





## **Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media for Development Journalism in Africa: Consequences and Challenges for Nigeria**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This work cross examined the chance, consequences and challenges of cross-fertilizing indigenous media with new media for the purpose of practicing development journalism in Africa with reference to the Nigeria society. The call to cross-fertilize indigenous media and new media has been on the front burner since 1980's even though the why, who to do the mixture, how, when and for what purpose has not been emphasized. Thus, this, paper which theoretical construct is anchored on the agenda-setting, development media and technological determinism theories, scrutinized the nature and significance of indigenous media and new media and established that the development journalist is responsible for the mix in Africa through the practice of development journalism. Since no nation can develop using only technologies developed by other countries, the mix becomes a good option. The author encapsulate this in a proposed model which capture the entire essence of cross-fertilization of indigenous media and new media for the practice of development journalism in Africa and urged all those concerned to use the model as a guide to overcome any challenges and possible consequences that may arise as a result of the blend once the government and other stakeholders provide the enabling environment and infrastructure.

**Keywords:** Africa, Cross-fertilization, Development Journalism, Indigenous media, Media integration, New Media, Nigeria.

### **INTRODUCTION**

In time past, development as a concept was used purely in economic terms. Economic growth was often considered from the perspectives of the Gross National Product (GNP) and Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of a country. This was practically used as benchmark for measuring and defining development. But as time went on, the inadequacies of this definition and

### *Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media*

perception became glaring, because economic growth could no longer be seen as an infallible index of human and national development.

Development, according to Oguejofor (2004) in Dunu and Oraka (2006, p. 89) is a “change, a transformation or modification into a better life”. This captures the early definition of Oladipo (1996, p. 1) when he states that development is a “process of economic and social advancement which enables people to realize their potentials, build self-confidence and lead life of dignity and fulfillment.” Development is a process aimed at freeing people from evils of wants, ignorance, social, spiritual and economic exploitation of any kind. Nwanne (2006, p. 107) sees development as an “internally generated and self-sustaining efforts aimed at achieving a higher level of economic, political, cultural, psychological and other desirable indices of progress.” This view upholds Wilson (1991, p. 201) early assertion that development is “what society thinks make its people live richer and better lives”.

From the forgoing, development can be said to be the process of participatory, social, political and economic change meant for the benefits of the people. No wonder, Soola (2002, p. 15) writes that development must be “people centred, human capital resources, designed and packaged to promote the well-being of the beneficiaries”. Development must recognize the need of the people by striving for self-reliance within the people. Nonetheless, to attain the heights called “real development.” developing countries especially in Africa, such as Nigeria must “judiciously use the media among other things” (Ojo, 2003, pp. 823-834). This is because the media have proven to be an efficient and effective channel for the dissemination of developmental messages to a heterogeneous audience, since the people are the starting point of development. Moreover, the media are powerful agent of development. Udoakah (1991, p. 207) notes that government of developing nations are “usually enchanted by the power of the mass media” which include the old media – newspaper, newsmagazine, radio, television and the new media, such as the Internet, email, online newspaper among others.

The media also include traditional/indigenous media such as gong, flute, drum, community radio, community newspaper among host of others. All the different types of media help to broaden the horizon of people in every society. The people through the media can be mobilized for national development. The media can be used to foster growth and development through the dissemination of developmental messages. This is what has given rise to relatively new concept development journalism.

Development journalism is a concept that attempt to deal with the “needs, strengths and aspiration of journalists endeavour in the emerging nations” (Mc Phail 2006, p. 40). Soola (2002, p. 157) writes that development journalism is “a child of necessity”, “a child of circumstances” born in response to what journalist in developing countries perceived as unfair, lop sided flow of international news imbalance in favour of the West. Development journalism can also be described as a process as well as efforts to set up well trained and informed journalist in the utilization of the different

media of communication for the dissemination of developmental messages so as to better the life of the people in rural and urban areas of developing countries like Nigeria.

Apparently, a development journalist should be able to use the different media of communication whether indigenous, old or new media for the transmission of developmental messages to the rural and urban populace. Indigenous media such as community radio, community newspaper, town crier, and flute among others may be very effective for the rural population but not the urban population who most likely would prefer new media such as the Internet, mobile phone, online newspaper among others. Hence, a mix/blend of both-indigenous media and new media becomes a good option for the practice of development journalism in Africa. This was what prompted the author to examine the consequences and challenges of such media mix-cross fertilization of indigenous media and new media, for Nigeria. Meanwhile, at this point, it becomes imperative to establish the theoretical construct of this paper before ascertaining the nature of indigenous media as well as the significance of new media before examining the rudiments of cross-fertilization of indigenous media and new media for development journalism in Africa with reference to the possible consequences and challenges for Nigeria.

### **Theoretical Framework**

The theoretical constructs of this paper is anchored on the agenda-setting theory, development media theory and the technological determinism theory. The agenda-setting theory became necessary for this study because it encourages the use of the media of communication, either indigenous or new media to focus attention to certain issue. Similarly, the development media theory presupposes the use of the media of communication to enhance nation building by focusing on national development. Technological determinism theory was considered appropriate because it is one of the theories that postulate that all social, political, economic, and cultural changes are influenced by advances in technological innovation and diffusion as in the case of cross-fertilization of indigenous media and new media for effective practice of development journalism.

Agenda-setting theory according to Wimmer and Dominick (2003) provides the platform for the media to present objects suggesting what individuals in the mass should think about, know about and have feelings about. The development journalist can use the media to influence the mindset of the people. By merging indigenous media and new media, such influence will be stronger as cross-fertilization involves a merger of two different media, one, of which is within the immediate environment and the other outside the environment.

Development media theory on the other hand, postulates that development journalists and other media workers have the responsibilities as well as freedom in their information gathering and dissemination task to

### ***Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media***

bring everybody closer, (Folarin, 2005). It is in the light of this that a model for the cross-fertilization of indigenous media and new media was proposed to enable the development journalist to carry out its professional task without any restriction irrespective of the continent.

Finally, technological determinism theory provided a bearing for this paper with one of its tenets which involves using communication to transfer technological innovation (cross-fertilization of indigenous media and new media) from development agencies (development journalist) to their client (rural and urban populace) so as to create an appetite for change through raising a climate for modernization and development among members of the public, (Anaeto, Onabajo and Osifeso, 2008). In addition, technological determinism theory is the belief that technology helps to determine the course of history and all social, political, economic and cultural changes are influenced by advances in technology. For instance, the central focus of cross-fertilization is to increase awareness and bring about attitude change.

From the foregoing, it is evident that the agenda-setting theory, development media theory and technological determinism theory remain very relevant to this discussion irrespective of the criticism on any of them.

### **Nature of Indigenous Media for Development Journalism Practice in Africa**

Indigenous media are synonymous with indigenous communication system, African communication system and ora-media among others. They are traditional forms of communication used to disseminate messages to both homogenous audience and heterogeneous audience. Wilson (1997, p. 60) writes that ora-media is a “multi channel communication system which is employed in most rural areas (villages, clans, towns, wards) as well as rural-urban settings. It is essentially, an oral process which depends on the effective use of the human auditory system. “Traditional communication is a complex system of communication which parades all aspect of rural and urban life in Africa”. Wilson (1990, p. 281).

Indigenous media deal with the values and beliefs of the people and this make them useful means through which “social engineers can bring about behavioural change in people in every society such as adopting family planning practices”, (Bame 1998, p. 55). Aina (2003, p. 128) adds that indigenous media refer to the “folklore (the people’s media) and that orature that is, verbal equivalent of literature which is written and which is not stored anywhere except in collective memory.” Does this denote the fact that indigenous media are all oral and have no form of technical bases? No!

African communication system may be described as folk media yet, that is not to say they do not involve some form of technicalities like the new media. Just cross-examine the gong, flute, drum and all other processes which documents and information go through some form of technicalities before they come out as community newspaper and community radio and television. Notably, indigenous media use particular instruments adapted to

the culture of the people. Even though some communication scholars have argued that such instruments are limited due to powering and energy, it still does not exclude fact that indigenous media are also technological based.

From the forgoing, one can assert that indigenous media are one directional media like old media, capable of enhancing the scope of grassroots' awareness and stimulate Internet. They are the main channels through which rural dwellers and to large extent urban populace gets information about events happening far and around them. Kwasi (1998, p. 10) states that indigenous media are "inextricable integrated into the whole social system" of any society in order for them to respond to the cultural milieu of the environment. Wilson (1997) observes that the audience of indigenous media are usually located in widely dispersed settlements within a culture and usually have their information needs met largely by the various indigenous media operating in that environment. This explains why Ansu-kyeremeh (2005, p. 16) notes that "indigenous communication system denotes channels that are embedded within the traditional moves of a people and contributing significantly to their history and culture."

From all indication, indigenous media are potent instrument for development journalism practice in Africa. They can be used to promote the cultural values of the people, enlighten the people and to educate them on some if not all, policies of government. Indigenous media can also be used to teach the people necessary skills in agricultural production, small scale industry among others.

In addition, the media can contribute in the expansion of the market, which is already taking place in most African countries like Nigeria. Furthermore, indigenous media can be used to prepare the people for the future by instilling confidence in the people's ability to overcome life challenges for development purposes.

This notwithstanding, Karikari (2000,p. 51) advises that "the language, symbolism and representatives must be that of the less privilege or oppressed people so as to engage them in a permanent dialogue for change". Furthermore, it must promote self image which enhances positive esteem and build self confidence and faith in communities' abilities to take initiatives in changing their circumstances. In addition, the use of indigenous media for development journalism in Africa should be based on peace building, socio-economic development, literacy development, and cultural as well as political development.

Even though, indigenous media maybe limited to the cultural milieu of the people, it is good to note that they can complement each other, operate independently and blend with any other media like new media even in development journalism practice. In fact they are as significant as the western new media for the development of developing societies. Ogwezzy (2008:21) states that despite the advent of modern day media (new media) in Africa, the use of traditional media is "still very much coming, adaptable, acceptable and recognizable by the people.

**The Significance of New Media for Development Journalism Practice in Africa**

Technological changes have been and would continue to be a major factor for information processing, storage and dissemination. It is therefore not surprising that new media—a product of technological change, have provided new and improved ways for information creation, acquisition, storage, and dissemination. This explains why globally, everyone is embracing new media in their daily communication needs. Today, people are driven and propelled into carrying out their duties and living their lives in this digital world at an alarming speed and accuracy without any recourse to time factor, geographical location among other factors. These are made possible because new media such as mobile phones Internet, videoconferencing, webcasting among host of others.

New media are Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and their associated social context incorporating devices such as the Internet among others which enables and extend our abilities to communicate regardless of time, space and geographical location. New media are “electronic technologies for creating, acquiring, storing, processing, communicating and using information” (Tiamiyu 2002, p. 35). McQuail (2005, p. 136) describes new media as “desperate set of communication technologies that share certain features apart from being new, made possible by digitalization and being wildly available for personal use as communication devices”. New media can also be viewed as all forms of western communication technologies used as channels for the dissemination of information to a heterogeneous audience regardless of time space and distance

Naturally, since new media are channels for information dissemination, they automatically become veritable tools for development journalism. They have the capability of bringing about positive change in every nation where they are utilized. The development journalist who utilizes the new media for the dissemination of development messages would achieve quick and easy delivery of development messages that would lead to the empowerment of poorer communities and help to reduce the gap between the developed (rich) and developing (poor) countries as well as rural and urban populace in any society.

Globalization and the reduction of the world into an atomic village have been made possible today as result of new media. Furthermore, new media have created an online mobility thereby making the development journalist to make developmental messages easily accessible to both rural and urban populace. In the light of this, Field (1991, p. 43) states that new technologies have made “information more accessible than ever before and in theory, more information make its possible to share solutions to common problems, to learn from other people’s mistakes and create a more just and equitable social order.” Similarly, Mencher (2003, p. 25) notes that “cites, states and the government put their records into database, which make the information

### ***Festus Prosper Olise***

accessible to reporters”. In fact, new media like the Internet makes everyone, development journalist inclusive, to transmit an almost unlimited amount of information.

Furthermore, with new media, the development journalists do not have to travel far or near before he or she can disseminate developmental messages. Apart from this new media can ensure consistence flow of developmental messages to both rural and urban masses at a reduced cost, less time and maximized speed and accuracy without any recourse to travelling hazards. Take the e-mail and mobile phones for instance, within seconds, multiple messages can be sent. Today we can capture pictures with our mobile phones and alter same in seconds, one can even record ones voice and send same in less than a minute.

Apparently, indigenous media as well as new media are very significant for development journalism practice in Africa. Their tremendous benefits for the dissemination of developmental messages are quite glaring in our society today. This no doubt, explains the reason why many communication scholars have advocated for the combination of both media for a single aim – development amidst other critics who thinks otherwise.

### **Cross-Fertilization of New Media and Indigenous Media for Development Journalism Practice in Africa**

Development journalism and development communication can not be fully achieved without considering the rural populace. Until recently, the urban area in most African countries like Nigeria has been the focus of almost all developmental efforts while the rural areas were neglected. In view of this imbalance, as well as the need to reduce it to the barest minimum or even eliminate it completely, some scholars have made some useful observations and contribution. Konkwo (2007, p. 299) alluding to Solomon (1970) and Udoye (1985), recommended some strategic options aimed at liquidating these imbalances, traceable to social class distinction, centre periphery distinction, regional disparities in economic development and inter/intra urban variation in the achievement of economic well being.

Over the years, there have been calls for a general theory of human economic development that will be beneficial to every sector of the population, beginning from the rural population. Any form of development journalism or development communication that does not take into consideration the rural dwellers like peasant farmers, the fishermen the petty traders, the cattle rearers etc is grossly inappropriate and inadequate.

Above all, development journalism and development communication are pivotal concepts in developing countries, “all in the periphery, primarily in Africa, Latin America and Asia, with low income, high illiteracy rate and virtually no modern media system. The infrastructure to support an advanced telecommunication system simply does not exist”. (McPhail, 2006, pp. 43: 43). Can one completely say that McPhail’s descriptions of Africa and other developing countries are true? Definitely Africa, Latin America and Asia are

### *Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media*

advancing daily. With Nigeria, a developing nation for instance, having her own satellite called Nigerian Communication Satellite Limited (NTGCOMSAT 1), the MTN mobile company, starcomms telecommunications network and Glomobile rolling out 3G mobile technologies, and South Africa owning the popular Digital Satellite Television (DSTV), the Nigeria own HiTV and even more recently is the DAARSAT, which was launched in October 7 2008, by DAAR Communications PLC. With all these development in mind, can one then say that an advanced telecommunications system does not exist in Africa? No! Perhaps, McPhail did not see into the future of Africa, Asia and Latin America, countries which he preferred to call “newly emerging nations”.

This notwithstanding, developing countries journalists’ must employ the appropriate communication channels for the dissemination of developmental messages to target audience for socio-economic restructuring, transformation of attitudes and behaviour of its people and for development at large. Some communication scholars like McPhail (2006) have advocated the use of indigenous media for development journalism/communication, while others like Imoh (2007, p. 194) have emphasized the use of new technological innovations. The author believes that an integration of both traditional/indigenous media and new will lead to quick development. This is because integration will enhance greater efficiency in the transmission of information to the people in any given society, encourage an improved two way communication, increase faster and deeper reach of the grassroots. Furthermore, an integration of both media would improve the impact development journalism will have on rural and urban dwellers as development journalism is inefficient without deeply reaching the grass roots. Similarly, Ndolo (2005, p. 7) writes that since no nation can develop using technologies developed by other societies, “cross fertilization” (media integration), becomes the answer. Adding to this, the International Commission (1981, pp. 81-82) notes that while combined use of traditional folk forms, interpersonal communication and modern media, carefully organized and blended, leads “to interesting socio cultural experiences and results, adverse examples, may also be cited which show detrimental influences particularly when some preconditions and particularities of each environment have not been respected”. Moreover, “the modern media (new media) cannot serve fully the communication needs of Africa unless they are combined with traditional modes of communication”. (Ibagere, 1994, p. 96). Media integration (cross-fertilization) is the deliberate bringing together of two or more media systems for the purpose of providing a purposive mix. It can also be seen as the joining together of the traditional/indigenous media with the new media. This is what Wilson and Unoh (1991, p. 18) called it the “trado modem communication.” They defined it as the combination of traditional communication technology and approaches with modem hardware in a manner that both complement each other.” They further explained that media integration is the combination of traditional Nigerian media instruments which have been identified in the former Cross River state in

particular with modern Euro-American media for the purpose of reaching rural societies more effectively and thus making the communication process meaningful and relevant to about eighty percent of Nigeria's population which resides in these rural communities.

At this point it comes imperative to note that media integration is not the same thing as media convergence even though both are product of technological advancement and media transformation. Media convergence is the blending together of services that have been separate, such as the Internet, mobile phone, digital television, microcomputers amongst host of others. Media convergence can also be seen as an advancement of media technologies which have brought about a blend between the old and new media to become one media - New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs). However, in the case of media integration, the two forms of media, which are the traditional/indigenous media, that are peculiar to the African people, such as gongs, flute, talking drum, indigenous news paper and radio and television etc and the new media such as the Internet, mobile phone, etc, blend to complement each other. They are two separate media used mutually at a particular period for a particular purpose in order to achieve complementary integration but does not make them become one media as in the case of convergence.

Media integration did not just come out from the blues. Its origin can be traced to the early 1970 by leading scholars like Herbert Schiller an Afro-American Marxist writer; Carl Nordenstreng, a Dutch; Frank Okwu Ugboajah of Nigeria, the Irish Sean McBride who chaired the committee that produced the text, *Many Voices, One World*, Des Wilson, Elo Ibagere, Ike Ndolo, all of Nigeria, among others. These scholars believe that both the traditional media and the new media have their advantages as well as their disadvantages. However, emphasis would not be placed on their merits and demerits of the channel as media integration condemns the ethnocentricity of any media type. As a result emphases would be placed on the significance of media integration for development journalism.

With media integration, development journalism/communication would be capable of empowering the rural and urban populace with speedy and accurate economic information and enlighten them on the need to participate in their civic responsibilities. It would also enable them to understand their rights and obligation as citizens of any country. With cross-fertilization it would be easier to transmit messages that would enlighten the people about their constitutional rights to votes. For instance, music, gongs, local radio and television stations (indigenous media) can be mixed with web radio and mobile phones (new media) to send enlightenment messages to people in both rural and urban regions.

A healthy nation, they say is a wealthy one, development journalism would not be complete if health messages are not sent to the rural and urban populace of every nation. With gongs and talking drum, local radio, and television stations can relay how the town crier uses the gongs, flute and talking drum to pass on messages to the people. This can also be transmitted

### *Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media*

on the Internet, captured through or relayed on digital television. Today, health messages are now widely spread and felt in rural areas, especially with the fast spread of telecommunications facilities. Mobile phones can be built to incorporate medical signals through indigenous songs, which mobile phone owners in rural and urban areas can use to ascertain their main health related issues, such as ascertaining the number of hospitals around the vicinity, medical doctors' schedule amongst other issues. With this cross-fertilization, disease prevention can be facilitated.

For instance, Souter (1999, p. 410) notes that an onchocerciasis control programme supported by World Health Organization (WHO) in the Volta River Valley, uses satellite and radio transmission for monitoring data from infested areas to determine optimal spraying that will control parasite levels and permit effective use of neighbouring agricultural land. Similarly, WHO uses information exchange through the Internet to mobilize vaccination teams in the large area of sub-Sahara Africa, which is 'especially vulnerable to meningococcal meningitis'. Moreover, media integration like a mixture of mobile phone and indigenous song would break the barrier of illiteracy among rural dwellers for the transmission of health developmental messages. Digital/satellite television and radio stations can have a signature tune of an indigenous music before relaying news and other programmes.

Development journalism is better enhanced with media integration for the transmission of socio-economic and developmental messages. Considering the persistent and indeed intensification of poverty and deprivation, Karikari (2000, p. 52) calls "for renewed interest in the use of integrated media to support development". Media integration is used for creating general awareness, imparting skills and new technology utilization. It is an objective that community media and new media ought to pursue, to support local initiatives and efforts. Furthermore, with media integration, development journalism practice is capable of enabling the ruralities to take rational, correct and judicious economic decision. It can foster the education of the rural child through the production and transmission of appropriate educational programmes.

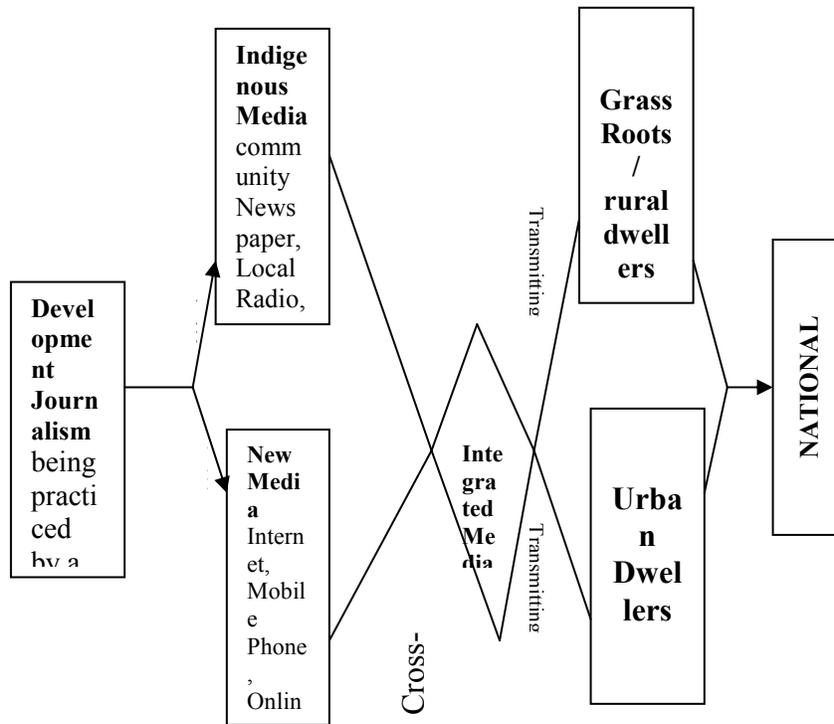
Apart from this, media integration would ensure that development journalism/communication is able to transmit agricultural innovations to the rural farmers which would in turn, yield more results. Wilson (2005, p. 123) writes that innovations are "the act of introducing new ideas, ways or improvement to transform the society into a new form". He claims that in speaking of forms of innovations, one may invariably be speaking of development as well. By this assertion, it would not be out of place to say that transmission of agricultural innovation is transmission of developmental messages. A mixture of local fair, films, exhibitions, photo, local radio and television (indigenous media) with DVD, CD-ROM, digital television and video conferencing, solve this problem.

Therefore, development journalism must be "targeted towards understanding the rural people's perspective, the hidden constraints the rural populace encounter in trying an innovation and to understand the incentives

that will promote or inhibits adoption, (Imoh, 2007). With media integration of videoconferencing, mobile phone, local radio and festivals, rural and urban dwellers would be involved in receiving and sending messages as well as taking part in discussion and decision making process. Karikari (2000, p. 54) observed that the rationale for community media is that they create conditions for marginalized communities to have their own voice”, so also does new media. Media would further consolidate such by enables freedom of expression among other things.

By and large, if all these are put in place, development in Africa would not be farfetched as creating awareness and mobilization towards development which is the core aim of development journalism is greatly enhanced with media integration, or what one can call media cross-fertilization. All the points herein are further encapsulated below through a proposed model.

**PROPOSED MODEL FOR MEDIA INTEGRATION THROUGH THE PRACTICE OF DEVELOPMENT JOURNALISM**



### *Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media*

It is no longer news that the media are agents for national development. They create in the minds of people the need for and means of achieving national development through the dissemination of developmental messages which can be simply called development journalism. The question arising at the point is, which media type should be used for development journalism/communication? Some scholars are of the view that for rural dwellers, traditional media should be used for the transmission of developmental messages, while others think that new media should be used considering the fact that we are in the age of digital technologies. There are some other scholars who share a contrary view, in which the researcher's position was anchored upon, scholars like Des Wilson, Elo Ibagere, Ike Ndolo all of Nigeria, have recommended a combination of traditional/indigenous media and the new media/New Information and Communication Technologies (NICTs). Hence, the researcher formulated the above model as a road map to media integration through the practice of development journalism.

Since there is a number of significance in the use of NICTs for the practice of development journalism in developing countries as well as advantages in the traditional media for the practice of journalism globally, integrating the two media become necessary for a more even and effective development journalism. Moreover, over dependency on western media is definitely not a solution as no nation can develop with the media system designed by other nations. In addition, considering the fact that over 80% of the people living in developing countries especially in Africa countries are rural dwellers, ignoring indigenous media is not the best. Thus integration becomes pertinent. This formed the basis of the proposed model. Moreover, a pictorial representation of the use of integrated media for development journalism makes it easier for all stakeholders to understand how they can use the media for national development.

Furthermore, the author anchored the cross-fertilization (media integration) on the practice of development journalism because one cannot talk about media integration in isolation, it should be used for a purpose or purposes. Moreover, paramount in developing countries, especially the ones in Africa are issues revolving national development.

As shown in the model, the development journalist through the practice of development journalism takes hold of indigenous media such as local newspaper, local radio and television stations, gongs, songs, flute, flute, talking drum among others and new media such as the Internet, mobile phone, DVD, satellite/digital television and radio, etc for development journalism. He or she merges the two media types-media integration. With the integrated media, he or she transmits developmental messages to the people. She or he uses the integrated media to create awareness and mobilize the people for development.

For instance, a radio set can be placed in a designated spot such as a Community Listening Centre (CLC) for the rural dwellers to converge and the town crier or an interpreter can be assigned to interpret the news and

other information as it is relayed on the radio. The same interpreter can be made to go round the community educating the people. In addition, Internet and television services and facilities can be brought to rural dwellers in a designated spot tagged Community Viewing Centre (CVC) and the services of an interpreter can be employed or used to teach the people how to use the Internet and television. With CLC and CVC, the development journalist can combine the use of indigenous and new media to transmit development messages.

The model postulates that the blend should operate in the balance of strength, advantage, credibility, reach, effectiveness, fidelity and accessibility. The end result is national development, a nation that has the basic amenities, an advanced agricultural system, a stable and rich economy, a stable and fair political system, a high technological impact, a strong defence, happy citizens, above all, a well informed people amongst others.

The model does not consider any media type superior than the other. It ensures that the indigenous media are promoted at the same level new media are not left out and are given room for further development. This would in turn promote what Fidler (1997) refers to “mediamorphosis”, the transformation and development of old media to new media and further changes. Indeed, the model would preserve the relationship between indigenous media and new media. It would bring about communication order for development. In fact it is the key to unlocking of the information problems confronting Africa irrespective of any perceived consequences or challenges.

#### **Consequences and Challenges of Cross-Fertilizing Indigenous Media and New Media for Development Journalism in Nigeria**

It is an acknowledged fact that cross-fertilizing indigenous media and new media is the best option for the practice of effective development journalism in all developing countries especially in Africa, Nigeria to be precise. However, to fully enjoy benefits of cross-fertilization, there is need to be aware of some possible consequences and challenges accruing from the cross-fertilization of indigenous media and new media for development practice in Africa, with particular reference to Nigeria for obvious reasons. These could be technological problems, financial problems, language barriers, social problems, political problem, cultural problem or personal problems. These challenges and any perceived consequences nonetheless, the fact remains that cross-fertilization is the best option for Nigeria and other African countries for development journalism practice.

Unarguably, cross-fertilizing indigenous media and new media would no doubt require some form of technologies. Thus, the first major problem may be that of technology failures. This is because there is already an existing permanent power supply problem amidst many promises by successive Nigeria government. Another issue is high cost of purchasing new technologies required for the mix. Take for instance a situation when the

### *Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media*

development journalist in Nigeria decides to use the radio or digital satellite television set or the Internet alongside an interpreter to interpret development messages relayed to rural dwellers in a community listening or viewing centre and there is power outage, this could frustrate the development journalist as well as the rural dwellers lose faith in what is being said. To avoid this, the use of alternative power like generator may be utilized. This makes it important for Nigeria government not to only concentrate her entire resources into street and road light projects but to also provide an alternative supply to her people in the absence of the normal electricity in the place of generator, solar equipment among others.

Another contending issue is the issue of connectivity. To get connected to the Internet for example requires a telephone line, a modem, a configured system and subscription fee to the Internet Service Provider (ISP). This cost some money. Moreover, even though most indigenous media may be relatively cheap, they cannot alone meet the demands of the 21st century generation. Ignoring the new media because of their relative high cost is not a good alternative rather the development journalist can depend on new media like the mobile phone which is relatively cheap and has many users who cut across the urban and rural community of Nigeria.

Furthermore, the political state of Nigeria can pose as a challenge the development journalist in cross-fertilizing indigenous media and new media for the practice of development journalism in Nigeria. Nigeria's political system has always experienced fluctuating growth. This unsteady political climate of the country has affected virtually all the aspects of the country. This equally has some effects on the Nigerian media. Olise (2008, p. 287) observes that the Nigerian government is only interested in raising revenue through crude oil and other means. Apart from the fact that there is no form of motivation as it seems, provided to media gatekeepers Nigeria government use their political powers to manipulate the media to relay news and messages that suit them to the detriment of the citizens. As a result the citizens are bitter and do not take the messages of the development journalist seriously whether relayed through indigenous media or new media or a mixture of both.

Government negligence has also contributed to personnel problem in Nigeria. Although media integration for development journalism requires few personnel, this does not underscore the important of expertise. The development journalist needs to be trained in the use of both media for development journalism. Unfortunately, very few journalists in Nigeria are computer literate. This fact is encapsulated in Anim (2007, p. 356) findings in a study conducted, thus he states that Nigeria journalist were "greatly deficient in the use of computers". This also explains why Olise (2009, p. 434) asked a fundamental question that even if new technologies are put in place in Nigeria media, are the professionals media and technology experts available?" In this regard, Onyene, Mbah and Madumere (2009, p. 419) advice that from "age three, children should be exposed to the use of computers as facilitative technique".

### *Festus Prosper Olise*

Finally, the development journalist in cross-fertilizing indigenous media and new media for development journalist should be aware that problem of socio-cultural crisis may arise since most Nigerians are resistant to change especially the rural populace. The people may find some of the blend a strange invasion on their cultural rights. Therefore, the development journalist should get an interpreter to explain some basic truth to the people before he or she begins his or her jobs.

### **Recommendations and Conclusion**

There is no arguing the fact that even though some consequences or challenges of cross-fertilizing indigenous development journalism practice in Africa may arise, it still remains the best option for the African development journalist for the dissemination of developmental messages to both the rural and urban populace. This is because, when one considers the nature of indigenous media for development journalism in Africa as well as the significance of new media for development journalism in Africa, one cannot help but to insist that a blend of both media type would take development journalism in Africa to height that were never imagined. Moreover, it is not enough for nation to develop using technologies developed by other nations hence, it becomes imperative to mix indigenous media with new media which is believed to be western.

This mix would ensure that both the media integrationist and development journalist would get the desired result in the practice of development journalism. However, for proper understanding of how cross-fertilization can be achieved effectively for the practice of development journalism in Africa, the proposed model which does not consider any media type as superior to the other, becomes the only option for a smooth communication order for the practice of development journalism in Africa irrespective of any perceived constraints.

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### *Cross-Fertilization of Indigenous Media and New Media*

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