

# Globalization, Mass Media And Development In Nigeria: The Nexus

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## ABSTRACT

Globalization has become one of the defining features of the contemporary world, and is, no doubt, undergoing tremendous social, economic, cultural and technological transformation. Relations between states are being re-defined and restructured in the globalization process through the instrument of mass media. This study analyses and evaluates the nexus between globalization and mass media in Nigeria development. The fundamental issue by this study was therefore on the implication of the linkages for globalization, media and development. A literature review of works done on the concept of globalization, dimensions of globalization, the concept of mass media, types of media the concept of development, globalization and mass media, and the globalization, media and Nigerian development was carried out. Methodologically, the study was carried out qualitatively through content analysis of relevant literatures. After a thorough analysis of the data gathered, it was deduced the realities of the underdeveloped nature of Nigeria and African countries, and the subsequent loss incurring in the inevitable on-going process of globalisation. To enable Nigeria and the likes extricate itself from predatory of the west in the global arena, governmental discipline, political stability, good governance and focused and visionary leadership striving to ensure harmonious existence and cooperation towards development were recommended.

**Key Words:** Globalization, Mass media, Development, Communication, Information technology, Social network.

## INTRODUCTION

Over the years, there have been heated and passionate debates on the relationship between development in Europe and Third World underdevelopment. In recent times, the fetishism about globalization tend to obscure this debates and liberal scholars often under the umbrella neo-liberalism tend to argue that, the questions of underdevelopment are either settled or that, they are no more significant in contemporary global political economy.

No doubt, it appears that arguments for the linkage or de-linkage between Third World and the International Capitalist World is becoming at least futile. This is because the hurricane globalization seems to have swept across the World, bringing down as it passed, the territorial boundaries of Third World States, sweeping faster and deeply through economies, politics, social, cultural, environment, education and technology; thereby exposing most parts of the developing World to the cold discomfort of imperial market forces.

Globalization is running wild today via the channel of mass media; the media have greatly accelerated the pace of globalization. The inventions of Information and communication technologies (ICTs) have greatly accelerated the process of globalization in recent decades; which are latest for the promotion of socio-cultural, political and economic globalization.

The media is perhaps one of the most vital agents of development in the modern world. As such no one can deny the fact that, the issue of information and communication is a purveyor of national development as free and responsible media is necessary for development particularly in countries where development has not taken deep root. The media as an agent of mass communication rose and developed to the present stage in the industrialized and developed countries, therefore the rise of the media could be linked to the growth of national cultures with a linguistic unity, to the increase of literacy, which invariably has led to spectacular events in the technological resolution from the early movable type printing to the transistor. The media, as the sounding rods of information, are on the very sharp cutting edge of modern development and civilization.

The study, therefore analyse and evaluate the nexus between globalization and mass media in Nigeria development. The need to do this has become very vital especially at this time when Nigeria is in dire need for development. It is in this contest that, this study examines the place of the media in national development calculation in the era of globalization.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

In this section highlight of the foundational issues that define the central theme of this paper will be reviewed. The issues discussed will provide the necessary context and barometer for validation of the argument

advanced. In this respect, attention will be drawn to the concept of globalization, dimensions of globalization, the concept of mass media and type of media, the concept of development, globalization and mass media, and the globalization, media and Nigerian development.

### **The Concept of Globalization**

Globalization according to MacGillivray (2006) is one of the most pervasive, but deeply contested processes and developments in contemporary society. This is evident in the avalanche of writings and essays focusing on particular aspects of the process. Writers have thus disagreed not only on its actual definition, but also its nature, historical origins, relevance and impact in society. Indeed, David Held and Anthony McGrew (2002) have described debates about it as 'one of the most fundamental debates of our time.' Although in a sense, globalization can be said to be a new term for an age-old process of social and economic transformation, the extensive scope of its operation has led to its present dominant position in contemporary discourse. This explains why so many socio-economic and even political developments are attributed either directly or indirectly to globalization.

Globalization phenomena like many social science concept is pregnant with meaning; the definition has been inherently problematic; this is partly because as a multi-faceted process, while some have emphasized the economic aspect of the process, others focus on its social political, cultural or even technological dimensions.

Globalization can be defined as "a complex economic, political, cultural, and geographic process in which the mobility of capital, organizations, ideas, discourses, and peoples has taken a global or transnational form (Moghadam 1999). It can also be defined as "the network of connections of organisations and people across national, geographic and cultural borders and boundaries" (Pearson Education, 2002). According to a more detailed definition:

Globalisation refers to the increasing importance of international trade, international relations, treaties, alliance etc. International of course means between or among nations. The basic unit remains the nation even as relations among other nations become increasingly necessary and important" (Daly, 1999:1).

Emphasizing the time-space compression and the stretching of social relations in the modern era, Anthony Giddens (1990) defines globalization as 'the intensification of worldwide social relations which link distant localities in such a way that local happenings are shaped by events occurring many miles away and vice versa'. He recognizes the fact that this entails a dialectical process since such local happenings may move in an opposite direction from those that shape them.

While admitting that 'globalization is very hard to define,' (2002) Boaventura de Sousa Santos prefers a definition that is more sensitive to the social, political, and cultural dimensions of contemporary society. For him, globalization is 'the process by which a given local condition or entity succeeds in extending its reach over the globe and, by doing so, develops the capacity to designate a rival social condition or entity as local'. He draws attention to two significant aspects of this definition:

- i) That in the conditions of the Western capitalist world system there is no genuine globalization because what we call 'globalization' is always the successful globalization of a given localism. His explanation for this is that there is no global condition for which we cannot find a local root, a specific source of cultural embeddedness.
- ii) Globalization entails localization, and we live in a world of localization as much as we live in a world of globalization. He illustrates this with the globalization of English Language as the lingua franca which has entailed the localization of other potentially global languages, such as French. Similarly, the globalization of the Hollywood star system has entailed the ethnicization of the Hindu star system or other actors. He therefore submits that the full meaning and explanation of any given process of globalization can only be identified if we equally consider the adjacent processes of relocalization occurring in tandem and intertwined with it. From this analysis, he makes the controversial formulation that there is strictly no single entity called globalization, but rather 'globalizations' and, suggests that we should always use the term in this plural sense (Ibid). He argues that what we call globalization consists of sets of social relations which inevitably change, and, since 'globalizations' are bundles of social relations; these are bound to involve conflicts resulting in the emergence of winners and losers (Ibid).

His general definition and description of the globalization process has close similarities with that proffered by Roland Robertson who states that 'we may best consider contemporary globalization in its most general sense as a form of institutionalization of the two-fold process involving the universalization of particularism and the particularization of universalism'(1992)

There is some force in the last two definitions particularly when globalization is viewed from an ideological perspective. This is because the actual nature and social impact of globalization has been shielded by

venerated attempts to cast it in an entirely economic, non-political and non-ideological garb. It is projected as the best economic and social value for humankind that must be embraced by all states and individuals. Yet, a close analysis of the main pillars of globalization and how these have been used in contemporary society shows that it is a process strewn with, and deeply enmeshed in, ideological contexts with far-reaching implications for its relationship with development.

Nevertheless, there are formidable difficulties in defining globalization with the use of such social and economic correlates. As they stand, the definitions do not immediately draw attention to the constituent elements of the process and how they have come either to be universalized or particularized, as the case may be. Moreover, they are not sufficiently comprehensive and represent particular interpretations of the globalization process thus further limiting our understanding of the process.

It is perhaps in recognition of these difficulties that Robert Holton (2005) has argued that a useful definition of globalization must emphasize three key aspects, namely;

- a) The intensified movement of goods, money, technology, information, people, ideas and cultural practices across political and cultural boundaries;
- b) The inter-dependence of social processes across the globe, such that all social activities are profoundly interconnected rather than separated off into different national and cultural spaces;
- c) Consciousness of and identification with the world as a single place, as informs cosmopolitanism, religion or earth-focused environmentalism.

This comprehensive approach to the definition of globalization is also adopted by David Held, et al who defines it as:

A process (or a set of processes) which embodies a transformation in the spatial organization of social relations and transactions - assessed in terms of their extensity, intensity, velocity and impact - generating transcontinental or interregional flows and networks of activity, interaction, and the exercise of power (2003:16-17).

According to them, this inclusion of the four spatio-temporal dimensions of globalization namely; the extensity of global networks, the intensity of global interconnectedness, the velocity of global flows, and the impact propensity of global interconnectedness helps to differentiate globalization from more spatially delimited processes such as localization, nationalization, regionalization and internationalization. It also provides a framework and basis for a quantitative and qualitative assessment of historical patterns of globalization (Ibid). More importantly, such a comprehensive approach draws attention to the multi-dimensional nature of globalization and the interactions between the various dimensions of the process. Equally signal, is the fact that the various interpretations of globalization emphasize its deeply contested nature. It is therefore not surprising that John Wiseman has described it in the following words:

Globalisation is the most slippery, dangerous and important buzzword of the late twentieth century. It is slippery because it can have many meanings and be used in many ways. It is dangerous because too often it is used as a powerful and simplistic justification for the endless expansion of unregulated capitalist relations into every part of life in every corner of the globe. It is important because debates about globalisation can illuminate a world in which time and space have been so dramatically compressed that distant actions in one corner of the globe have rapid and significant repercussions on people and places far away (1998:1).

However, the common theme that runs through these definitions is interdependence, interaction, and interconnectedness; and taken together, the afore-mentioned definitions highlight various dimensions of contemporary globalization.

### **The Concept of Mass Media**

Media is the plural form of medium (a means or agency, instrument through which communication or contact is made). According to Kirby et al (1997), medium refers to a single source of information or technique of passing information while media refers to more than one source of information designated to reach out to many people- (a mass Audience). Nwoke (1997) viewed media, as channels through which message, information, ideas and knowledge are conveyed to people or inculcated into learners. In a related note, Giddens (2004) defined media as a wide variety of forms, including; television, newspapers, films, magazines, advertisements, video games, CDs, satellite cables and web or internet facilities that reach mass audience. In a common parlance, media can be define as the various means of mass communication, including television, radio,

film, magazines and newspapers, together with the people involved in their production. The role of the media is to provide factual and reliable information including the expression of ideas and opinions. But the information so provided may also educate, entertains or plays advocacy roles.

#### **Types of Media:**

It is now very appropriate to classify and discuss how the varied media can be manipulated through varied technological and electronic process towards engineering and developing the society.

**Electronic Media:-** The electronic media can be subdivided in to radio, being an audio- medium only; a broadcast medium using only the aural medium of information dissemination, with rather inexhaustive reach and peroration; with relatively simpler methods of broadcasts to reach far and wide; appealing to both the blind and the sightful patrons. On the other hand, the television is the audio-visual broadcast medium, perceptibly tactile, pictorial and photographic in its visual delineations, further enrich with all the magic sound and vision, through which the medium can create its own appeal and impression.

**Print Media:-** the print media, consisting of newspapers, magazines, hard or soft, do not belong to broadcast media, through mass –circulated, with very many people targeted reading the same papers, messages or articles simultaneously, but individually and isolated. Their messages may be understood, misunderstood, interpreted and misinterpreted variably, creating like appeals and impressions among the citizens for good or bad; enhancing or hindering development. They may also mould or warp the minds, depending on the content's appeals.

**Celluloid Media:-** these consist of what can be called cinemas or films, also called motion pictures collectively, described as a sequence of pictures of objects photographed in motion by specifically designed cameras (called motion picture camera) and thrown on a screen by a projector ( motion picture ), in such rapid successions as to give illusion of natural movements. Live programmes can be presented in this form through the instrumentality of celluloid. When properly manipulated as such, the celluloid media can also educate, inform and entertain. They may be manipulated to create targeted effect or results desired.

#### **The Concept of Development**

Development is a word with an ever-changing definition. It has no shape, no parameter, and has a connotation of which assumes the most convenient definition for the context in which it is applied. Yet despite numerous semantic debates found within the development literature, it is important to recognize that such discourse is not an end in itself, but merely a launching point for important, meaningful methodological discourse and design (Midgley, 2006).

Development is best described as a “philosophy, a process, the outcome or product of that process, and a plan guiding the process towards desired objectives” (Sharpley, 2002, p. 23). As a philosophical concept, it describes a desirable future state to which a society might progress, and will highly influence the formation of development policies.

While the term development may be defined or interpreted in various forms, in the context of development theory, it refers to classification of human-beings' status in the society (social class), the availability of vital utilities such as water, sewage, food, health education and transportation facilities as well as the position of a nation's resources in the world system. Below are some social scientists' definitions:

Goulet (1968, p.388) stated that;

Development has usually been treated as a process, a particular kind of social change. Nevertheless, development is also a state or condition. Whenever a society is called developed or underdeveloped we refer to its present condition. Similarly, when development is declared to be a major goal of Third World nations, the allusion is to a terminal condition, not to a process. Thus the single term 'development' refers both to the destination of a journey and the journey itself.

The three major goals of development identified by Goulet (1968) are: sustenance of life, self-esteem and freedom. While development has been primarily attributed to economic growth, there is an emerging conceptual shift to socio-economic factors. Smith (1977) refers to development as 'welfare improvement' meaning a “better state of affairs, with respect to who gets what, when and where.”

According to Seers (1969):

The questions to ask about a country's development are three: What has been happening to poverty? What has been happening to unemployment? What has been happening to inequality? If all three of these have declined from high levels, then beyond doubt there has been a period of development for country concerned.

By identifying development with distributive justice Mabogunje (1980) illustrated who was getting what, when and where by paralleling development with the reduction of poverty level among the masses. Thus, the issue of development reflects among other things how governments provide goods and services to their entire residents, the distribution and accessibility of the provided goods and services to various social classes and how these classes are involved in development.

### **Mass Media and Development**

Mass media brought major alteration in both human thought at the individual level and cultural developments at the collective level. The process of social, cultural and technological evolution is by no means at an end. A number of roles have been assigned to the media in achieving development within any society. At one point in time, policy makers, government, civil societies, development organisations and the private sector acknowledged the important role the mass media can play in achieving developmental goals or targets. A senior executive of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), Narinder Aggarwala (1979), noted that a journalist covering the development beat is expected to:

Critically examine, evaluate and report on the relevance of a development project to national and local needs, the difference between a planned scheme and its actual implementation and the difference between its impact on the people as claimed by the government and as it actually is' (cited in Dare, 2000, p. 164).

Aggarawala's description of development journalism emphasises the watchdog role of the press.

In a CIMA report on independent media's role in development, Graves (2007) noted the need for the media to provide reliable sources. According to this report, developing an appropriate media development strategy can create accelerated sustainable democratic and economic development. The report also noted that the media can enhance democratic development by giving a voice to the people, acting as a balance and watchdog to potential government misconduct.

Wood and Barnes (2007) acknowledged the role of the media in reducing poverty via a) raising public awareness and debate, and b) shifting public and political opinion. They recommended the following functions for the media:

- Informing a wide range of audiences on poverty reduction issues;
- Providing an open forum to reflect different public views, including those of economically poor people;
- Providing an inclusive platform for public debate.;
- Scrutinising and holding all actors to account for their actions.

### **Globalization and Mass Media**

Advancement in technology has been an important issue of contemporary globalization. To a large extent, it determines the nature and scope of the dimensions of globalization. Modern technology has resulted in unprecedented communication worldwide, the use of modern technology has facilitated social interaction through the mass media via television, radio, newspapers and now, the Internet.

It is very difficult to imagine the globalisation process without the existence of mass media. Media contributes strongly to the globalisation of society (art, culture, news, commercials, consumer culture, tourism and so on). Globalisation and mass media are deeply intertwined. Marshall McLuhan is an early theorist who made the connection between media and globalisation by combining two concepts: 'the medium is the message' and the 'global village'. Indeed, many scholars have studied the link between globalisation and media and "most theorists agree that there is practically no globalisation without media and communications" (Rantanen, 2005). Terhi Rantanen (2005) highlights the role of media and communications in globalisation, by defining globalisation as a "process in which worldwide economic, political, cultural and social relations have become increasingly mediated across time and space". Terry Flew (2007) argues that media have a central place in globalisation due to three reasons: firstly, that media corporations have increasingly globalised their operations; secondly that the global communication infrastructure facilitates global information flows; and finally that global media play a key role in how we view events across the world in developing shared systems of meaning. This aspect of global media culture has been the main focus of media theorists.

The breaking up of space and time, brought about by electronic media, has led to individuals being able to interact with one another and within frameworks of mediated interaction, regardless of special disparities. This has altered contemporary methods of communication, leading to new phenomena such as online communities through online networks. The expansion of communication flows and global online networks raise the possibility of new dimensions of globalisation, and new forms of global/local media flows.

Overall connexion of mass media and globalization bring into question the relevance to Nigerian development as a third world country.

### **Globalization, Media and Nigerian Development**

This section seeks to locate Nigeria development within the globalization matrix by exploring the dynamics underpinning the interaction between globalization and mass media.

It is clear that globalization has led to the tremendous transformation of society. Starting from its early origins to the contemporary phase, it is indisputable that globalization has wrought fundamental changes in the nature and structure of society. Relying on economic interpretations, some writers have regarded such changes as progressive. This perspective maintains that over the years there has been tremendous improvement in living conditions world-wide with a consequent positive impact on human rights. In a book appropriately titled: *In Defense of Globalization* Jagdish Bhagwati, picking on particular aspects of social and economic life such as democracy, poverty, women, and environment contends that globalization has had a significant and beneficial effect on society. According to him, it has a human face and ought to be extolled and further promoted. Put simply, the argument is that trade enhances growth which reduces poverty and this in turn impacts positively on development.

Empirically speaking and reading from social reality, using Nigeria as a case study, globalization is created with revolution of information and communication technology particularly computer based internet which has facilitated e-commerce, e-fund transfer, e-banking, e-advertising, consulting, mail, library, online programmes etc. which generate some level of development.

The western world, to exploit the advantages of their industrial and economic superiority to establish and perpetuate domination in mass media systems over the developing nations both quantitatively and qualitatively.

Quantitative imbalance is about the amount of news flowing from industrialized nations to the un-industrialized nations and vice versa. For instance, if a content analysis of CNN, BBC etc is carried out, it is likely that out of 100 news stories, maybe only 10 will be about the un-industrialized nations put together. Ekeanyanwu (2005) also noted that out of the paltry 10 news stories about the un-industrialized nations, nine maybe all negatives. This is qualitative imbalance. Ekeanyanwu (2007) further argues that South nations never get a mention in the media of the western world unless the bizarre or disaster/crisis oriented event occurs. The implication for this is that news about poverty, hunger, political struggles, diseases, wars, coup d'états, disasters and other forms of crises are reported in the Western media. These same types of unfavourable news are relayed back to the developing countries (Ekeanyanwu, 2007).

The developed nations also dominated the international flow of news well into the 1990s due to their domination of the world communication systems and resources, which include news agencies, satellite broadcast facilities, newspapers and magazines (Okunna, 1993). World news had always been dominated by the "Big Four" international news agencies: Reuters headquartered in the United Kingdom, the Associated Press, which is based in the U.S., United Press International, also based in the U.S., and Agence France Presse, which is based in France (Okunna, 1993).

While most media houses in Nigeria have regular slots and spaces for news originating from the developed world, Nigeria is either not being covered at all in the media of the western world (quantitative) or endure malicious negative news reports about events in these countries (qualitative).

The argument here is that communication according to MacBride et. al (1981); has become an "exchange between two unequal protagonists without necessarily having to compete, but instead allows the predominance of the more powerful, the richer and the better equipped to continue to monopolize the flow of news". Momoh (1988:7) strengthens this view, when he states thus: "It is common knowledge that news from Third World countries usually make their appearance in the media of developed countries only when they are sensational and border on drama strong enough to arouse their sensibilities and sense of curiosity".

Okigbo (1990:6) also points out "despite the fact that the developing countries account for about 75 percent of the world population, less than 30 percent of world news coverage is devoted to them". Okigbo argues further that this leads to a perpetual uncovering of the regions, the ultimate result of which is lack of adequate information about these areas". He goes on to say that the flow of world news is mostly unidirectional. Thus, according to him, the average South citizen is more likely to know more about the western world than the Third World. This paucity of news flow from the Third World to the western world also means that the average westerner is likely to know very little about the Third World. This inadequate and biased flow of international news around the globe has led to the perpetuation of some prejudices and the holding of certain attitudes that do not support global co-operation based on fairness, equity and just treatment (Okigbo, 1990:6).

However, most news flow studies have reached a common consensus that the global flow of news follows narrow and ethnocentric media mappings. So, according to Chang et al (2000), the developed and industrialized Western nations dominate the global news flow in terms of what comes in and what goes out. As noted earlier and supported by Turan and colleagues (2009), the small/weak nations only get attention when the “bad” news happens. For instance the issue and the activities of Boko Haram is often been reported in western media houses.

On the cultural front, the problems are endemic cultural impoverishment is yet another form of poverty inflicted on Nigerian and African societies through the influence of globalization. In Nigeria, western culture and values have so much infiltrated our society such that, some of our rich cultural heritage has given way to alien ones. Precipitating this cultural impoverishment is the giant technological height attained by the western world in the area of communication. Examples are the proliferation of television and western movies as well as the internet, all of which influence the lifestyles and the way Nigerians think. Often, immoral and attitudes were imbibed while the normative values become meaningless.

More so, globalization has encouraged with the establishment of powerful mass media and social networks whose main aim is to expose and spread western values, norms, ideologies and ways of life to the rest of the world. Today, the VOA, BBC, CNN and other satellite and cable organizations are playing this role of spreading western cultural values to the rest of the world. However, this negates all the ideas of cultural relativity and cultural pluralism such that today, we suffer from crises of identity through impregnation with foreign values.

One fundament dreadful aspect of globalization is the continuous increase in crimes and criminalities in Nigeria. The sophistication of criminal activities in Nigeria and worldwide has been one of the results of this development. The growing advancements in information technology as increase the volume and rate of crimes, advance fee fraud or Nigeria scam. Telecommunication gadgets such as tax machines, cellular phones as well as internet social networks such as Yahoo, Google etc. were all known to have been enlisted by criminals to foster their criminal activities in Nigeria.

The consequence of globalization for social rearm has been disastrous; the entertainment industry has also been globalized with attendant negative effects. For instance, the western satellite networks through their news, films and music promote the culture of violence, pornography, sexual pervasion-homosexuality and lesbianism, vulgar languages, drug abuse and addiction, and alcoholism. All these behaviour traits negate the values of the Nigerian custom, traditions and religion.

In political terms, globalization penetrates the boundaries of the nation states and makes a real mockery of the sovereign and legitimacy of nations. Paradoxically, technology revolution has undermined the sovereignty of states and violated the privacy of the individuals and groups, with the demand by the western world in the name of global community for upholding of common standards of democracy which runs contrary indigenous political system. The politics via mass media is breeding deceits, blackmail, intimidation and often naked violence, electoral ringing, malpractices and corruption which are wide spread and has pervaded the political environment in Nigeria.

Developmentally, the cumulative effects of all these, keeping in view with the above facts have created pressures in development process in Nigeria.

## CONCLUSION

The present day globalization is a continuation of a long tradition of over decades, the tradition of imperialism. Globalization is only the latest phase and expression of the uninterrupted history of domination and subjugation of people, nations and cultures. The nature and severity of the globalization and mass media coupled with its implication for development among developing countries of Africa gives a serious concern and calls for caution as its gains are not equitable neither is the inequality arising from it equitable. The prospects for Nigeria and the third world countries in the globalization processes is governmental discipline, political stability, good governance and focused and visionary leadership striving to ensure harmonious existence and cooperation towards development.

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