Journal of COMMUNICATION AND MEDIA RESEARCH

B

2009

Vol. 1 No. 2 - October 2009

Constraints and Challenges of Reporting Development News in the Nigerian Press

KADIRI KEHINDE KADIJAT*

Abstract
Available literature shows that the Nigerian press has always been preoccupied with politics and sensational news and that it is giving little attention to development matters. Specific kinds of information which satisfies the needs and wants of the people can contribute to economic and social progress of a country. The need for Nigerian newspapers to report development news therefore stimulates the interest of this study. This study explores the roles of the press in the development of the society. The study shows that the press is not making enough contribution to the development of the society as set out by development journalism and media development theory. The factors that prevent the press from adequately reporting development news are examined and solutions are also proffered. The study concludes that the press must choose the best way to approach their weaknesses and fortify their strengths.

Introduction

Petersen, Schramm and Siebert (1956) and Altschull (1995) said the media have become pervasive instrumentalities of modern existence. The media are expected to explain, inform and educate the society on crucial issues affecting the society's well being and progress. Over the years the issue of development has come to the fore as one issue that the press is expected to focus attention on. Since the 1960s the modernization theorists (Schramn, 1964) have advocated the importance of the media in the development process of a nation. Their arguments have formed the cornerstone of much of the premises on which development journalism is built on.

Development news is believed to have a positive impact on the lives of all or the majority of people that are exposed to it. This belief has generated so many controversies that has led some scholars such as Aggarwalla (1979), Moemeka (2000) etc to seriously canvass for its use on the pages of newspapers. However, development news coverage on the pages of most newspapers is given scanty coverage as compared to the coverage of sensational and political news stories. The development stories, even when they are covered, are not critically reported and analysed for the betterment of the target audience for which the news is intended.

The media are the fourth estate of the realm. For them to perform effectively, they must be free from any restrictions that prevent the ventilation of people's opinions and views on issues affecting them. The media are meant to serve the people both elite and those at the grassroots. They are expected to focus their time and resources on sensitive issues that matter most to the people. Watson (2003: 110) buttressed this point by saying that the media must be seen as the representatatives of order. He further said that ''the media are agencies of policing. They produce stories 'that help to make sense of, and

*Kadiri Kehinde Kadijat, Department of Mass Communication, University of Ilorin, Ilorin.

JCMR Journal of Communication and Media Research, Vol. 1, No. 2, October 2009, 125 – 135.
© Rapid Research & Communications Ltd.

express sensibilities about social order'. Things are represented in terms of correctness or incorrectness rather than in terms of truth or falsehood.'' Journalists must focus on policy and always see the relevance of their stories to policy making and implementations in order to improve journalism and to produce less "soft news" and more "hard news". The media are supposed to showcase development news that can positively affect the lives of the people; they are expected to explain, interprete and comment on the implications of events and issues.

Media can also be used to advocate people's cause. Every newspaper that is worth its salt will be ready to fight for the people by ventilating the opinion of the masses. They are supposed to bring to the limelight what the people need and what they expect from the government. Watson (2004: 105) says that ''A newspaper wishing to perform in accordance with democratic-participant theory will act as advocate of public participation in all walks of life. It will support such ideas as the representation of workers on boards of management and it will perform as documentarist in revealing management that deny such representation.''

However, certain factors have limited the ability of the press to adequately report the development process adequately. This essay examines these factors and proffers some solutions.

What is Development News?

According to Aggarwala (1979:181), the journalist's job on a development-oriented news beat is to ''critically examine and evaluate 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 people as claimed by government officials and as it actually is.''

Development news is supposed to ''...show traumas, upheavals, problems and the progress encountered and achieved from the grassroot to the seat of government and the meaningful stage-by-stage account of the projects on new bridges, schools, offices, hotels and roads and other projects'' (Soola, 2002:159). Development news focuses on socio-political and economic wellbeing of any given society, anchored on the principle of mobilisation and conscientization of the pubic towards amelioration of the people's negative situation.

In a study of development news in three Indian daily newspapers, Shah (1990: 33) observed that an accepted premise in the study of mass communication in developing countries is that the circulation of specific kinds of information can contribute to social and economic progress. As he puts it, ''Development news should examine critically, evaluate and interpret the relevance of development plans, projects, policies, problems and issues. It should indicate the disparities between plans and actual accomplishments, and include comparisons with how development is progressing in other countries and regions. It should also provide contextual and background information about the development process, discuss the impact of plans, projects, policies, problems and issues on people, and speculate about the future of development.''

He further explains that development news should reflect the needs of the people, which may vary from country to country or from region to region, but generally include primary needs, such as food, housing and employment, secondary needs such as transportation, energy sources and electricity; tertiary needs such as cultural diversity, recognition and dignity.

In recognition of the importance of media in the development process, scholars have propounded models and theories, specifically designed to anchor their activities on solid philosophical and professional foundation. Prominent among these models and theories are development journalism and media development theory.

Development Journalism

The issue of Development Journalism started after the independence of most of the developing countries in the 1960s. Independence brought to the fore the reality and responsibilities of shaping the destinies of the new nations and the promotion of the welfare of the people, whom they had made to believe that self –governance can only lead to unlimited prosperity (Dare, 2000). The media, which were used to fight the colonial masters to achieve independence, were later turned to instrument of national integration. Several years after independence the media in the developing world, especially in African nations, were vested with the sole responsibility of nation building and development agent.

Development Journalism sees development as a goal that can be achieved through the collaboration of the media with government to achieve national consciousness and unity among the populace. The press is seen as an ally of the government in promotion of national development. They are to function as a partner to the government of the day in the achievement of development of the state. The Kenyan politician, Tom Mboya (cited in Barton, 1969:172), stated categorically that ''African journalists must join forces with the country's leaders in the cause of nation-building or face the charge of traitor.''

The above statement is succinctly supported by Kwame Nkrumah of Ghana, who saw the media as a revolutionary tool for African liberation from the shackles of colonialism, neo-colonialism and imperialism. Nkrumah (cited in Domatob and Hall, 1983: 9) believed that for the developing countries to achieve the industrialisation of the developed world, the African media have a revolutionary mission ahead of them; therefore he insisted that ''...our Revolution African Press must carry our Revolutionary purpose .This is to establish political and economic system upon our continent that will free men from want and every form of social injustice and enable them to work out their social and cultural destinies in peace and at ease.[In this respect]... the true African ...newspaper is a collective educator – a weapon, first and foremost, to overthrow colonialism and imperialism, and to assist total African independence and unity.''

Evidence abounds from both literature and empirical studies that the media have a powerful influence in advancing national development in developing countries (Rogers, 1962; Schramm, 1964). Development journalism intends to use the media to inform, educate and sensitise the public on issues that will emancipate and empower the society. The media are used as a tool to contribute to developmental goal of their countries. Also, the media are effectively utilised to achieve national unity, patriotism among the citizens, to foster political stability, promote national integration for the peaceful existence and stability of the government.

Domatob and Hall (1983:11) succinctly supported the above assertion by stating that ''Development journalism has a somewhat more difficult job; by spreading the message of patriotism and national unity it hopes to create new social values and cohesive national feeling.''

Development Media Theory

The call for media intervention in development process is hinged on what McQuail called ''development media theory''. Under this theory, the media are seen as a pivot for national development in developing countries. McQuail (1983: 131) states that the central thesis of the theory is that the mass media in developing nations should be used for ''the primacy of the national development task (economic, social, cultural and political); the pursuit of cultural and informational autonomy; support for democracy; and solidarity with other developing countries.''

Primarily, the theory is rooted in the modernization/functionalist paradigm of mass media's role in development. It proposes the use of the mass media in achieving

development in developing countries. McQuail (1983) is of the view that since the 'four theories of the press'(Authoritarian, Libertarian, Soviet/Communist and Social Responsibility) by Siebert, et al (1956), are inadequate in explaining the media systems of developing nations, the need for another theory becomes essential. Thus, he propounded the development media theory to take care of how the media can aid the development of those nations. The assumption is that the mass media are part of the instruments for achieving development in developing nations.

McQuail (1987) (cited in Baran and Davis 2000: 112) assigned a particular social role to the media. He says ''Development media theory advocates media support for an existing political regime and its efforts to bring about national economic development....By supporting government development efforts, media aid society at large. This theory argues that until a nation is well established and its economic development well underway, media must be supportive rather than critical of government. Journalists must not pick apart government efforts to promote development but, rather, assist government in implementing such policies.''

The pervasiveness of the African situation requires that the media must play a significant role in championing nation building, that is, the creation of national consciousness and unity as well as the encouragement of co-operation and peaceful co-existence between diverse and sometimes hostile communities. The late Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya (as cited in Domatob and Hall, 1983: 10) exhorted the press to''...positively promote national development and growing self-respect since in Africa it can have a tremendous influence on nation-building. It may constantly inspire or could set out to frustrate the spirit of Harambe or national unity which every young country needs as the fundamental of its progress.'' Kenyatta's contention was echoed by Mamman Daura (as cited in Domatob and Hall, 1983: 10), a one-time editor-in-chief of the Kaduna-based *New Nigerian*, who argued that ''...the (mass media), therefore, should be an agent in mobilising the society, in educating the society, in consolidating independence or, in one or two cases, revolution.''

Communication research has shown that the media are capable of promoting national development (Rogers, 1962; Schramm, 1964). Hence, in the developed world the media are given a pivotal role in the development and sustenance of the countries they are. However, the opposite seems to be the case in the developing world in which there is still visible poverty everywhere. This brought us to the juncture in which we ask ourselves whether or not development journalism is being practiced in Africa the way it should be. This observation has also brought to the fore the question of whether development media theory is the antidote for the under-development of the developing nations.

Empirical researches conducted in Nigeria indicated that the media are not making enough contribution to the development of the society as set out by development journalism and development media theory. In a study on the press and the challenges of rural development: a comparative study of the *Weekly Trust* and *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* newspapers in Nigeria, Jimoh (2007) examined the extent of coverage of development-oriented and non-development issues and the dominant area of coverage between rural and urban development-oriented issues by the two (*Weekly Trust* is a privately-owned newspaper and *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* is a State newspaper) newspapers.

Jimoh (2007) found out that development issues were given inadequate coverage by both newspapers compared to the space they devoted to non-development news. Also, coverage of rural development news (25%) was not up to the coverage of urban oriented development reports (47%). Jimoh's study also revealed that *Weekly Trust* gave much more coverage to rural development events constituting 94.5% than *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo's* 5.3%.

Adeyanju (2003) critically studied the performance of the press in the way it reported events in the Fourth Republic. Using qualitative content analysis, he concluded that

events of the First Republic were reported in favour of elite owners of the media against the masses of the country. He argued that the press were only used as political tools against opponents when the elites were not satisfied with the system. But when things were in their favour, the press pretended as if they were not aware of the implications of the bad policies of government. Adeyanju (2003)'s findings have further exposed the critical position as well as the conspiratorial role of the press in the conflict relations between the elites and the masses.

Similarly, Best (2005) did a study on (how the press has engendered) what he believed to be genuine participation in governance, and empowerment of the masses. The study which was carried out between 1999 and 2002, found that the press in Nigeria did not serve the development needs of the people. She added that the press served significant powerful urban elites at the expense of the masses who are the majority. This, she argued, is due to the ownership and urban-centered nature of the mass media.

Best (2005: xiv) concludes that "the Nigerian press, in its current structure, focus, content, language and flow of information, only cater for a limited number of urban Nigerians and consequently does not promote the much sought after participation and empowerment for development purposes".

The scanty reportage of development news is not only peculiar to the Nigerian press; it was also replicated in other parts of the world. Some of the studies carried out show how most newspapers gave little coverage and little in-depth analysis of development news.

Archer (1976) conducted a four month content analysis of the presentation of Food and Nutrition in six main newspapers in Jamaica, Guyana, Trinidad and Barbados. Archer (1976) found that the emphasis was on giving helpful cooking hints and new recipes; the newspapers, which he examined rarely concentrated on the importance of nutritional requirements of the body or on the nutritional value of food which would have been considered as development news.

One of such studies by Cuthbert and Sparkes (1978) examined how six dailies from the U.S. and three from Canada covered Jamaica in the mid-1970s. Their study found out that development stories – such as the Caribbean Festival of Creative Arts (CARIFESTA) – received scanty coverage in the newspapers.

Also, Nair (1967) and Mishra *et al.* (1968) indicated how little space and attention were devoted to developmental issues and events in the media they analysed. While Nair (1967) was mainly referring to the private press in India, Mishra *et al.* (1968) came to their own conclusions after studying media and developmental news in the slums of Ecuador and India.

Vilanilam (1979) investigated the impact of newspaper ownership patterns on the amount of development news produced in relation to the coverage of political, governmental and other categories of news. The study showed that there was relative lack and little in-depth analysis of development news that did appeared.

Constraints and Challenges of Reporting Developing News

There is no doubt that the media are facing a lot of problems and challenges from political leaders and other private interests in African countries. These constraints limit their performance and effectiveness but the journalists cannot afford to let such attitudes get in the way of their work. The media are the fourth estate of the realm of the society that inhabits them and they must stand up to the tasks when the occasion demands.

For the media to perform effectively, the state must be able to guarantee their freedom. This involves access to information. The inaccessibility of the media to the needed information that will have impact on the development of the society is a major constraint. The press in Nigeria are checkmated by various previous decrees of the past military administrations in the country. These draconian laws are summarised by

Olukotun (2002:100) as offensive publication (proscription) Decree No.35 of 1993; State Security (Detention of Persons) Decree No.2 of 1984 under which for instance journalist can be detained and held incommunicado for security reasons; The treason and other offences (Special Military Tribunal) Decree No.1 of 1996; as well as The Constitution (suspension and modification) Decree No. 107 of 1993 which annuls a citizen's right to public apology or compensation, if he was unjustly or unlawfully detained.

The oppression unleashed on the media prevents any existing and potential interest in promoting development news. Economic and social problems are also issues they contend with. The imposition of Value Added Tax newsprints into newspaper production by both the Abacha and Abubakar administrations, and the consequent skyrocketing cost of production, forced many newspapers to downsize, cut back on circulation, increase cover price or simply capsize. The years between 1994 and 1999 were harsh ones for the press, not just because of censorship decrees and frequent detentions, but also because of hostile economic policies. The imposition of a 5% Value Added Tax on newspapers in the 1999 budget by General Abubakar stiffened further the climate in which many newspapers found themselves. Increase in the cover price and advertisement rates by the *Guardian* and other publications in 1999 made the press even more of an elitist product than it ought to have been, at the beginning of civilian rule (Olukotun, 2002). All these resulted in full or partial paralysis of some newspapers.

The reason for the oppression on the media by the various governments in Nigeria (particularly the past military governments) is because development journalism was originally conceptualised to serve as the mouth-piece of the government.

However, Aggarwala (1978) hits the nail on the head when he states that development news must live up to what it is supposed to do. It must provide constructive criticism of government and its agencies, inform readers about development process affecting them, and highlight local self-help projects.

Also, the need for survival of the various mass media made some of them to report sensational news at the detriment of the development news. Most media exist primarily for profit making and class domination. In simple terms, classical Marxists see the media as being controlled and used for the interests of those who control the economic power, the bourgeoisie in capitalist setting. Also their (the media owners) views, which are constantly aired through the mass media, become dominant and invariably contribute immensely to the maintenance of inequality between the upper and the lower classes (Lenin 1972).

Development news, which is mostly tagged as hard and boring news does not have the capacity to sell newspapers. The truth of the matter is that people would prefer to read news that is not related to development issues. This statement is succinctly supported by Campbell (2004: 56) when he suggests that "Generally speaking, audiences around the world seem disinclined to be interested in serious news media, tending to prefer news with at least an element of entertainment in it. Where choices are offered between entertainment-oriented and 'serious' news, audiences often seem to prefer the entertainment-based output."

Murdock and Golding (1973) explain the reasons why media behave the way they do by stating that economic pressures on the media houses make them to select, present and package information, which are exciting and entertaining to suit the demands of the final consumers of the information.

The perspective of Murdock and Golding (1973) is supported by Dennis in Dennis and Merrill (2002:36) when he states that"...the media mostly respond to public taste in order to make a profit. It is sad that some of the most critically acclaimed television shows and quality magazines have died for lack of audience to sustain them. But at the same time, others that do honour creative work and quality content, come along and

succeed. Some media companies are so greedy and slavish to profits that they cheat the public by producing shallow news and poor quality entertainment.''

The above statement brings to the fore the issue of financial sustainability of the Nigerian media. They are grappling with reality of the economic meltdown, which is 'melting' on most organisations and individuals. The media have to survive and in order to survive they must provide what their target audience will be willing to consume; but this is not the only factor that determines the content of the news. Advertisers have influence on the editorial content of publications their adverts appear in. Hence, they determine what goes into the newspapers.

Herman and Chomsky (1999) (as cited in Campbell, 2004:62) support the statement above by arguing that ''News organisations become 'interested in attracting audiences with buying power, not audience per se, and as a consequence it is the advertisers who can exert influence on news content over above audience interests/needs''. Campbell (2004) confirms the influence of advertisers by saying that even the most established news media outlets can be subjected to the pressures of advertisers.

A more crucial index of the underdevelopment of media is its urban, elite-centered bias, and its almost cynical neglect of the rural areas. Indeed, as new technologies are acquired, and production becomes more computerised, the gap between the urban and the rural in Nigerian journalism will widen. ''Urban elite class directly or indirectly call the shot for the mass media ...their agenda and ideology are often at variance with those of the people who receive prominence in the media'' (Soola, 2002:122).

The situation is made worse by the fact that most newspapers and broadcasting stations do not have reporters in the rural areas. Those who maintain a national presence have reporters in state capitals who shuttle between one state function and another to gather news.

The development communication professional, scholars, experts, writers, reporters must, in the words of Melkote (2003), work with the individuals and communities at the grassroots so that they may eventually enter and participate meaningfully in the political and economic process in their communities and societies. In this vein, the content of the newspaper, and other communication media must be synchronized. This finds a tacit agreement in Nurura's (1994:41) statement ''The content of the messages mass communicated should be balanced. The content should be rural and urban –oriented and address to the masses in both sectors. The message should be need-based and appeal to the audience.''

Also, the publication of newspapers in English language has shut away the local artisans, farmers, market women, etc out of the development information that might have impact on their lives. Indigenous language newspapers or media will appeal to most illiterates as well as literates from both rural and urban centres (Salawu, 2002). Establishment of indigenous language newspapers that report more on development news is a good step in the right direction.

It seems apparent that attention is not given to the professional values and ideology which are known for the practice of development journalism. The reportage of what the media houses call 'development news' is mostly event-oriented. Event-oriented news is the news coverage that does not really have relevance on the lives of the people. They are routine news which is mostly disseminated to serve as a public relations booster for the different organizations of government. Development news must be covered based on the positive impact that it will make on the lives of the recipient and not the source of the news.

The standard of education of most journalists covering development news beat is rather unfortunate. Some of these journalists do not have orientation of what development news is supposed to be; therefore, their mobilisation potential is limited. The journalists

develop their own definition of development news which would later on be inimical to the national development efforts of the nation.

The definition given to development news is relative depending on the source that the news is from. Studies have shown that most of what journalists tagged as development news is nothing but a propaganda summation of the government of the day or a private individual striving to achieve an aim. Development news ought to reflect the needs of the people and it must also have positive impact on the lives of the people involved. Therefore, context of development news must be easily understood and it must be highly relevant to the environment of the people.

In fact, the importance attached to development news by scholars has sparked controversy over the value of development news or development communication. Ogan and Fair (1984:173) throw their weight on the coverage of development news if it has the potential to satisfy the needs of the population. The two scholars do not feel that the acceptance of government handouts from national leaders full of self-serving praise for their economic and social accomplishment can be regarded as development. They further say that ''calling the 'good news' in government public relations releases 'development news' will not change the situation.''

Another challenge of reporting development news is the issue of ownership and control of the media by government and elite private individuals. Adeyanju (2005) noted that development communication theories, McQuail (1983)'s inclusive, are not valid when it comes to explaining the direction to follow in achieving development. According to Adeyanju (2005) the domination of the lower class by elite media owners exists because the media are operated in a capitalist economic setting where profit maximization is the order. Adeyanju (2005)'s viewpoint is rooted in the much referenced Karl Marx's position on the mass media. According to Marx (cited in Murdock and Golding, 1977:15) ''The class which has the means of material production has control at the same time over the means of mental production so that, thereby generally speaking, the ideas of those who lack the means of mental production are subject to it...In so far, therefore, as they rule as a class and determine the extent and compass of an epoch, it is self-evident that they...among other things regulate the production and distribution of the ideas of their age: thus their ideas are ruling ideas of the epoch.''

This hypothesis shows that Marx, a journalist who even edited the German paper called *Rheinische Zeitung*, understood the extent to which the mass media can be manipulated, even when they were not fully developed. He had continuously emphasized the use of the media by the controllers of the means of production, who at the same time were owners of the media. Their political, religious, moral and social phrases, passed through the media, are only aimed at influencing the people. Marx (cited in Lenin 1972:11) puts it this way ''People always have been the foolish victims of deception and self-deception in politics, and they always will be until they have learnt to seek out the 'interest' of some class(es) or other(s) behind all moral, religious, political and social phrases, declarations and promises.''

In simple terms, classical Marxists see the media as being controlled and used for the interests of those who control the economic power, the bourgeoisie in capitalist setting. Also, their (the media owners) views, which are constantly aired through the mass media, become dominant and invariably contribute immensely to the maintenance of inequality between the upper and the lower classes. The media exist primarily for profit making and class domination.

Solutions

The various newspapers must strive to devote strategic pages to the reportage of development news. Reportage of development news should be given more prominence by the various newspaper editors in their editions. The editors should ensure that more

spaces are allotted to development related issues and also the use of pictures must be increased. There is also the need for in-depth analysis of development issues in the press.

A development desk should be established by press organisations saddled with the responsibility of covering development matters effectively. The development desks established by the press outfits should be coupled with continuous training and retraining of reporters on development reporting viz-a-viz the need for 'nosing' and reporting development events than other news events. This will help increase the focus on development events. Also, there is the need to make development news more interesting for people to read.

There is the need for journalists to go through various trainings and workshops at intervals. This training must be relevant and it must be able to empower journalists for the betterment of the news organisation in particular and the growth of the nation in general. This training will enable journalists to capture the human perspective of development news. It must be able to enrich and transform the lives of the people that are exposed to such information.

It is recommended that development newspapers should be established for the primary aim of canvassing, monitoring development policies and projects including drawing attention to areas in need of development at both the rural and urban centres. This will make such papers to report development matters alone as it is the case with the *Public Agenda*, a strictly development focused bi-weekly newspaper published in Ghana.

Reporters ought to avoid over dependency on one source of information for their development news. They must make sure that they get different sources of information which will spice up the quality of the development news reported. Also, reporters should make sure that newsworthiness is not determined by the value-orientation of the Western media. The news reported must be relevant to the nation and its people. For a balanced development of the society, newspapers houses should try to get a balanced report on both the private and government development news.

And as Ogan and Fair (1984:187) recommended, "... needed is greater use of critical sources, extensive or even medium-range analysis of the development topics and less dependence on government for the sole sources of information."

Related to this, it could be further argued that the media have a huge task of reporting process-oriented and not event-oriented news stories from the government establishments. The media practitioners must check the abuse and misuse of the media by government functionaries who take advantage of the media simply because some journalists are so lazy to critically examine information that is passed down to them. At this juncture, it must be stated categorically that these news stories must be appropriately investigated and analysed for the development of the society. However, it seems that some advocates of development journalism, share the liberal view that the state and government will always act in the interest of the populace (Oso, 2002).

But, Graham Mytton (1983) (Quoted from Oso, 2002: 125) aptly pointed out that "The fact that a government holds power to protect the public from harm is no guarantee that the same power will be used in that interest. Development journalism requires that governments or their agencies supervise, decide, judge and act in a field in which they are subject as well as object. Reporting on governments and their activities is a legitimate part of the media's function: therefore, governments are not reliable and independent arbiters of what the media ought to be doing. Because their own activities form a major component of the news, governments have a very obvious and immediate interest in how they are reported."

Apart from getting balanced report from both private and public institutions, the media must not propagate news only from the urban centers at the detriment of the rural centers. Rural issues merit serious attention, but so do issues affecting the disadvantaged sections in any part of society. It would be a misconception to believe that the

'disadvantaged' constitutes only the poor farmers. The urban migrant population, slum dwellers, street children, HIV-affected people, rural tribes/scheduled castes – all of these people would come under the tag of the disadvantaged. It is important to identify them thus, because they deserve the attention of the authorities concerned.

The various media houses should strive to be socially responsible to people that they are meant to serve. Public interest should not be sacrificed for profitability. The primary goal for the continuance existence of the mass media should be to make significant contribution to the development of the society that inhabits them.

Conclusion

The media are apparently facing a lot of challenges, but they cannot afford to be socially irresponsible to the society. They must be able to set the agenda and terms of public debates and in the main, determine the contents of the media. The press must address themselves to the crucial role of covering process-oriented news stories rather than event-oriented which will be for the betterment of all. The media practitioners must practice the ethos of development journalism, which believes that media reports must be characterized by investigations rather than consultation of live or human sources. They must not be used as part of the cultural mechanisms for maintaining the social order; rather they must provide an alternative definition of development and the strategies for executing them.

References

Adeyanju, M.A. (2005). *Development related theories and their relevance to development communication and the operation of mass media in Nigeria.* Unpublished seminar paper delivered at the University of Ibadan.

Adeyanju, M.A. (2005). Development related theories and their relevance to development communication and the operation of mass media in Nigeria. Unpublished seminar paper delivered at the University of Ibadan.

Aggarwala, N. (1979).What is development news? *Journal of communication*, 29, 181-182.

Altschull, J.H. (1995) *Agent of Power: The Media and Public Policy*. New York: Longman.

Archer, H. (1976). Food and nutrition content and approaches in CARICOM media. In J.A. Lent (Ed.), *Mass communication in the Caribbean* (pp.297- 320). Ames: Iowa State University Press.

Baran, S. & Davis, D (2003). *Mass Communication Theory: Foundations, Ferment, and Future*. U.S.A: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning.

Barton, F. (1979). *The press of Africa*. London: The Macmillan Press Ltd.

Campbell, V. (2004). *Information Age Journalism: Journalism in an International Context*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Cuthbert, M. and Sparkes, V (1978). Coverage of Jamaica in the U.S. and Canadian press in 1976: A study of press bias and effect. *Social and Economic studies*. 27(2), 204-220

Dare, O. (2000). Development Journalism: The Role of the Print Media in development and Social Change. In A. Moemeka, *Development Communication in Action; Building Understanding and Creating Participation* (pp.161-178). Lanham Maryland: University Press of America.

Dennis, E and Merrill, J. (2002). *Media Debates: Great Issues for the Digital Age*. USA: Wadsworth/Thomson Learning

Domatob, J & Hall, S. (1983). Development journalism in Black Africa. *International communication gazette*, 31, 9-33.

Kunczik, M. (1988). *Concepts of Journalism*. Germany: Media and Communication Department.

Lenin, V. (1972). *Fundamentals of Marxism-Leninism*. Moscow: Progress Publishers.

McQuail, D. (1983). *Mass Communication Theory: An introduction*. London: Sage Publications

Melkote, R. (2003). Theories of development communication. In B. Mody (Ed.), *International and development communication: A 21st Century Perspective* (p.142-158). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mishra, V., Simmons, E., Kent, K. (1968). Media and development news in slums of Ecuador and India. *Journalism Quarterly* 45(4), 698-705.

Moemeka, A. (2000). Development and Mass Communication: Effective Use of the Mass Media in Rural Development and Social Change. In A. Moemeka, *Development Communication in Action: Building Understanding and Creating Participation* (p.133-160). Maryland: University Press of America.

Murdock, G. and Golding P. (1977). Capitalism, communication and class relations. In J.Curran, M.Gurevitch & J.Woollacott (Eds.), *Mass communication and society*. (pp.56-73). London: Edward Arnold

Nair, L. (1967). Private press in national development: The Indian example. In D. Lerner and W.Schramm (Eds.), *Communication and change in the developing countries* (pp.45-67). Honolulu: East-West centre press

Ogan, C., & Fair, J. (1984). A little good news: The treatment of development news in selected Third World newspaper. *International Communication Gazette*, 33:173-191.

Olukotun, A. (2000). The 1999 Nigerian transition and the media. *African Journal of Political Science*, 5(2), 33-44.

Oso, L. (2002). Perspective on Development Journalism. In L. Oso (Ed.), *Communication and Development: A reader* (pp.1-28). Abeokuta: Jedidiah Publishers

Salawu, A. (2002). Development communication in Yoruba newspapers. In E. Soola (Ed.), *Communication for development purposes* (pp.172-184). Ibadan, Nigeria: Kraft Book Limited

Schramm, W. (1964). *Mass media and national development: The role of information in the developing countries*. Standford: Stanford University Press.

Shah, H. (1990). Some methodological considerations for the study of development news: An examination of three Indian newspapers. *International Communication Gazette, 45, 33-48*.

Siebert, F., Petersen, T., Schramm, S. (1956). *Four Theories of the Press*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press.

Soola, E. (2002). Development journalism for prints and electronic media journalists in Nigeria. In E. Soola (Ed.), *Communicating for development purposes (pp.115-125)*. Ibadan, Nigeria: Kraft Books Limited.

Sussmann, L. (1978): Development Journalism: The Ideological Factor, in: Horton, P. C. (ed).

Vilanilam, J (1979). The meaning of development. In J. Lent & J. Vilanilam (Eds.). The use of development news. (pp. 2-19) Singapore: AMIC.

Watson, J. (2004). *Media Communication: An Introduction to Theory and Process*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.