Making a Case for Community Radio in Nigeria

Olusegun W. Ojomo, PhD
Department of Mass Communication
Babcock University
Ilishan-Remo, Ogun State
Nigeria

Wasiu Tejuoso
Department of Mass Communication
Moshood Abiola Polytechnic
Abeokuta

Awofadeju Peter Olayinka
Department of Mass Communication
Oduduwa University, Osun State
Nigeria

Ilesanmi Taiwo Oluwashola
Orange 95.4FM, Ondo state
Nigeria

Abstract

Community radio has assumed a monumental growth in the last two decades in several nations of the world. This development is largely due to its potential to democratize and provide a horizontal form of communication, thus, contributing more meaningfully to development efforts than the other forms of broadcasting. Despite these efforts, it is very disheartening to note the non-existence of a single community radio in Nigeria, while there are over a thousand community radios across Africa. Thus, the country's political aspirations for inclusive participation of the majority and contextualization of development remained elusive due to non-democratization of access and use of information for freedom of expression. This imperative to positively and qualitatively hasten progress has eluded the citizenry due to unfavourable policies, legal and regulatory frameworks. This paper is a clarion call for immediate promotion and operation of community radio in Nigeria, from legal provision in holistic practice in consonance with the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, The African Charter on Broadcasting and the Windhoek Declaration to establish, maintain and foster independent, pluralistic and free press; all of which are essential to guaranteeing the fundamental human rights of Nigerians.

Keywords: Community, community radio, pluralism, participatory media, Nigeria

Introduction

Nigeria has been going through a process of democratization with efforts to strengthen institutional structures that promote the system and firmly place the country among the league of democratic states in the world for the past decade. Democracy is a function of many factors like a guarantee of human rights and the fundamental freedoms, expanded choices for the citizens and independent institutional capacity, among others. These are the minimum requirements that will guarantee socio-political and economic development and sustainability (Pate 2006, 2003). Nigeria is a federating nation, comprising 36 states and one federal capital. It operates a three-arm and tier of governments—the executive, legislature and the judiciary as well as the federal, state and local governments. An elected president is the head of the executive arm while each of the 36 states, is equally headed by a democratically elected governor.

In a country like Nigeria, with over 163 million people (NBS 2010), over 250 ethnic groups speaking 450 dialects, spread across 774 local government areas within 923,768sq.km expansive land mass, sub-divided into six geopolitical zones; the success of democracy in such a diversified entity, will undoubtedly depend on the expressive capacity in the people, both vertically and horizontally because freedom of information and of expression are the live wires of the democratic process. These include the rights to communicate and the rights to access means of communication that enable citizens to utilize information within the bounds of democratic norms (Pate 2012). The history of broadcasting, specifically radio, in Nigeria dates back to 1932 when the colonial administration established a re-broadcast station of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) in Lagos , with the primary objective of keeping the expatriates abreast of events in Britain (Akingbulu & Bussiek 2010: 11; Ojebode & Akingbulu 2009: 204). The colonial administration's radio broadcast was more of a re-diffusion of content on issues and events in Britain. Olorunnisola (1997 in Ojebode and Akingbulu 2009: 205) notes that: the content of the programs had no direct relevance to the basic needs and lifestyles of the indigenous audiences, because the re-broadcasts were meant to fulfil the listening needs of the colonial masters" (Mabogunje 1991: 2).

The redifussion system later in 1952 transformed into the Nigerian Broadcasting Service (NBS) and later renamed in 1956 as the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC). The enactment of a new colonial constitution in 1954 led to the emergence of regional broadcast stations. The then regional governments; first, the West in 1959, then East in 1960 and lastly, North in 1962, established regional broadcast stations (television and radio), to champion the course of their regions (Akingbulu & Bussiek 2010: 11). Thereafter, the federal government also set up a television station in 1962. Later, the NBC began to expand in 1967 and built a station in each state. This was reversed by a policy change in the 1970s, and government ordered the transfer of most NBC stations in the states, except for those in Lagos, Ibadan and Enugu, and added the Kaduna station of the Broadcasting Corporation of Northern Nigeria. The NBC later became the Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria (FRCN) to control all federal radio stations. The Nigeria Television Authority (NTA), a new body was formed, to centralize all federal and state television stations in the 1970s. The broadcast media landscape remained under government control until the promulgation of Decree 38 of 1992 by the military regime of Gen. Ibrahim Babangida, which liberalized the sector and allowed for the establishment of private commercial broadcasting, even "though the 1979 Constitution of the Federal Republic of Nigeria (Section 36, 2) made express provision for the establishment of private radio stations, successive governments refused to put this provision into effect" Ojebode & Akingbulu 2009: 206).

The country's return to democracy in 1999 and the successive democratic transitions have opened up the space for freedom of expression. It is in pursuance of this objective to comprehensively democratize the access and use of information to extend the boundaries of freedom of expression in the country that the process for more liberalization of the airwaves was initiated in 2003. The aim of the process was to expand the existing plurality in the broadcasting landscape in the country, with the hope that it incorporates community broadcasting to complete the liberalization and opening up of the airwaves as enshrined in the National Broadcasting Law. Thus, the major reason for the struggle to actualize community broadcasting in Nigeria is mainly to further democratize access to information, provide a voice for the voiceless, increase participation in the affairs of state and open up the rural areas for faster development. Despite these efforts, it is very disheartening to note the non-existence of a single community radio in Nigeria, while there are over a thousand community radios in Africa (www.imesoimeso.org). Akingbulu (2007) further corroborated this assertion when he opined that, in the whole of West Africa, Nigeria was the only country without community radio, whereas in less endowed countries like Niger, there exist 98 community radio stations as at 2006; Mali has 88; Ghana 15; Senegal 14 and Burkina Faso 33, among others. And some of them like Ghana have more than a decade's experience of community radio broadcasting (Akingbulu 2007; Diedong & Naaikuur 2012: 124-126).

Community Radio Broadcasting

Community broadcasting is a grassroots focused system of public communication which has become popular in many countries of the world especially Europe, North America and Latin America. Interestingly, the African Charter on Broadcasting recognises and advocates for a three tier radio regime in individual African countries: public service, commercial/private and community.

Pate and Abubakar (2013:3) quoting Fraser and Estrada (2001: 3) observe: Public service broadcasting is generally conducted by a statutory entity, usually but not necessarily state-supported or state-owned corporation with broadcasting policies and programming often controlled by a public body, such as a council or a legally constituted authority… and community broadcasting is that non-profit service that is owned and managed by a particular community, usually through a trust, foundation, or association. Its aim is to serve and benefit that community; relying on the resources of the community. A 'community' in communication parlance is understood within spatial and social contexts (Alumuku, 2006; Ayedum-Aluma & Olatubosun, 2011). In its spatial context, community is viewed relative to geographical territory or a particular cultural or political entity. In the social context, it is defined in terms of shared interests, tastes, and values as well as demographic and psychographic factors. It must be emphasized that people form community, not simply by living in proximity and having functional 'utilitarian' contacts with each other, but because they truly communicate with each other and create common symbols and meanings together. Therefore, the community for community radio is defined along these two contexts. Thus, according to Ayedum-Aluma and Olatubosun (2011:188), the community of community radio "may refer to a group having a common language, a common history, a common lifestyle, as well as a common residence or locality." This also means that the community is not just a local entity, but could also be a global entity, reinforced by Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs). From a simplistic perspective, community radio is the radio station established and operated by the people of a specific community to advance, promote and protect the community's common interest and objectives. In a broader sense, the African Charter on Broadcasting defines community radio as the "broadcasting which is for, by and about the community, whose ownership and management is representative of the community, which pursues a social development agenda, and which is non-profit" (portal.unesco.org).

Also, Opubor (2006) explains the term community radio as: When radio fosters the participation of citizens and defends their interests; when it reflects the tastes of the majority and makes good humour and hope its main purpose; when it truly informs; when it helps resolve the thousand of one problems of daily life; when all ideas are debated in its programmes and all opinions are respected; when cultural diversity is stimulated over commercial homogeneity; when women are main players in communication and not simply a petty voice or publicity gimmick; when no type of dictatorship is tolerated, not even the musical dictatorship of the big recording studios; when everyone 's words fly without discrimination or censorship, that is community radio. On the basis of the foregoing, Ayedum-Aluma et al (2011:188) on their own define community radio as "an activity owned and managed by a group whose common and defining property may be geographical, demographic, religious, political or even historical." One major shortcoming of this definition lies in its non-universality especially in countries like Nigeria considering the ethno-religious and political tensions that usually arise to threaten peace and security. Hence, a definition that is silent on those tension areas would be a better one for Nigeria. This paper therefore, views community radio as; a broadcast organization established, owned , and operated by a community (which could be spatial or social) on a non-profit basis to provide participatory and horizontal communication as a catalyst for the overall development of the community.

Features and Roles of Community Radio

Essentially, the community radio is an extension of the lives and aspirations of the community. The community radio is by name, definition, orientation, content and philosophy grassroots based. It cannot be anything but community oriented and people-centred. The coverage is usually limited serving a small community and catering for their special needs and interests (Oso, 2003:159). According to a UNESCO study, "Although news contents vary, emphasis is placed on local news and problems affecting the community and its inhabitants" (1971, p.11). The community radio, just like the community newspaper is an instrument of dialogue among the local people and between them and the outside world particularly the political authority. The community radio therefore, should function as a two-way communication channel providing a means through which the community could express itself, both within and to the outside world. As Muthoni Wanyeki has notes, the community media have a dual role; "that of a mirror (reflecting the community back at itself) and that of a window (allowing the outside world to look in at its experience" (Wanyeki, 2000, p. 30). From the above according to Oso (2003:160), the key issues about the role of the community media in national development revolve around the concepts of access, participation, decentralization and democracy. It is an instrument of horizontal communication. These key concepts should inform the organization and operation of the community media. Its need and importance must also be seen within this perspective.

As Oso (2001:23) earlier noted, the corporate, urban-based media cannot serve the communication and information needs of the local populace. Their (i.e the commercial media) interests, philosophy, organization, ownership and control structure, working and professional values are opposed to the socio-cultural structure and political and economic interest of the local people. It is very evident that while the so-called national, commercial and elitist media are more or less instruments of elite social control, the community media are tools of liberation, democracy and local self-assertion and self-determination. By its nature the community media, of which the community radio is an offshoot, are participatory. They should be owned, managed and operated by the community people themselves. Community participation is thus seen as both a means to an end and an end in itself. The process of community radio programming, production, management and ownership are in themselves empowering, imbuing critical analytic skills and confidence about the interpretations reached and solutions found. The medium therefore, must enable, enhances and sustain community participation, (Wanyeki, op. cit. p.31). Community participation will also ensure that the community radio stations function as appendages of the community; a reflection of what Oso (2003) refers to as 'a voice of the community and not for the community'. The overriding import of community participation is underscored in the view of Masilela who sees no difference between alternative media and community media. According to him, Alternative media are distinguished by their ownership and management structures, their financing, their regulation, their programming and their policy stances on issues of access and participation. In terms of their ownership and management, alternative media are community-owned and managed through duly elected representatives or direct and voluntary community participation. In terms of their programming, alternative media carry community-oriented programming produced by community members for community members. In terms of their policy stances on issues of access and participation, alternative media are highly responsive to highly targeted audiences and use interactive methods as much as possible, (quoted in Oso, p.161).

The characteristics of community radio thus, include access and participation, volunteerism, independence, localism**,** and diversity. These characteristics are necessary for the achievement of the goals of the radio, which pivot around facilitating human development anchored on freedom, which in contemporary societies is viewed as a springboard for sustainable development. While the philosophy of national broadcasting is promoting national integration and loyalty to the centre (Oso, 2002:153), that of community radio is giving the people a voice. In community radio, the community and its members realize they have something to offer, and consequently, they begin to look for that something from within their own environment. These features clearly show that community radio is built on the understanding of the community and its characteristics. In the words of Opubor (2006), the purpose of community radio is to build community life. Building a community is more than building an individual or a few families. It is built on what holds people together, across different families, religions, sexes, economic situations and political persuasions.

Why Community Radio?

The question of who fills the gap as the source of regular information about the immediate environment for the people is critical in a discourse of this nature. Obviously, all available evidences point to the fact that the answer lies in the community radio. Radio remains the most pervasive media in Nigeria and the most patronized means of mass communication. A figure quoted by Akingbulu and Bussiek (2010: 10) and credited to the National Bureau of Statistics (NBS) reveal that 88 percent of Nigerian households have access to radio with 72.9 percent ownership while a much recent survey by the NBS showed that 80 percent of Nigerians have access to radio, with at least a radio set or two in every household (NAN Report, Dec 19, 2011). In practice, those that do not have personal radio sets, listen from those owned by friends, colleagues or others. Indeed, Nigerians are great radio listeners. However, as observed by Pate and Abubakar (2013:7) the current structure of radio station ownership, operations and distribution in the country is still undemocratic and none participatory to reflect the ongoing reforms, decentralization and democratization in the country. As observed, apart from the fact that the sector is heavily dominated by governments and some commercial interests, most radio stations are concentrated in the urban areas focusing mainly on the elites and their affairs. Hence most radio stations are located in urban and metropolitan areas as Lagos, Abuja, Kano, Kaduna, Enugu and Port Harcourt cities. In Nigeria's commercial capital city of Lagos alone, in the South West, there are six commercial radio stations while in Abuja, the nation's capital, in the North Central, there are eight and Kano has six (See www.nbc.gov.ng).

Consequently, information flow is one way and does not sustain developmental efforts of different communities existing in the country. The only observable traces of community content exist in some programmes produced about community development and community initiatives; for example "Kam Kwuo" of BCA Radio, Abia State and "Nzuko Ndi Igbo" of NTA, Aba, Abia State. These community based programmes are produced by the broadcasters without input from the concerned communities. This still makes it impossible for the existence of bottom-to-top communication model. Therefore, people obviously depend on the alternative media for information concerning them but are not accorded the opportunity to make inputs towards active participation in the creation of media content. This indicates that the poor, the weak and the disadvantaged especially those who reside in the remote areas are in most cases marginalized and at best treated as passive stakeholders. In fact, there are parts of the country that are hardly covered by local broadcast signals. Hence, the need to further democratise and decentralise the broadcast system by accommodating community radio to enlarge the space for many more languages and interest groups to participate (Pate 2012). It is on this premise that community radio broadcasting is considered inevitable especially, now that other countries that embraced it have discovered the limitless benefits.

Existing Socio-Cultural and Legal Framework for Community Radio in Nigeria

Coordinated efforts to initiate community radio broadcasting in Nigeria started in November 2003 with the inauguration of the Steering Committee on the Initiative for Building of Community Radio. Members of the committee were drawn from diverse backgrounds across the six geopolitical zones, as well as stakeholders from the international community. There were representatives from the media and civil society, academia, women's groups, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) experts, government officials and the World Bank among others. The Committee, desirable of pluralistic sources of information in Nigeria's emerging democracy, especially at the community level, sought the review of existing legal frameworks for broadcasting to provide licensing for and establishment of community radios by adopting a road map of engagement and inclusiveness at the zonal, national and international levels to:

• Create awareness and enlightenment through workshops and conferences in all the geopolitical zones.
• Embark on advocacy campaigns for decision makers in the legislative and executive arms of the Nigerian government and other stakeholders for change in government policy.
• Research and publications to document the process and struggle.
• Local and international advocacy tours.

A public consultative mechanism was adopted when the Federal Government of Nigeria in 2006, through the Minister of information, constituted a 17-member multi-sectoral committee to draft a policy to guide government on the establishment of community radio stations. The committee headed by the distinguished late Professor of mass communication, Alfred Opubor submitted a draft document to establish guidelines governing the licensing regime of community radio stations in December 2006. The then Minister, Mr. Frank Nweke, Jnr acknowledged radio as an important tool in addressing critical issues like poverty alleviation, education, health care, peace building and other aspects of development; but expressed worry that very few people participated in the dissemination of information with the majority simply acting as passive receivers and assured that the government would initiate the process. The Minister's comments corroborate the purpose of community broadcasting "as a key agent of democratisation for socio-cultural, educational, and economic development" (NBC 2012: 97). However, lack of continuity and government bureaucracy became a notable factor that stalled progress despite several advocacy visits to lobby governments at federal and state levels, NBC officials and media campaigns to ensure the subject remained in the public domain and debates. There were also submissions of memorandum to government committees on the Review of the National Mass Communication Policy and that for drafting the Community Radio Policy. This eventually led to Nigerian tertiary education curriculum reforms and community radio courses were introduced and taught to equip communication and journalism students with the prerequisite skills for participation in community broadcasting operations. Thus, for several years, there were contestations on community radio in the context of existing broadcast governance regime in Nigeria. The First, second, third and fourth editions of the National Broadcasting Commission (NBC) Code made no explicit provisions on the operations of community radio broadcasting in the country. Bidding for broadcasting license gave community radio stations little chance to compete with wealthy commercial media organisations because radio licenses, as stipulated in the Code, were only to emanate from registered companies whose majority shares were held by Nigerians.

Thus, the licenses could only be obtained by limited liability companies and not organisations registered under trusteeship such as Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and Community-Based Organisations (CBOs), who are not-for-profit organisations. This automatically foreclosed any room for the community radio establishment and flourishing. Yet, these were community advocacy groups that champion the visions and aspirations of various communities. Thus, confirming Adeyileka (2012, p.1) submission that, among all the African union members, Nigeria is the only country, that is yet to start the implementation of community radio concept and the reason for this is not far-fetched. The National broadcasting commission (NBC), which is the regulatory body.... had no guidelines for community radio, despite its avowed commitment, to that effect, thus making it impossible for the people at the grassroots to express themselves.

Benefits of Community Radio

According to Buckley, (2008:1), "Community broadcasters are indeed artisans or craftspeople, creating images with sounds, not designing media to a formula driven by marketing calculation or propagandistic intent, but drawing on a passion for the medium and a belief that community broadcast can make a difference in people's lives and livelihoods." It emphasizes the fact that community broadcasting is a key agent of democratization for social, cultural and economic development (Oguka, 2012). One of the strong arguments in support of the establishment of community broadcasting in Nigeria lies in its power not only to drive grassroots' development; but also its role for stimulating national cohesion and harmonious living in Nigeria (Garba, 2011). The relevance of community broadcasting has been stressed by the ways development-motivated countries of the world embraced community radio broadcasting since 2005. Records show (Garba 2011) the population of community radio in different countries as at 2011 as follows: USA: 200; Australia: 116; India: 103; Canada: 95; Hungary: 60; UK: 200; Mali: 100; South Africa: 28; and Namibia: 26. These figures, surely, would have increased by now. The increase perhaps would have been sustained by the belief that community broadcasting instills confidence and self-expression among the people. Going by the meaning of community: a group of people living in a particular place for a common life coordinated by common interest (Smith, 2002); good broadcast stations, if well managed, will help to ease tension by preaching love, security consciousness, good neighborliness, co-operation and peaceful co-existence. This is so because the voice of the community leaders is more authentic and trustworthy than the distant voice of government officials (Garba 2011).

Nigeria as a nation combines plurality in different aspects—over 250 ethnic groups; multiple religious affiliations of Christianity, Islam and traditional African religion; diverse linguistic variations with over 450 dialects, cultural diversities, amongst others. Naturally, every ethnic group would prefer to have access to the radio and broadcast in its language or dialect. But such needs cannot be realised on existing media channels because of limited capacities. In many cases, English and some few major languages dominate the airwaves with the noticeable exclusion of smaller groups, thus, sometimes promoting alienation and acrimony among communities. Programmes are disproportionately tilted in favour of the urban areas and elite tastes, just as the commercialisation in the system helps to restrict access for the majority of the people. Hence, the need to further democratise and decentralise the broadcast system by accommodating community radio to enlarge the space for many more languages and interests groups to participate (Pate 2012). Community radio can be used to improve awareness and knowledge of solutions to community development problems within various sectors including culture, rural development, education, hygiene and sanitation, agriculture and local governance among people living in the rural community in particular. In a study on Simli, a community radio in Dalun, Northern region of Ghana, Seidu et al. (2011) contended that community radio enhances increased enrolment in school through the School for Life (SfL) literacy programmes being broadcast on the station; reduced out-migration by young girls due to the station's enlightenment and an increased use of fertilizers by farmers (Simli Radio, 2010). This finding, particularly the adoption of good and modern agricultural practices is in agreement with the conclusion by Chapman et al. (2003) that rural radio is effective in improving the sharing of agricultural information by remote rural farming communities. Seidu et al. further established that, there has also been increased awareness on hygiene and sanitation issues in the sampled communities as well as enhanced social cohesion, manifesting itself in several ways including friendship and conflict reduction. More so, listeners have been able to broaden their horizon of knowledge through the opportunity provided to them by the radio in terms of broadcasting international news. Community radio (CR) also serves as an important link between duty bearers and rights holders and as such, capable of effectively promoting the other sectors of the community.

Affirming the effectiveness of community radio in this regard, Seidu et al. remarked: through its (Simli Radio) strategy of communal listenership, more than 100 communities have formed listeners clubs across the two administrative districts in the Northern Region. Listeners' clubs have a major role in the design and running of programmes. They listen and are able to track programmes and make inputs as to what should be encouraged or changed. This promotes ownership and relevance of programmes to the people. Listeners identify themselves with the programmes and listeners clubs are a valid indicator of radio reception. (Simli Radio, 2010) These findings about Simli Radio support the assertion of Sterling et al. (2007) that, community radio provides listeners with the voice with which to respond to programming and to create programming content. According to them, Simli Radio has considerable impact on listeners in the communities. The programmes are popular and the listeners are inspired to improve upon their family's daily life. Especially the recordings from the communities and the direct access listeners have to the radio were found to catch the listeners' priorities. Most people found that community radio programmes concerned their lives more than other radio programmes, due to the fact that they could identify well with the presenters and the programmes made directly in the communities. Community radio wields a lot of influence. It informs the people about what is happening in all the sectors of their community. It would be very difficult to know what is going on without the radio. The community radio serves as the foundation and it is marketing the other sectors.

The activities of community radio could give further meaning to decentralization and local governance where an appropriate medium is created to facilitate an interface between duty bearers and rights holders. The opportunities for interactive sessions provided by the community radio station for local authorities to explain government policies and programmes would be a clear indication of the promotion of accountability and transparency. The people get the opportunity to question certain actions and commissions of the authorities perhaps, through the "listeners' comments" sessions, a means of collating feedback from listeners. Inherent in this assumption is that, the representatives and other leaders in those communities are now put on their toes because of radio broadcasting. Supportive of this function, Seidu et al. (2011) quoting Asheitu in response to a question on how duty bearers relate with the masses explained as follows: We can now talk to our Members of Parliament (MPs) through the radio. We now know that the MPs are there for development; they can no more cheat and have to bring development to our communities. Hitherto, they went to Accra and would not remember we voted them but now Simli Radio calls on them and bring them closer". The traditional decision-making process at the family level in most societies has limited room for female voices. This stereotypism, has greatly hindered women participation in decision making process. As the incomes of women engaged in Income Generating Activities (IGA) may have been enhanced with the presumed help of the promotional activities of community radios, there is high tendency for an increased acceptance of women's views in matters that affect not only the family but the community as well. This is evident in Seidu et al. observations in their study that, "the daily programmes aired on Simli Radio have helped to 'soften' the grounds for female voices to be heard in and across the community on some topical issues that affect the family and community generally."

As alternative to the urban-based elite–oriented commercial stations, the activities of community radio will in no small measure promote the economic activities of its clients in and around the catchment areas. It would promote Small and Medium Enterprise (SMEs) development. This, the station would achieve through provision of a forum for SMEs to reach out to the larger population by undertaking advertisements at very affordable fees compared to what is obtainable in the commercial media. The station, with a business promotion segment - a time reserved for general business advertisements and promotional activities for SMEs and artisans to explain their products and services, will in no small measure contribute to increased sales and revenue which later translate into the overall improved living condition. As alternative to the elite-oriented corporate radio stations, Oso pointed that the community radio is often associated with the poor, disposed and voiceless people in both the urban and rural areas. In this context, he contended that community radio is expected to present an alternative social, economic and political agenda to the existing status quo. Stemming from this is the fact that the principal purpose of a community radio is development, development conceived not just in terms of economic (qualitative) indices but more in terms of justice, equity, increased freedom of expression, opportunities for education, better access to social resources, political empowerment and participation i.e qualitative aspects of development. Moreover, while the established urban radio are profit making ventures, the community radio system is run on the philosophy of public service or what is known as civic or public journalism.

It is to serve and advance the interest of its community, the goal being "to provide media consumers the news and information they need to be able to make decisions in a self-governing society, to be active not only in building news coverage but also in building their communities," (Pew Centre, 1997, quoted in Oso, 2003, p.61). Though community radio has to be concerned with viability and sustainability, it is not a commercial profit making venture. It operates within what Rafael (2000) calls the logic of socio-cultural profitability as distinguished from the logic of economic profitability of the commercial radio, and a political profitability of the state owned radio stations. The socio-cultural logic aims at improving "community capital that money cannot buy… take on the role as effective facilitators of social demonstration… stir up materials and symbolic production more in line with the needs of the community" (Brunetti, 2000, quoted in Oso, p.35). Borrowing from Howley's opinion on the import of community radio, he notes; Community radio at once is a response to the encroachment of the global upon the local as well as an assertion of local cultural identities and socio-political autonomy in light of these global forces (Howley, 2002). The community radio stations therefore, become instrumental in identity establishment and re-establishment of indigenous communities who are in the flux of social and political transitioning like Nigeria.

Conclusion

It may be necessary to state here that the absence of community radio broadcasting stations in Nigeria is a serious disadvantage to the nation's overall development aspirations. With the high rate of trained but unemployed manpower in Nigeria, an initiative to promote community radio could help to create employment opportunities while promoting grassroots development. The initiative could emerge from communities, the organized private sector, the government, the non-governmental organisations or other stakeholders, but ultimately, it is the vision, hard work and cooperation of the communities that will help community radio to take its firm root. If nations like India, Zambia and others can take the advantage of community radio to democratize communication at grassroots level and promote development thereby, with Nigeria's mammoth population, expansive land and the quest to develop and fully democratize, community broadcasting can be an important resource to positively and qualitatively expedite progress.

References

Akingbulu, A & Bussiek, H. (2010). Public Broadcasting in Africa Series: Nigeria. Johannesburg: Open Society Initiative for Southern Africa.

Akingbulu, A., (ed.) (2007). Building community radio in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges. Lagos: Imeso and PIWA.

Akingbulu, A. and Menkiti, M. (2012). "Building Community Radio in Nigeria: How Far?

Alumuku, P.T. (2006). Community radio for development: The world and Africa. Nairobi: Paulines Publications Africa.

Ayedum-Aluma, V., & Olatubosun, W. (2011). Institutionalizing Community Radio in Nigeria: Some undercurrents". in Oso, L., Soola, D., & U. Pate (Eds.), Media, governance and development: Issues and trends. A Festschrift for Prof. Idowu Akanbi Sobowale (pp. 187-196). Lagos: Primus Prints and Communication.

Buckley, S. (2008). Community broadcasting: Good practice in policy, law and regulation. Paper prepared for UNESCO for World Press Freedom Day 2008. Retrieved 24/04/2015 from http://www.unesco.org/new/fileadmi

Garba, K.A. (2011). Community Radio a Tool for National Development. Retrieved 03/05/2015 from http://www.ngrgaurdiannews.com/index.php?option=com...

Howley, K. (2002). Communication, Culture and Community: Towards a Cultural Analysis of Community Media. The Qualitative Report, 7(3), 1-24. Retrieved from http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR7-3/howley.html

Jude, T.K, Bernard B.M, Fabian, I.A & John, A.O (2013). "Community Radio and Nigeria's National Security Exigencies: Fears and Promises"; New Media and Mass Communication, Vol.17

Ogu , S.E (2003). "Community Radio: Its Philosophy, Organisation and Management" in Oso, L (ed.) Community Media: Voices of the Oppressed, Abeokuta, Jedidiah Publishers.

Opubor, A. (2006). Can radio build communities? in building community radio in Nigeria: Issues and Challenges, Akingbulu, Akin (ed.); Lagos: Imeso and PIWA.

Oguka, C. (2012). Community Broadcast Licences Issuance begins in April. Retrieved 21/04/2015 from http://digicastmagazine.com.

Oso, L. (ed.) (2001). Communication and Development: A Reader, Abeokuta, Jedidiah Publishers.

Oso, L. (ed.) (2003). Community Media: Voices of the Oppressed, Abeokuta, Jedidiah Publishers.

Pate, U. and Abubakar, A. (2013). "The Struggle for Community Broadcasting in Nigeria", Malaysian Journal of Media Studies, Vol.15, pg 1-19.

Seidu, A., Alhassan, A. and Abdulai, A. (2011). "The Role of Community Radio in

Livelihood Improvement: The Case of Simli Radio" in Field Actions Science Report; Vol. 5

Wanyeki, L.M. (2000). "The Development of Community Media in East Southern Africa", in Baofo, S.T. Kwame (ed.) Promoting Community Media in Africa, Paris, UNESCO, 2000.