RETROSPECTING ON THE USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONY IN NIGERIA.

BY

Thomas A. ALEMOH Ph.D
alemohthomas@yahoo.com; dralemoh@gmail.com
thomas.alemoh@arts.fulafia.edu.ng
+234**8026923502,** +234**8164305391**

DEPT OF THEATRE & MEDIA ARTS,
FEDERAL UNIVERSITY OF LAFIA,
NASARAWA STATE.

RETROSPECTING ON THE USE OF CELLULAR TELEPHONY IN NIGERIA.

Abstract:

The introduction of the Global System of Mobile phone (GSM/Cellular Telephony) into Nigeria has marked another phase of development in the overall development of the country. Obviously, this has led to improvement in telephone services, provided jobs, and increased government's revenue. This paper reflects on the challenges and prospects the introduction of GSM has brought on a developing nation like Nigeria. In doing this, the paper assesses the nature of the cellular phone first as a medium of interpersonal communication and goes on to evaluate the changes in the use of the cellular phone which makes it gradually take the form of a medium of mass communication. The paper notes that it is in this respect that the implications of its use pose more challenges to the country. It is, therefore, recommended that Nigeria, being a developing nation, should articulate communication policies to adequately regulate the use of the new technology. Above all, the need for Nigeria to develop her own technology cannot be overemphasized so as to break the dependency chain that ties developing nations to the industrialized world.

Keywords: cellular telephony, developing countries, information and communication technologies (ICTs), Nigeria, Marshal McLuhan.

Introduction

When the Canadian linguist theorist, Marshal McLuhan, predicted in his book, *Understanding the Media: The Extension of Man* (1964) as cited in Moemeka (2007) that the world would someday become a 'Global Village' through the use of information technology, many probably dismissed his postulation as simply chimerical. Suffice it to say that what appeared improbable then has become a reality in the contemporary world. The direction in which information technologies (ITs) are leading man is bewildering so much that "one is prompted to believe that the world has shrunk further from the global village level to a tiny global family" (Nwodu, 2004, p.72). Baran (1999) cited in Nwodu (2004, p.74) notes that "What has returned McLuhan to the front of the cultural discussion surrounding the mass media is the Internet…. Wired magazine, the self-proclaimed 'Bible of Cyberspace' has anointed McLuhan its patron saint". For this reason, Griffin (2000, p.313) has accorded Marshal McLuhan accolades describing him as the "Oracle of the Electronic Age". In contrast, Gordon (1982) in

Nwodu (2004, p.314) berates McLuhan's theory of Technological Determinism upon which he premised his assumptions as lacking in empirical support, vague and inconsistent.

In spite of these criticisms, McLuhan's prognosis cannot be easily dismissed with the wave of the hand considering the realities of the modern world where communication is no longer hampered by distance. At the touch of a button, the entire wide world opens right before one's eyes and even in the comfort of one's bedroom. The information super highway through cyberspace communication has greatly enabled man to conquer the constraint of distance in communication. With this development, one could reach out to and be reached at any point on the globe provided there is a means of access. Satellite or space communication has made it possible for a fisherman in the creeks of the Niger Delta to watch European League matches live on his boat provided he has the necessary equipment.

Like a typical village setting, what happens even in the remotest segments of the world becomes news easily across the globe in a split second. Information has simply gone viral. This is the core of McLuhan's idea of a 'global village' in which, according to him, the human race has once again been retribalised as everyone has been connected to everyone else in one global family. Benson-Eluwa & Kajiag (2012, p.340) stretch the argument further that the world has not just become a global village but a household saying

> The prophecy or prediction of Marshal McLuhan that the world would become a global village is no longer speculation, but a fulfillment and beyond even becoming a global household. The compression of the world into a global village is strongly build (sic) on the growth and development in Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs)…

The Cell phone is one of the technologies that are spinning the world round in this mouth-gaping communication revolution. Others include computer, Satellite, Internet, social media, etc, and they have been labeled different names depending on the angle one looks at them. For instance some scholars, as noted by Baran (2004) in Nwodu (2004), call them Information Technologies (ITs), New Information Technologies (NITs), and New Communication Technologies (NCTs). Severin and Tankard (1988) also reported in Nwodu (2004) describe them as Communication Technologies [CTs], and Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). However, most scholars prefer the term Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) which is a potpourri of three comparatively complimentary concepts –

Information, Communication and Technology – combined to give it its desired meaning as well as indicate the area of its coverage (Agudosy, 2007).

Telecommunications is majorly about the use of the telephone which in Nigeria today is used rarely as land line and predominantly as GSM. It is this second aspect of telecommunications use that this paper focuses on. Unlike the conventional (land line) phone, GSM is operated with portable, wireless, pocket-size phones called cellular, mobile, handset or simply cell phones. Nevertheless, GSM can still work with the conventional telephone system through a process of interconnectivity.

Cellular telephony introduced in 2001 is one component of ICTs that has dramatically changed the face of communication in Nigeria. Before then, there was landline telephone system which was affordable only by the rich. With the introduction of the Global System of Mobile communication (GSM), telephone has become a household property. Now that cellular telephony has come to stay in Nigeria and going by the assumption that a new medium introduced to any society always produces certain changes in that society, it could be safely conjectured that the use of this new communication technology has had, and continues to have impact on the communication behaviour of its users in Nigeria and by extension, the overall development of the country. This paper, therefore, seeks to analyze the potentialities of the cellular phone as a medium of communication and the implications of its adoption and use in Nigeria. The prospects and challenges of the use of cellular telephony as an innovation in Nigeria are worth considering. This point was well made by Etuk (2009) at the first Professor Emmanuel Akpan Memorial Lecture that

> Since on a daily basis, our lives are being affected, whether we like it or not, by these new media, preoccupations suggested and defined by them, and tastes excited and either satisfied or frustrated by the same, it is high time we took a good look at them and at least awaken our consciousness, even if there is nothing we can do to influence or stop them.

As a point of departure, the paper examines the nature of cellular telephony and the changes it is undergoing which make its use more complex. The paper also points out ways Nigeria could maximize the gains from this fast developing medium of communication for her overall national development.

Theoretical framework

The discourse is anchored on the theory of technological determinism expounded by Marshal McLuhan that major changes in society could be traced to the introduction of new technologies. In his exposition, McLuhan notes that the invention of alphabets transformed the society from a primitive state to a literate one while the industrial revolution was facilitated by innovations in the printing industry. In relation to communication, McLuhan further observes that "be it oral, written, or electronic, the primary channel of communication changes the way we perceive the world. The dominant medium of any age dominates people" (Griffin, 2000, p.317). However, it merits mention that such changes could cut both ways which makes it imperative for researchers to conduct a critical evaluation of the prospects and problems of any new medium of communication in order to know how to effectively harness its potentialities and preclude its dangers. McLuhan asserts rather figuratively that "we shape our tools and they in turn shape us". More importantly as Griffin cited above has observed, "McLuhan's historical analysis has heightened awareness of the possible cultural effects of new media technologies". In all, technological determinism underscores the importance of the medium in the communication process. This forms the plank upon which the often quoted but yet controversial assertion by Marshal McLuhan that "The Medium is the Message" was made. This paper assumes that the introduction of GSM into Nigeria has triggered off certain identifiable behavioural changes in the users and challenges to the entire country.

In discussing further the theoretical bent to the study of information and communication technologies, the 'Mainstream' and 'Critical' perspectives come into focus. These are schools of thought advanced by scholars who have found themselves on two antipodal ideological camps because of what they think are the impacts of the use of the new technologies particularly on Third World countries (Tsui, 1991 in Alemoh, 2011). To the mainstream thinkers, their optimism about the positive impacts of new communication technologies stems from the assumption that the development has economic and social benefits to the countries concerned. They are therefore actively promoting the adoption and use of these technologies while advocating the removal of constraints that could hinder the full realization of these benefits. Proponents of this school of thought include Pool, Stevenson, Lang and Blumer (Tsui, 1991, p.69).

The critical perspective offers a contrary view on the impact of the new technologies on the developing world. Scholars here maintain that the technologies have provided another means of integrating the third world countries further into the expansive world capitalist formation in

which case, the developing countries are continuously subject to exploitation. This is not surprising as this group of thinkers approaches the issue from a Marxist viewpoint which stresses the role economic and political forces play in global relations. Instead of focusing on the potential of technologies, this school of thought analyzes the social shaping of the technologies and the underlying impact they have on the developing countries. Scholars in this camp include Hamelink, Halloran Schiller, and Melody.

It is pertinent to observe here, as Tsui (1991) has noted, that the two perspectives are clearly at variance in their postulations without the slightest possibility of their convergence in the near future. However, this paper does not completely align with any of these two dominant perspectives but it argues on both sides. It is the position of the paper that the new communication technologies have prospects and challenges for third world countries which must be carefully analyzed as a platform for evaluating their impact on the developing countries.

Advent of cellular phone in Nigeria

GSM was introduced in Nigeria in 2001 by President Olusegun Obasanjo. The services were provided initially by a consortium of foreign firms beginning with Econet (as it was then known which later changed to V-Mobile on May 14, 2001) followed by MTN which started operations on May 16, 2001. Much later, the Federal government ventured into the business by establishing M-Tel as an arm of NITEL (a conventional land line public phone service provider already existing in the country) to compete with the foreign firms. The first indigenous service provider was Globacom (GLO), which started operations on 29 August 2003, and owned by the business magnate, Chief Mike Adenuga Jnr. As the industry grew, more players joined the league among which were Visafone, Eltisalat, and Starcom. At the moment, MTN, Airtel, GLO and Etisalat have overshadowed other network service providers in Nigeria. Again, some of the service providers have undergone change of corporate names and identities overtime. Worst culprit in this regard is Econet which transformed to Vodacom (2004), V-Mobile (2004), Celtel (2006), Zain (2008), and currently Airtel (2010). The other culprit is Eltisalat which made an inroad into the Nigerian market in 2008 but changed its name to 9mobile on 20 July, 2017.

The telecommunications industry in Nigeria, of which GSM is a component, has grown phenomenally. According to statistics released by the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) reported in Adepetun (2019), the "telecommunications sector ended year 2018 with 172 million subscribers, with teledensity rising to 123.4 per cent from 105 per cent in January 2018",

adding that the service providers got "25.5 million new subscribers in the course of the year". *ThisDay* (2019, online) quotes The News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) as saying that "Teledensity is the number of telephone connections for every 100 individuals living within an area and it varies widely across the country".

Adepetun (2019) again notes that

> Further analysis of the statistics showed that MTN remained the largest operator in the country with 66.7 million subscribers and 39.7 per cent market share. Globacom is next with 25.6 per cent market share and 43.3 million subscribers. India's Bharti Airtel, operating as Airtel in Nigeria is third with 43.1 million subscribers and 25.5 per cent market share, while embattled Emerging Market Telecommunications Service (EMTS) trading as 9Mobile finished the year with 9.10 per cent market penetration and serviced 15.4 million subscribers

The report further observes that "In terms of Internet penetration, the operators jointly added 11.6 million new subscribers in the course of the year, pushing online penetration to 111.6 million from 100 million as at the beginning of last year. MTN had 43.8 million Internet users, followed by Airtel with 29 million; Globacom is third with 28 million and 9Mobile is fourth with 9.9 million subscribers". These statistics point to the high rate of internet use facilitated majorly through cellular telephony in Nigeria at the moment.

The Obasanjo's government during which GSM was introduced to Nigeria claimed that it created ten million jobs through the innovation. Giving it the benefit of doubt and looking at the scenario as it is at the moment, most youths who were previously unemployed now have something gainfully doing as telecentre operators, voucher (prepaid card) distributors, phone technicians, phone accessories dealers to mention but a few. On the part of the Federal government, the sale of licenses to the service providers alone raked more than N400 billion into the public confers. This figure may not be doubted considering the fact that the licenses were sold at exorbitant rates as attested to by Strive Masiyiwa (2019), CEO and Founder of Econet Wireless, Nigeria. According to him, Econet's license alone cost $285m "and was the most expensive license ever issued in Africa at the time".

Adepetun (2019) notes further that "In terms of contributions of the sector to the economy, while the last quarter was yet to be upload (sic), the telecoms sector contributed 9.19 per cent in quarter one of 2018; 10.43 per cent in second quarter and possibly due to economic challenges, finished quarter three with a short fall. The third quarter was 8.39 per cent". The

report adds that "The telecoms regulator, while making reference to a National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) release, noted that the contributions of telecommunications and information services to GDP from Q1 – Q3 2018 was N4.7 Trillion. It stressed that in the Q3, 2018 the amount stood at N1.5 Trillion". From the foregoing, it could be hypothesized that the introduction of cellular telephony as an aspect of telecommunications in Nigeria has boosted the economic development of the country. However, let us examine the nature of the cell phone as a prelude to understanding the complexity about some other impact it is making in Nigeria.

Cellular phone as a medium of interpersonal communication

Like its progenitor, the landline phone, a cellular phone is primarily designed as a means of interpersonal communication. Interpersonal communication involves two or more parties in an interaction, who exchange information either on a face-to-face basis or through a medium such as a telephone, letter, or through the use of signs and symbols among others. MacBride, et al (1981) in Akpan (2005, p.75) notes that "It has been rightly said that the telephone is a sophisticated extension and amplifier of traditional oral communication. No other media can match the direct spontaneous dialogue."

A telephone conversation is perfectly an interpersonal communication because the two speakers can only talk to each other with each swapping roles with the other as trans- receivers. It means there is no permanent sender or receiver in such an interaction and it is this unique factor that makes interpersonal communication dyadic. Another good feature of interpersonal communication using the phone is the possibility of immediate feedback unlike in the conventional mass communication setting. Evidently, a cellular phone is used to make and receive calls, exchange texts messages (sms), pictures, data, ringing tunes, music and video. In view of the above indices, one could conclude safely that a cellular phone is designed primarily as a medium of interpersonal communication.

The transmutation of the cellular phone

Every known technology in the world is subject to modification. For example, the flashy automobiles on the roads today are improved versions of the wagons and Henry Ford's prototypes used in the Victorian era in Europe. In the telecommunications front, the cellular phone which originally is designed for use as a medium of interpersonal communication is gradually undergoing a technical metamorphosis by virtue of the multiple functions that some models of this information technology can perform. Akinlade (n.d) has observed that "Mobile

telephony and smart mobile devices like cellphones are certain to increase the numbers of internet users in the world as time goes by". Akinlade buttresses this claim by citing the Internet Society which in their annual Global Internet Report (2015) predicts that "mobile internet will play a key role in bringing the next billion users online" basing its optimism on the facts that "smartphone sales are the majority of mobile handsets sold worldwide, and 192 countries have active 3G mobile networks which cover almost 50% of the global population".

As a pointer to this, most models of cellular phone at present can access the Internet. The Internet, as a medium of mass communication, has been integrated with a medium of interpersonal communication. Here is seen the evidence of the concept of Mediamorphosis as propounded by Fidler (1997) cited in Roa (2006) and Nwammuo (2011) which tries to explain the evolutionary relationships between new and old media. Mediamorphosis is all about the changing forms of media in response to the information needs of the society. It is "the transformation of communication media, usually brought about by the complex interplay of perceived needs, competitive and political pressures, and social and technological innovations" (Fidler, 1997, pp.22-23). Nonetheless, the concept of mediamorphosis or media integration must be carefully pursued so that as Wilson (2009) warns it would not lead to media cannibalization or a domination of one medium by another.

The point of emphasis here is that cellular telephony by being connected to the Internet has shifted its position functionally from being a purely interpersonal medium of communication. Evidently, the information that is available to an Internet user in London can also be assessed simultaneously by a user of cellular phone here in Nigeria provided the latter is rightly connected. Teleconferencing is another way in which cellular communication is taking on the garb of mass communication although on a limited scale. With the use of a cellular phone, a user is able to connect and interact with more than two parties in a single call, each person being able to hear and address the others at different locations at the same time. In actual fact, this is a miniature conference but what is more important here is the realization that an element of mass communication is involved, and that is a media audience scattered over a wide geographical area. It cannot be taken for granted that the other conferees are all known to one another. So, the small audience could also be assumed to be anonymous and heterogeneous, both attributes of mass communication audience. In line with this development, a Dictionary of Mass Communication (undated, p.336) notes that "it is also possible to combine telephone conferencing with video link

so that participants can see one another". Amazingly through Skype application on some smart phones, callers could see each other on the screens of their handset while interacting. This innovation is already gaining ground both in the corporate world and in the academia where one could participate in an overseas conference within the confines of one's office.

Equally fascinating is the fact that a cellular phone could be used at the individual level to disseminate the same information to a fairly large number of people at the same time through the use of text (bulk sms) messages. All that the user has to do is to feed in the numbers of the target recipients (whether known or unknown to him in person) and instructs the phone to send the same message simultaneously to the numbers indicated. It is noteworthy too that the recipients are in different locations at the time in question. The content of such messages include music, pictures, songs, proverbs, quotes, adverts and public enlightenment campaigns. On this note, all telecommunication network service providers in Nigeria have always assisted the Federal government in disseminating public service announcement of benefit to the citizenry as part of their social responsibility in the areas of political enlightenment, health mobilization, and cultural promotion among others.

Cellular phone has also proved useful as an ancillary to news gathering and processing in the practice of journalism. Many journalists in Nigeria at the moment do not bother themselves with conventional cameras any longer so long as they are with their camera phone. A camera phone could also be used for video coverage of an event after which the news story is written (typed as a text or WhatsApp message), edited by using the phone's in-built dictionary, and transmitted to the newsroom for onward inclusion in the day's news bulletin either through voiced report i.e. reading to the editor or a text message/post if it is a short story. Of course, in a live broadcast, the journalist's report can be connected to a microphone in the studio for instant transmission to the audience. This is another example of media integration.

In view of the foregoing discussion, it could be hypothesized that the use of cellular phone is no longer tied to its interpersonal nature. Rather, emphasis in its use is gradually shifting towards making the technology a medium of mass communication. This is where interest lies in its implications for a third world country like Nigeria.

Implications of cell phone as a medium of mass communication

The question has always been asked: what is Nigeria's position in the global village? Technology is a determining factor in the position a country occupies in the digital divide as one

that commands influence or one that obeys orders. For now, most countries of the third world including Nigeria are in the latter category. More worrisome is the fact that "…technological progress in general– and more particularly the increasing use of communication and information technology– is now sufficiently well advanced for it to be possible to forecast trends and to define prospects, as well as to identify risks and stumbling-blocks" (MacBride, et al, 1980, p.31). Interestingly, the technological race continues but to the disadvantage of much of the third world.

Here again, the vexed issue of dependency syndrome comes into play. The countries of the third world are dependent on the advanced countries for technology including the ICTs. Nwodu (2004, p.73) observes that

> The fewer most powerful nations of the West who control the production and distribution of these latest communication technologies use these technologies to saturate the world… with western political philosophies, economic ideologies and socio-cum-cultural values to the detriment of the numerous and poorer developing nations .

By this development, the dependency chain (the Centre-Periphery paradigm) that has always tied the third world countries to the apron strings of the metropoles is further strengthened with the mass importation of cellular phones to the developing nations. Once again, the third world countries assume the position of perpetual consumers of finished products and a ready dumping ground for all sorts of industrial output including those that may be hazardous.

Nigeria imports all kinds of cellular phones whether substandard or not. Some of the phones are tailored made for other climes and do not easily fit into the Nigerian environment. Again, the cost of importing the phones is a drain on the fast depleting foreign earnings of the country. As a result, the cost of phones in the market is still on the high side making it difficult for poor Nigerians, particularly those in the rural areas, to acquire the technology. The implication of this is that although this segment of the population is within the same country where telecommunications business is booming, many of them are still cut off from the mainstream of using the new communication technologies because of cost of access. Expectedly, this hampers the realization of media democratization which is an imperative for national development in any country.

The telecommunications industry in Nigeria is evidently dominated firmly by foreign firms which automatically paves way for capital flight from the nation's beleaguered economy.

As much as it is appreciated that these companies provide jobs for Nigerians, what they (the companies) rake in as profits repatriated to their home countries cannot be compared with whatever social responsibility projects they have executed in the country. As a pointer to this fact, MTN, a South African based telecommunications service provider and forerunner into the Nigerian market was said to have made within half a year a profit that it expected to make in a whole year! This calls for intervention on the part of the Nigerian government which had earlier in Obasanjo's administration mooted the idea of going into partnership with a foreign firm to establish a local GSM assembly plant in Abuja to reduce the cost of the technology. Up till this moment, the idea is yet to materialize.

The integration of cellular phone with the Internet poses some serious challenges to the third world countries. In the first place, Cybercafés which dot the nook and cranny of Nigerian cities now witness reduced patronage because most subscribers connect directly using the cell phone with the major Internet Service Providers (ISPs). However, the cybercafés are fairly able to survive in business because the cell phone user may not have all the required gadgets like printers, scanners, among others to operate with independently. Moreover, network signals fluctuation sometimes compels individual subscribers to patronize cybercafés where such signals are often stronger.

Another serious challenge is that a direct Internet connectivity to cellular phones worsens the problem of cultural imperialism, moral decadence and cyber fraud which have constituted the dysfunctional implications of ICTs use in the third world countries. Nwodu (2004) quoting Pilotta (1992) notes that "the recipient of the technological input is also a recipient of foreign cultural values embedded in the technology itself". The question is: how should subscribers' access be regulated? The only way out tentatively is that since the Internet service via the cellular phone is through telecommunications service providers, the regulatory agency –the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) –could collaborate with security agencies to track down subscribers that would abuse the use of the technology. At the moment, the police & other law enforcement agencies in Nigeria are fighting the upsurge of fake news dissemination by using subscribers' biometric data. This is a right step in the right direction.

The integration of the Internet with the cellular phone has some benefits. For instance, the service providers have being helping out in mass enlightenment campaign on key issues in the country as part of their social responsibility as mentioned earlier. Excellent examples include

support for the Rebranding Nigeria Project, electoral mobilization, peace advocacy, religious admonition, etc. The integration now makes information readily available to subscribers who would not have to go to cybercafés any longer to browse. People are becoming more aware and knowledgeable on issues affecting their lives; there is a greater participation in the discourse of national matters through the social media indicating that media democratization is somewhat still being achieved.

Udoakah (2006, p.83) has noted that "these communication technologies help to provide people of various background access to the world communication system". However, for this to be achieved in Nigeria, the service must be available and affordable. The idea of restricting the subscriber to a certain time frame within which a credit card (voucher) can be valid is against business ethics. Having purchased a credit card, it is the business of the subscriber to exhaust the card at his/her own pace just like an electricity prepaid meter works. Also, there is need to slash down the current charges for surfing in view of the large market available to the service providers. Further, the service must be available on a wider scale than it is at present where telecommunications service is anything but an apology in some parts of the country. Although the industry is on the verge of stabilizing in the country, what is obtainable at the moment compared to what countries in the western hemisphere enjoy in terms of telecommunications service calls for much improvement.

Cellular telephony integrated with the Internet provides an avenue for the promotion of cultural values which have incessantly come under a perpetual threat of the western media. Messages in the form of idioms, proverbs, songs and quotes are now disseminated to subscribers in an attempt to showcase the rich cultural heritage of Nigeria. By the way, if others can manipulate the system to pursue sinister objectives of corrupting the public mind, Nigeria can take advantage of the same system to counter the forces of cultural imperialism and re-orientate the citizenry through cultural reengineering.

Conclusion

This paper started by examining the nature of ICTs with particular interest on cellular phone as part of telecommunications. Cellular phone was further evaluated in its nature as a medium of interpersonal communication but one which is fast changing form into a medium of mass communication. The implications of this development to Nigeria as a third world country were examined. The point is that cellular telephony holds bright prospects for developing

countries particularly when it is integrated with the Internet. In spite of its threat as a weapon of advancing existing cultural imperialism, the socio-economic impact cellular telephony will have on the economy of third world nations cannot be glossed over. The three theoretical perspectives on which this discourse hinged support the position of the paper on the issue.

By the way, the third world countries cannot run away from the global revolution in communication in view of the challenges that go with it. Schiller (1976) reported in Wilson (1997 in Alemoh, 2011) submits that it is not easy to ignore the western communication system and its products because the system, according to him, is powerful and possesses the means to present itself and its products globally. As observed by the MacBride Commission (1981, p.33), "while modern technology offers new prospects for the development of communications, it also creates problems and dangers".

Recommendations

As a panacea, the paper recommends that the third world countries should develop their own technology. This feat has been achieved by those nations classified as the Second World e.g. Japan and China who did not just fold their hands to watch things happen in the highly competitive world of information power play but through technological adaptation, they 'copied' the western nations and have become rivals to the latter in information technology.

What this means is that the third world countries should not be content with their dependence on the advanced nations of the world, while finding a way to closely monitor the use of the new technology (cellular telephony in this case) so that it would not be another yoke in disguise in the global communication equation which has ever remained in a state of disequilibrium. One other way the third world countries can safeguard themselves in this technological whirlwind is for them to articulate good communication policies which would spell out in clear terms what each country intends to achieve in the communication sector with the use of the new media technologies. Here the warning of Kurt Waldeim in footnotes to ***Many Voices, One World*** (MacBride, 1981 in Alemoh, 2011) is most pertinent

> …failure to assert the primacy of policy over technology is an alarming and increasingly dangerous phenomenon in the modern world. This danger is present in the area of communication. Unless it is removed, further communications developments may well produce consequences which were neither foreseen nor desired from a more comprehensive national or international perspective.

For Nigeria and the rest of the third world, the time to do that is now because as Wilson (1997, in Alemoh, 2011) notes

> We, therefore, get to the inescapable conclusion that if Nigeria nay Africa must have an effective communication system, she must extricate herself from the trappings of western-imposed intellectual and policy occlusion and develop for herself a more dynamic model that possesses the capability of addressing her numerous communication and developmental problems.

References

Adepetun, A. (2019). Nigeria ends 2018 with 172m subscribers, 31.5% broadband penetration. Retrieved on 23/07/19 from https://guardian.ng/technology/nigeria-ends-2018-with-172m-subscribers-31-5-broadband-penetration/, 19 January.

Agudosy, F. I. (2007). Religion and information communication technologies in the modern world, In Soola, E.O (Ed) *Communication for development purposes*, Ibadan: Craft Books Ltd.

Akinlade, A.A. (n.d). The influence of social media on the voting behaviour of the youth in south-east Nigeria. A Dissertation submitted to the school of postgraduate studies, University of Nigeria, Nsukka. Retrieved on 04/01/2019 from http://repository.unn.edu.ng/bitstream/handle/123456789/4323/Akinlade%2C%20Ajibola%20A..pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Akpan, C. (2005). A comparative analysis of the uses and gratifications of GSM and landline phones among students of the University of Nigeria, Nsukka, *International journal of communication,* No 2, January.

Alemoh T.A (2011). Implications of Cellular Telephony for Third World Countries, *International Journal of Humanities,* 3 (4), 1-9.

Benson-Eluwa, V. & Kajiag, J.L (2012). Information and communication technologies (ICTs) in public relations and advertising, In Aliede, J. (Ed) *Today's Readings in Mass Communication: Issues, Insights and Perspectives*, Enugu; Prime Targets Limited.

Etuk, U. (2009). Aesthetics, the new media and national development, First Prof. Emmanuel Akpan memorial lecture, University of Uyo.

Fiddler, R. (1997) *Mediamorphosis; understanding new media*, Thousand Oaks Calif: Pine Forge.

Griffin, E. (2000). *A first look at communication theories,* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Manjula B. K. (undated) .*Dictionary of mass communication*, New Delhi: K.S

Paperbacks

Masiyiwa, S. (2019). Econet founder reveals story behind company's downfall in
Nigeria. Retrieved on 24/07/2019 from
https://techpoint.africa/2015/10/06/econet-founder-reveals-story-behind-companys-downfall-in-nigeria/

Moemeka, A. (2007). Is the medium the message or the massage? A critique, not of
theory, but of interpretation (A continuing Struggle against Intellectual Colonialism).
Key-note speech at the National conference of the African Council on Communication
Education (ACCE) Zaria, Sept. 4-9.

NCC Document (2007). Nigeria marks six years of telecommunications revolution,
The Guardian, Wed., August 22, p.54.

Nwammuo, A.N. (2011). Mediamorphosis: Analyzing the Convergence of Digital Media
Forms alongside African Traditional Media. *African research review*, 5 (2), retrieved on
10/05/2019 from www.afrrevjo.com

Roa, M.(2006). Mediamorphosis: understanding new media (Book review). Accessed on
08/05/2019 from https://www.tandfonline.com/author/Roa%2C+Madammohan.

ThisDay (2019, online). Active mobile telephone lines in Nigeria hit 162m. Retrieved on
04/01/2019 from https://www.thisdaylive.com/index.php/2018/07/06/active-mobile-telephone-lines-in-nigeria-hit-162m/

Tsui, L. S. (1991). The use of new communication technologies in third world countries:
A comparison of perspectives", *Gazette*, 48, (2). Retrieved on 23/07/2019 from
https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/001654929104800201

Udoakah, N. (2006). Communication and society, In *Fundamentals of human
communication*,Wilson D. (Ed), Ibadan: Stirling-Hordens Publishers.

Wilson, D. (2009). Unpublished lecture notes on *Ethnocommunicology*, Department
of Communication Arts, University of Uyo, Uyo.