



The Connection Between National Security and Communication

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Abstract: *The concept of national security is all-encompassing and pervades all areas of national existence but it seems it has been limited to concepts bordering on military prowess and territorial protection. As the bedrock of human essence, communication plays a huge role in the security of every nation. This paper explored the symbiosis that exists between national security and communication from the Nigerian perspective as both variables influence each other. Communication within a nation can threaten the security of a nation, just as much as issues of national security can impact the information that pervades various institutions in the society including the media. The systems theory formed the theoretical framework for this study, highlighting the nation as a holistic system dependent on connected elements including national security and communication. National stakeholders should understand and explore the link between these two concepts as a route for effective decision-making, peace and security within a nation.*

Keywords: *National Security, Media, Communication, Social Media, Nation, Nigeria*

INTRODUCTION

In the world today, dissensions and wars are prevalent amongst the citizens of a nation and also evident in a nation's relations with another. There is so much focus on these wars that it seems the importance placed on communication in preventing and curbing enmity or promoting peace is overlooked. However, communication is a driving force for social interaction and national security. Communication involves transmitting and sharing of information, emotions, attitudes and ideas (Akpama, E., 2013), as humans co-exist in a world of constructed meanings, emotions and expectations that form individual and national narratives (Comish, P. et al. , 2011). National security involves various aspects including social, physical, economic, technological and social aspects within a nation that ensure security of the citizens of the given nation – all aspects that thrive efficiently in an environment where strategic communication exists. Technological advancement is a major factor that has changed the dialogue within and outside nations as narratives are becoming difficult to control even between nations. In terrorist attacks such as 9/11 in New York and Washington, technology and digital communication networks were used in encouraging terrorism, spreading ideologies and encouraging new recruits in other sects worldwide such as Isis and Boko Haram (Archetti, C. , 2015).

Prevailingly, as much as communication is implicated in national security; issues of national security also influence communication as they are symbolic respectively. Terrorist acts, vandalism, kidnapping, protests, wars amongst other issues send messages and contribute in communicating various agendas. These issues influence topicality of issues in the mainstream and digital media; national security issues have sparked discussions on social media that have influenced national policies. The "Occupy Nigeria" commenced on the 1st of January 2012 in form of mass strike, demonstrations and engaging social media posts in protest against the removal of fuel subsidy by the Nigerian government (Igwebuike, E., 2016) and altered the decision of the government as it spread nationwide and in the global sphere attracting Nigerians from all around the diaspora to join in the protests.

Every national security issue has its own narrative and meaning; some protests and mass strikes communicate the desperation and emotions of the citizens to the government. In a similar vein, terrorist activities by Boko Haram communicate underlying issues such as political agenda, unemployment, and spread the message of fear amongst victims (unknown, 2014). All of this is often translated on social media and accentuated by the press in various ways. Very few studies show the relationship between national security and communication as well as the implications both elements have on national discourse and survival of nation, rather there is so much focus on weaponry and territorial strength as strategies for peace or defense. Every form of communication within a nation occurring in all the social institutions including the family, religious institutions, educational institutions and the media threaten influence security of every nation. Tension within religious groups can result into violence in various regions of a country and even spread beyond its borders. The security issues within a country also affects the national discourse within the country, Nigeria has faced recession in recent times and it has influenced its image in local and global reporting as well as social media posts and memes. It is important to understand that national security and communication are elements within the national ecosystem that work in unification and this liaison can either be destructive or constructive.

This study aims at analyzing the symbiotic relationship between national security and communication; how national security drives information within the society and how the information transmitted within and outside the nation plays a role in promoting or endangering national security. It focuses on how national security is implicated in communication within Nigeria and how issues within this nation also influence the communication strategies within and outside its shores. Although a few examples from international situations are highlighted, this exploratory research lures most of its paradigms from the Nigerian situation drawing case studies from the press, new media and musical content. As an exploratory study, materials were sourced from a variety of germane literature inclusive of books, newspapers and the internet and purposive sampling was adopted in the selection of the case studies.

National Security

The security of every nation is vital for the survival and growth of its political, social and economic systems. Various definitions have analysed the concept of national security in different ways. It has been described as the capability of the state in catering for the defence and protection of its people (Makinda, S. ,1998). National Security entails the nation's effort and strategies in protecting its states and its citizens against national crisis through power projections such as military power and economic might (Momoh, J. , 2016, January 13) . National threats endanger human rights and freedom, liberty to life, movement and the right to free expression (Momoh, J. , 2016, January 13). Ali (Ali, A. D. , 2013) explains that it borders on any incidence compromising the welfare and existence of the citizens of a nation and it is aimed at securing favorable living conditions for every member of the nation. A past president of Nigeria, Olusegun Obasanjo as cited by Onuoha (2009) explained that the key objectives of national security is to strengthen Nigeria as a whole by advancing her interest; ensuring a more stable entity; curbing crime; eradicating corruption, enhancing growth and development; improving the well-being of its citizens within and outside its shores as well as protecting the autonomy of the country and its assets (deoye, J., 2013). As quoted by Wali (2003), Olusegun Obasanjo stated:

“To strengthen the Federal Republic of Nigeria, to advance her interest and objectives, to contain instability, control crime, eliminate corruption, enhance genuine development progress and growth, improve the welfare and wellbeing and quality of life of every citizen”.

Momoh (Momoh, J. , 2016, January 13) explained that the concept of National Security developed in the United States after the Second World War with a focus on military strength, then later advancing to include non-military aspects of a nation such as economic, cultural and environmental values. Pertinent issues in Nigeria include corruption, terrorism, kidnapping, armed robbery and economic downturn. The #BringBackOurGirls Campaign is an example of a case that garnered international attention when 276 girls in Chibok, Borno state were kidnapped by the terrorist sect, Boko Haram (Plan International. (n.d.),2017) threatening the unity of Nigeria and the safety of its citizens. Hermann, (Hermann, C. F. , 1977) identified various aspects of national security that metamorphose ; *preferred value outcomes*, which are the values that determine the priorities of national stakeholders; *the global environment*, which recognizes that nations are not isolated and are influenced by issues on the international stage; *the local environment*, which determines the severity of threats to a nation, as what affects one nation may not

affect another. For example, natural disasters may be not eminent in other nations than others; the *type of threats* also determine the dangers and responses in each nation; and the *strategies available for averting threats* are ever-evolving with the advent of technology, war drones rather than warships can be used in fighting the enemy, and social media can be used as a tool to spread the word on ethnic and religious tolerance.

It is also important to note that human communication feeds off the issues within its environment. Hence, issues of national security can determine the topical issues in the media and the human relations within a nation at a particular point in time. In 2016, The Nigerian economy slipped into a recession leading to currency devaluation, high inflation rates, weak global oil prices and high foreign exchange rates within the nation – it was a key driver of the type of information being reflected in the local and global media in all beats aside from the financial columns (BBC. , 2016). Even, issues of national security outside a nation can influence the information within another nation, global terrorist attacks influence the way other countries communicate with immigrants and tourists, suddenly the level of security increases and interpersonal relations at the border become more strict and professional, even the relationship between tourists and natives become more guided.

Issues such as ethno-religious conflicts and kidnapping are examples of cases that influence the way humans communicate with each other within and outside a nation. With the prevalent kidnapping of children in schools such as the abduction of over 200 female students from a school in Chibok in 2014, security in educational institutions has become paramount, even religious institutions pay more attention to their security details [13]. This has also affected the tourist potential of the country, as kidnapping is an issue that dissuades foreigners from visiting and interacting directly with locals for the fear of revealing personal information leading to abduction.

Fundamental Elements of National Security

As identified by United Nations, (United Nations. , 2009) and De La Salle University, (n.d.) (Unknown, 2017) and explains various features that explain the core of national security. *Socio-Political Stability* guarantees national security, in every nation there is a need for peace and harmony irrespective of gender, ethnicity or social status. The constitution and the rule of law provide a framework for nation-building. *Territorial Integrity* is also important as every nation needs to be protected against resource exploitation. Another feature is *economic Solidarity and Strength and the free-market economy*, as it is necessary for the growth of the nation, on the basis of social conscience and public interest. *Ecological balance* is also vital to the survival of every nation as it is dependent on the consciousness of preserving the environment regardless of industrial and population growth. Every nation must also possess *cultural cohesiveness* as they are defined by their values and beliefs which built on the foundation of moral and ethical principles and in accordance with our cultural heritage while embodying ethnic, religious and linguistic differences. The *moral-spiritual consensus* is also another defining element of national security and it usually defines the vision which inspires the nation and it is displayed through acts of patriotism, words, national pride and the progress of the nation's goal. Lastly, peaceful relations with other nations is also important even as a nation runs an autonomous path, free from external control and interference.

Threats to National Security

Various issues threaten national security and as a nation they can be internal and external risks that pose a danger to the peace and security of a nation (Unknown, 2017).

Internal Threats: these are the threats that the country face from internal forces and they include; *organized crime* consists of crime syndicates, cyber-crimes, kidnapping, illegal drug trading, and prostitution. *Redistribution of wealth* is also another challenge. In Nigeria, there is a wide gap between the rich and the poor, this has led to increase in unemployment rate inadvertently leading a rise in the crime rate. Nations are also threatened by *economic sabotage* and it involves underground activities like counterfeiting, money laundering, smuggling and the high rate of importation. Despite its huge agricultural potential, Nigeria still imports rice, sugar amongst others (Vanguard., 2017). Also, *Corruption* is an economic virus that drains public resources, directing funds to the ruling class leaving to the populace to suffer and fend for themselves. Nations are also threatened by *natural and environmental disasters* that endanger the nation such as flooding. In recent times, during the rainy season, Nigeria has faced flooding issues in cities such as Lagos leading to loss of lives, restriction of movement and property (Thisday., 2017). Other threats that occur within a nation include *ethno-religious clashes*; religious extremism has become a global menace that threaten national security. The Boko haram religious terrorist sect is one of such that threaten Nigeria's

unity and security. The Biafran agitation which will lead to secessions of some states from the Nigerian nation is also a cause for concern. Lastly, severe *calamities* such as the influx of epidemics like the ebola virus and the meningitis epidemic, as well as calamities caused by humans including the Niger-delta crisis can threaten the survival of the Nigerian nation as well as international trade and tourism.

External Threats: this includes threats from outside the nation that can threaten foreign relations and also affect internal relations within a nation De La Salle University, n.d(Unknown, 2017); Brauch, H. G. , 2011). They include *multilateral disputes*, where tensions arise based on territory encroachment by neighboring countries. For example, the dispute between Cameroun and Nigeria. Also, *illegal border relations* such as illegal migration, influx of foreign terrorists, smuggling of expired drugs and harmful products into the country. Nations can also be threatened by *currency crisis* as this can cause national anxieties, which increase political instability and socio-economic instability and dislocation involving poor people. For example, the forex exchange rate crisis in Nigeria is causing concerns and affecting our foreign relations. *Ethnic, religious and cultural conflicts* which could be border and regional conflicts are also a form of external threats. For example, the xenophobic crisis in South Africa. The Boko Haram ethno-religious conflict has also become a menace to the Nigerian government and its populace (Peterside, Z. B. , 2014).The *proliferation of weapons of mass destruction* is also a cause for concern within nations. There is a wide and increased propagation of nuclear materials and technologies on a global scale and illegal trading of such weapons across borders can cause unhealthy external relations between two countries. These illegal trading has further fueled violence and clashes within the nation; over 30 communal clashes, sectarian dissensions and ethno-religious conflicts claimed a good number of lives and property (Okeke, V. et al., 2014). Other threats include *transnational organized crime*, International Monetary fund estimates that two percent of the world economy is as a result of drug trafficking (De La Salle University, n.d.) (Unknown, 2017), a menace also predominant in Nigeria. Prostitution is another organized crime prevalent across the borders; lastly, the nation and its government is susceptible to threats from global internet hackers which usually leads to cybernetic crime; sensitive information can be revealed through this risk and international trade relations are usually threatened through.

Communication and National Security

The policy makers and executive branches may appear as the only key players in national decision based on their rise to power through force or election; however, the media plays a powerful role in national cohesion and security. Aside from policies and military might often deployed by the government in addressing national security; communication is also vital in this mix, as information is a tool that can be used to protect the nation and achieve security or ruin it. The media is the mediator between a nation's government and its people. Hence, a nation's policies are transmitted and interpreted by the media. It is no surprise that in a democracy there is an emphasis on the freedom of the press to ensure that the media is free from selfish interests.

As indicated in Section 22 of the amended 1999 constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria, the media is entrusted with the power of monitoring governance and upholding fundamental objectives of state policy Ileonikhen, U. A. (2015, December 25).

It has been stated that the Vietnam War was compromised as a result of unfavorable media coverage leading to low levels of public support. In a democratic society, public support is key in the formulation and implementation of national policies (Momoh, J. , 2016, January 13). As a watchdog, the media plays an important role in investigating, alerting and reporting individuals, activities and practices that can endanger the safety of the nation.

The advent of digital technology has also awakened citizen journalism and increased participation of the public in national affairs. Momoh (Momoh, J. , 2016, January 13) quoting Shirky (2011) explains that social media has resulted in communal awareness of national issues and activities by using social networks to spread messages that can secure or destroy a nation as seen in the example of the Syrian nation who restricted its citizens from using Facebook. In 2012, Nigeria experienced the power of the media and citizen journalism when the "Occupy Nigeria" protests began on January 2nd as a response to the fuel subsidy removal by the federal government. Twitter was the main medium used in spreading information nationwide, resulting in many Nigerians participating in the protests and boycott from offices. Nigerians in other countries also showed solidarity by protesting in various locations worldwide (Heinrich Boll Stiftung, 2012, January). Ishaya Bako created an educative documentary called "Fueling Poverty" centered on the Occupy Nigeria protests; however, it was banned by the Nigerian Film and Video Censors Board (NFCVB) who described the content as "highly provocative and likely to encourage public disorder and undermine national security" (Atoke, 2012, May).

The #BringBackOurGirls Campaign is an example of a National Security issue that was spread all over the world through the help of social media with Hillary Clinton, Michelle Obama joining the campaign (Gibson, M. , 2014, May 07) . Traditional media also maintained the tempo through daily countdowns and editorials reminding the government on rescue efforts. As much as the new media has roused citizen journalism, it comes with its dangers including international terrorism and global crime syndicates. In this era of instant access to global information, new communication platforms and media technologies, there is a need to protect the nation by setting the right objectives; developing effective message and choosing appropriate channels to reach out to its citizens and its foreign counterparts.

Foreign media also plays a role in the national security of a nation, what is emphasized and highlighted can influence the perception of the country as a safe and peaceful nation or otherwise. The only way such reports can be countered is if national policies are continuously geared towards portraying the nation in a good light and rather than focusing on all its negatives, local media gives balanced reporting on both good and bad news.

National Security and Communication in the digital age

Technology is changing human patterns and habits globally; enabling the free flow of information within and outside nations as the weight, cost and power required for information-sharing technologies reduce. The complex nature of social networking creates room for multiple possibilities, both negative and positive (Carafano, J., 2009) . Its features create a virtual space for users to share information to the public and connect with othersn (Cooper, K., 2012). In the case of the Ebola and Zika Virus, the social media proved to be an effective tool in health-related crisis that was damaging to the security of a nation (Carafano, J., 2009). In the case of Reality Winner, a contractor with the National Security Agency (NSA) who allegedly leaked classified information on Russia's alleged attempts to influence the 2016 United States presidential elections to an online media outlet (Perez, E. et al., 2017) . Social media is also subject to creating hoaxes that trend and can threaten the security of a nation, as social media platforms afford people the cloak of anonymity and breeds deception. Individuals can spread rumors without being traced, such stories can form the foundation of a national discourse even though it's based on falsehood (Catone, J. , 2009).

National security is affected by social networking in terms of gathering and verifying intelligence/and information; assessing and influencing public opinion. As a medium backed by immediacy, sometimes stories spread without being confirmed. On December 2016, the president of the United States, Donald Trump tweeted "Today there were terror attacks in Turkey, Switzerland and Germany – and it is only getting worse. The civilized world must change thinking!", at this time, the motive for the attacks were yet to be confirmed as terrorist attacks and with a followership of over 35.8 million followers, his assumptions could fuel global security issues (Heer, J., 2016) . It also involves sharing risk communications that can help citizens in emergency or pandemic situations; conducting research; developing policies; planning and execution of programs and conducting information operations (Carafano, J. 2009) all of which can be threatened or strengthened by a series of posts on digital platforms.

Communication and National Security: Tools of implication

The relationship between national security and communication is emphasized through the use of certain tools within the national eco-system, which influence the national dialogue and the security of the nation.

Pictures: As the popular saying goes "a picture is worth a thousand words", the media has used striking images to reinforce or weaken national security. During and after the Second World War, the media employed visuals in constructing public opinion and emphasizing stereotypes and labels. Images on the war front were reprinted in the print and electronic media to create a certain impression of the "enemy"; thereby garnering support for government decisions and polices (Byars, N. B., 1994, April).

Headlines: The media has perfected the skill of using words to set the emotional atmosphere in nations.

When combined with the frequency and positioning of these headlines or articles, the atmosphere is amended to fit the melody of the current issues within the nation even when the government tries to play hide and seek. A good example is the health situation of the Nigerian president, Muhammadu Buhari. As much as the government has tried to keep it under wraps, the media has tried to keep it on the forefront with headlines such as "Buhari's Health Most Searched on Google" (Odunsi, W., 2017, May 18), "Doctors refuse to give Buhari a clean bill of health" [31], "Fresh Anxiety in Aso Rock over Buhari's health" (AAdetayo, O., 2017, April 22).

Also the words from the direct interviews conducted with concerned parties on national issues, help to further elevate or diminish National security. For example, the interview from older people that experienced the Biafran war reveal that most of them will prefer peace rather than the cessation of the Igbos from Nigeria based on their experiences. This information compared to supporters of Nnamdi Kalu helps to provide a balanced view for the public and for decision-makers to be more vigilant in taking decisions and seeking solutions.

Content: The media will always take a side or sell a concept with the stories published and broadcast. The media can reinforce religious, tribal and sectional loyalties, hence leading to cultural insecurity, invasion and exultation of western values over local values. In September 2015, the Nigeria media reported that President Buhari had ordered the closure and relocation of the church at the presidential villa. However, the rumors were debunked by the special adviser of the president, Femi Adesina – further escalation of this matter by the media could have caused religious crisis in the nation [33]. National Security is also enhanced or threatened by other parties in the media such as the film and music industries based on the approach in which they address national issues such as smuggling, drug trafficking, cyber-crimes and natural disasters in their content.

Nwanne (Nwanne, B. U., 2014) analysed the reportage of the Nigerian media during the Ebola crisis in his study *The media reportage of the Ebola crisis: lessons from Nigeria*, through a random sampling of newspapers and magazines devoted to Ebola-related information. His results showed that efforts by the media helped in reducing the widespread of the disease, as state, national and private media adopted effective communication strategies such as translation of information in various languages, consistency to create awareness (Nwanne, B. U., 2014)

Conditions: This includes the time or space given to the news dependent on the medium used. For newspaper, the space and position of a piece of news can influence the public perception of the seriousness or triviality of the news. For television and radio, it can be the amount of time allocated to the information or the time in which the news is broadcasted. Some of the national dailies in Nigeria continued countdown to the rescue of the Chibok girls on their front page to remind readers and citizens of the need to bring the girls back home.

Music and National Security

Music is a tool for communication recognized locally and globally for its power to destroy or create. Nketia (1974) defines music as a fusion of mental processes evident in culture and within the human mind with the power to influence others in various cultural environments (deoye, J. , 2013). Every culture has its own distinct musical attributes. In a Nation like Nigeria with diverse ethnic groups, diversity and cultural heritage is evident in the musical components and attributes of each tribe.

Adeoye ((deoye, J. , 2013) citing Omojola (1994) explains that music plays various roles within a society, which can also be assumed for the nation; communal binding; promoting social values, warning erring members; praising people and recalling historical and national achievements. Music expresses the narrative of cultural diversity and can either hinder or promote understanding or misunderstanding, peace or war, growth or stagnation. As an intangible aspect of culture, it is part of the elements that form the very foundation of a nation (deoye, J. , 2013).

Music has always played a role in history and nation building, as noted by Akpabot (1986), it has been wielded as a means of social control, serving as newspaper headlines coined in song and proverbs and informing people of happenings and its implications in the society (deoye, J. , 2013). The Nigerian National Anthem is a musical piece with lyrics extolling values that promote National Security if adhered to. A line in the first stanza “To serve with heart and might, one nation bound in freedom, peace and unity” emphasizes the need for individual efforts and collective unity. A line in the second stanza “In love and honesty to grow, and living just and true; Great lofty heights attain, to build a nation where peace, and justice reign” emphasizes the need for a patriotic sense of duty for the good of the nation and other citizens.

Cyber Crime and “Yahooze”

Olu Maintain, a Nigerian musician released a single in 2007 titled “Yahooze” with lyrics that glorified and endorsed internet scam in an era where cyber-crime otherwise known as “Yahoo Yahoo” was popularly known in Nigeria; “Yahoo oh oh, Yahoozee// If I hammer, 1st thing na hummer, 1 million dollars, elo lo ma je ti n ba se si Naira (1 million dollars, how much will it be when I convert it to dollars).” Rather than being treated as a case of National Security, he was invited to sing this song at the Under-17 World Champions of 2007 at the country’s capital.

It can be assumed that this song helped to trivialize the consequences of internet frauds and scams, rather than supporting the efforts to curb this fraudulent act (Olupohunda, B. , 2009, July).

Injustice, Corruption and Fela's Music

In the 1960s, where military rule was still prevalent in Nigeria, Fela Anikulapo Kuti was a musician who was inspired by the use of music in the political dissonance in the United States, channeling his musical genius into singing and speaking about issues that troubled the nation's security; corruption in the Nigerian government, police brutality, abuse of human rights amongst other issues (Mariam, A. G., 2011, January 10). In one of his songs, "I.T.T" (International Thief Thief), he criticized the multinational corporation "International Telephone and Telegraph" for cheating Nigerians: "Many foreign companies dey Africa carry all our money go../ Them go dey cause confusion (confusion)/ Cause corruption (corruption)... Them go pick one African man/ A man with low mentality/ Them go give am million naira breads/ To become of high positon here/ Him go bribe some thousand naira bread / To become one useless chief../ Like Obasanjo and Abiola."

Inter-ethnic relations and King Sunny Ade's "The Way Forward"

King Sunny Ade's song, "The Way Forward" was released in 1993 in response to the annulment of the June 12 election, calling all Nigerians for unity regardless of tribe and interests. The song which first featured in Yoruba was recomposed in 2003 in other languages including English to promote the spirit of unity and national solidarity amongst Nigerian citizens. Part of the lyrics of the song goes "Nigeria belongs to us. We must not damage it, because there is no other place we can go, a visiting destination is not like home (Isibor, O., 2015, November) Let us come together and work in unity, carry it, let me carry it." In a country with national security issues bordering on inter-ethnic clashes are prevalent for example, the "Fulani herdsmen" or the "Biafran movement", songs like this help to define the desired narrative in a nation with the message of unity, togetherness and pursuance of a single goal.

Ethical Implications for the Media

Okon (B. Okon, G. , 2013) notes the ethical considerations that journalists face when covering the "national security" beat, stating that there is a need to decide whether to pledge allegiance to the profession or to the audience as they continually struggle with the need to know or the right to know. Associating National Security with highly sensitive information, Okon (B. Okon, G. , 2013) explains that disclosing classified information may pose danger to the nation's security. Should the kidnapping of the Chibok girls have been classified information? Should the press have helped in covering up more information instead of revealing it?

The Wikileaks case is a global example of the ethical dilemma that journalism faces in publishing information that reveals the truth to the citizens of a nation, but damages the nation's security. The question of truth comes to play; minimizing harm; considering the interest of the general public and weighing the source of information and the motive for publishing the information (Muller, D. , 2014, May).

It is important that the media avoids sensationalism in the name of protecting national security and as much as certain information must be promoted in the media, certain details such as location and identity should be protected until information has been fully verified (B. Okon, G. , 2013). The case of the "Fulani herdsmen" in the north-eastern part of Nigeria has reflected the role the media can play in endangering National Security. Poorly researched stories resulted in the differing reports on identities of the Fulani herdsmen, their activities and the locations in which they perpetuated their wreckage and killing of innocent people (Unknown, 2016). However, it is important to note that the government should not use this ethical consciousness as an excuse to trump freedom of expression or right to free speech.

Theoretical Framework

The Systems Theory developed by Ludwig Von Bertalanffy, a biologist originated from life sciences, explaining the inter-relationship between organisms within the eco-system as a whole and unified system, hence nothing exists without other elements in the eco-system. It has been also been applied in other fields including the area of communication to explain the connectedness of various elements within the communication ecosystem which includes social institutions, processes of communication, information systems amongst others (Lai, C. et al., 2017). For this study, the systems theory explains the relationship between the nation, its communication systems and national security, giving a holistic view of the connectedness of all the elements. Therefore, none of these elements are really isolated from each other as they all play a role; national security impacts communication processes and systems just as much as communication in various social institutions within the society can negatively or positively impact the

security of the nation. The systems within a nation also evolve; the media systems within nations are evolving to accommodate citizen journalism since the advent of social media; governments within nations are also finding ways to be present on social media.

Effective Communication for National Security

Effective and strategic communication minimizes the threats to national security, promoting peace as effective communication is aimed at ensuring peace and security amongst all the stakeholders in a nation including citizens, media, other institutions and the government. Whatever is spread in the media usually influences the communication among various institutions in the nation including the family, educational institutions, religious groups and organizations. Therefore, it is important that the government of a nation pays attention to the way they handle information and quell crisis with their communication strategies (Comish, P. et al., 2011)

They include;

- **Identify the target market:** Diverse issues on national security affect various stakeholders in different ways. It is important to identify the audience receiving the message and understand their idiosyncrasies. For example, the messaging for the people in the oil areas in the Niger Delta will differ from the messaging targeted at Niger Delta indigenes in the diaspora.
- **Consistency in messaging:** Information can only be effectively transmitted when the messaging is consistent and directed at the target audience.
- **Competence and credibility:** The government must have efficient spokespeople that can effectively transmit information to various bodies and the populace to bridge the communication gap within a nation. These people or media whether on social media or in the press must be credible personalities that can be trusted in the local and global sphere as the information is only as good as the messenger.
- **Constant engagement of stakeholders:** Communication is incomplete without feedback; every nation must take into cognizance all its stakeholders and streamline its messaging to fit each category. Monologues are rarely effective; rather there should be an exchange of information that results into reaction and suggestions that aid peace and security within and outside nations.
- **Involvement and participation of citizens:** Feedback and interaction is also as important as passing information. Digital media has proved effective in sourcing from feedback from citizens of all age groups, gender, status, educational levels and religious beliefs. It acts as a means of measurement and evaluation, testing the effectiveness of the information transmitted within groups or the media.

Recommendations

To foster national development and security, the followings are recommended;

- The media must understand the important role they play towards national security and its policies and actions should be geared towards its success.
- National leaders must understand that communication plays a vital role in national security, hence they must work together with the the media on tactics that encourage development communication strategies that safeguard the nation.
- The media and other social institutions within the nation also have a role in educating citizens on the impact of their communications on social media platforms to the safety of the nation.

Conclusion

The security of any nation can be enhanced or truncated by communication channels: interpersonal relations, the traditional media, social media as well as others including music. Strategic communication enables and supports other aspects of national security in terms of policy planning and implementation. With the evolving communication patterns and technology such as social media, the government in conjunction with the traditional media also needs to evolve and adopt strategies that strengthen and safeguard the nation on both online and offline platforms without trumping individual liberties and privacy. Nigeria must realize the efficacy of communication as a tool in solving internal and external threats to national security and use it to its advantage in ensuring peace and stability within its borders and in its interaction with foreign counterparts.

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