisure, etc; society is composed of individuals who can "make news" and affect change by their actions; society is hierarchical, logically and orderly organised; and society is a "consensual" character that recognizes our interest (Hartley, cited in Lule, 1987:30). Lule puts forth that with news values in mind, the journalist then is free to apply style to his construction of the story.

Disparities continuously evolve in the news values and ideologies of different nations of the world. This is as a result of the fact that man is bound to be dynamic and complex. Man is not static, he changes over time. Changes and disparities in news values of the First, Second and Third World countries is a continuing phenomenon, as new models are already being developed for countries called the "Fourth World."

The media question is an unending one. New technologies, new trends and new approaches to news, the role and place of the mass media cannot be overemphasized in the contemporary society.

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