

## Pictorial Communication in Digital Era: Challenges and Prospects

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### Abstract

The paper appraised the challenges and prospects of pictorial communication in digital era with aim of fostering better utility of newsy pictures. Pictures provide a value-chain in the emerging mass communication process such that it is the major determinant of the niche names for different mass cum social media outlets springing up here and there. That is to say that it strengthens value-chain in the mass communication process because of its strategic utility nature. In this discourse, an attempt is made to unravel how pictorial (media) communication can be better appreciated and utilized in this era of multimedia. Photos, videos, Graphics and Films are strong mass communication tools and great care must be taken on how to make greater good use of them and as well preserve our culture and democracy.

**Keywords:** Pictorial Communication; Pictures; Challenges; Prospects

### Introduction

#### An overview of the historical development

The history of visual communication can be dated back to time immemorial. As Philip Geraci rightly said, "*Communication began with pictures*" Going by this statement, it can be said that the history of visual (pictorial) communication predates that of verbal form of communication.

One can buttress the stand the above assertion has taken by reflection on the biblical record of God's creation exercise. That God created man in His own image and His likeness suffice it to say that visual means of communication is divine-ordained- the prime means of communication that came into being. The paraphrases "*God created ---, let there be ---*" as used in biblical record symbolizes that God is an artist as well as a communicator. On the other hand, the same paraphrases suggest that God's exercise may have been achieved through visual mechanism. That, He appreciated His creatures after the creation exercise indicated that God visualizes, it was not recorded that God that God created which give credence to the assertion that communication originated through visual elements.

Also, another important developmental stage in the evolution of pictorial communication is the early man's scrawl in the caves which they use to represent things around them, the ancient Egyptian and Mesopotamian carvings, paintings and murals on the walls which were used in advertising their wares. These are regarded by advertising scholars as the earliest form of advertising as these ancient civilizations attracted customers through these visual means. Moreover, Rothstein stated that even the Japanese and Chinese alphabets of today are traced to the combination and manipulation of the mental images emanating from picture concepts.

Coming to Nigeria, the history of visual (pictorial) communication is traced to pre-colonial era. The popular Benin (Court arts), the paintings, carvings and crafts of Nri and Arochukwu symbolize the evolution of pictorial means of communication in Nigeria.

The ball was clearly set rolling when "*Iwe-Irohin*" came into being in 1859. The faint, still and less communicative images (maps, fist, head, palm, hand, etc.) as seen in the pages of "*Iwe-Irohin*" were in all pictorial mode of communication. It showed that our people were aware of the role of pictorial elements in effective mass communication delivery process.

With the advent of the electronic media communication in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, pictorial communication has risen to be the fastest and clearest means of communication in Nigeria where majority of the populace are relatively illiterates or else less educated.

The use of powerful images shot for television programme, the colourful pictures and even cartoons on our newspaper pages as perceived in the past four decades are evidence of the fact that pictorial means of communication has conic to be far reaching in its effectiveness and pervasiveness. Today, pictorial elements such as motion/still pictures of humans, animals, plants and other objects serve as linkage among all the emerging mass media of communication. It is a clear notion that with exception of radio and telephone (and even some mobile phone brands) in which pictures can be mentally perceived, virtually, every other forms of mass media be it electronic media, print media, or social network media involves pictorial elements in course of disseminating messages to the target audiences. Millions of youths and adults alike arc able to make good use of the communication opportunities modern technology has offered them effectively because pictures (visual images) are involved wholly and deeply. Think of the realities created in people's mind every minute by the presence of pictorial elements in the pages of our newspapers, magazines and books or that of motion pictures (video or live) on the screens of our satellites/cable and direct-telecast transmissions and even from the net. The evolving mass communication process is such that pictorial elements as its 'hybridizing device' continue to re-shape and add values to the convergence of the internet and other forms of mass media of communication. Looking at the challenges and prospects of pictorial media in modem mass communication process is like trying to appreciate the role of picture-related elements in the emerging mass communication process where rules of consumption may have changed, but mode of consumption remains all time at a high altitude.

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That is to say that one is examining the negative effects/challenges and positive effects/expectations as an indispensable facilitator of effective mass communication process contemporarily.

### Conceptual clarification

The writing of a good picture based story is predicated on having a good picture, without this, the exercise may not be feasible, or where it is the story may not be properly told since a blurred picture does not present a worthwhile image from which a good story can be made out [1]. By the above assertion pictorial communicator's arc encouraged to always go for good pictures through use of quality cameras and good renditions. In this discourse, pictorial communication refers to pictorial means of communication such as still image pictures (photographs), motion pictures (live transmissions, films and videos), and other picture-oriented graphics. Pictures refer to photo and other graphics generated through camera lens/censor challenges refer to pitfalls or shortcomings arising from digital pictures processes.

Prospect refers to possibility and expectations so as to make greater good use of digital pictures in mass communication process.

### Theoretical Framework

Maxwell McCombs and Donald Shaw wrote in 1972: *"In choosing and displaying news, editors, newsroom staff, and broadcasters play an important part in shaping political reality. Readers learn not only about a given issue, but how much importance to attach to that issue from the amount of information in a news story and its position. The mass media may well determine the important issue-that is the media may set the 'agenda' of the campaign."* [2].

McCombs and Shaw's proposition on Agenda Setting Theory was based on their study of 1968 USA election-the media's role.

Indeed, Agenda Setting Theory of the Press seems to be the most suitable for this discourse. This is because one is not telling people 'What to think' as it concerns the pictorial elements and the emerging mass communication process but will stress more on 'what to think about' as regard to *"The place of pictorial communication in digital age where expectations and possibilities are high but they exist some challenges that ought not be neglected"*. In an era when there is a lot of paradigms shift which has given way to changes in models of mass media, the old is giving way to the new interwoven form of mass media delivery process. Hence, there is need to set an agenda for media literate minds on what to think about as it concerns the position of pictorial elements in mass media outlets springing up here and there.

### The imperatives of pictorial communication

Pictorial communication is as old as life itself because it is the originator of all other forms of communication. A quick flash back to the assertion made in the preceding part of the discourse will put us once more in better perspective. God being the prime communicator created images first and not words-He perfected the work of creation through visual style. This tells us that communication is an indispensable, integral and innate aspect of life.

Attempt to define pictorial communication and what it is all about is not an easy one, rather it can be best understood by analyzing things associated with it.

Kamath [3], notes: *"In understanding what happens around him, man depends primarily on his sight, secondly on his hearing. In journalism which makes use of words only, the words bear the entire burden of re-creating for the reader, an experience undergone by someone*

*else. Printed words being visual representations of spoken words, sense of hearing is basically related to the act of reading. The eye in conveying sound symbol to the brain appropriates the work of the ear so to speak, and performs to a very limited degree its own peculiar function which to put it quite simply, is to see. In journalism which makes use of words and pictures, to the stimuli of sounds symbols there are added to the stimuli of forms of reality represented in the photograph. Together, these stimuli call forth a collaboration of the two senses by which the quality of a re-created experience is enormously increased and brought much closer to actual experience. The particular coming together of verbal and visual medium of communication do not produce a third and new medium. Instead, they form a complex in which each of the components retains its fundamental characteristics since words are distinctly one kind of medium, pictures another. Of various dissimilarities on the medium, the most pertinent to an understanding of photo technique is to be found in the ways in which they activate certain subjective response in the reader"*.

Nnanyelugo and Nnadiukwu, [4] while appreciating the power of pictorial communication had this to say: *"Talk about pictures and everyone would listen, both old and young. Perhaps, it is just the magic in the image. Imagine seeing yourself the way you are. What a technological wonder!"*.

A Chinese proverb says: *"a picture is worth more than a million words"*. For Nnanyelugo and Nnadiukwu this proverb is merely an understatement, considering the visual impact of a picture; it is even worth more than a billion words. These mass communication scholars maintained that the power of a picture can be best understood when one reflects on how people, events and places around the world are easily fixed on our mind when they are portrayed in pictures. In their submission, *"In photojournalism, it is cardinal sin not to tell it in pictures"*.

A popular sociological cartoon of 18<sup>th</sup> century which portrayed a segmented snake with the words *"JOIN OR DIE"* which appeared on the masthead of the Massachusetts *'spies'* in 1774 was among the pioneer works that accelerated the spirit of modern pictorial communication. The design was done by Paul Revere whose illustration of the *"Boston Massacre"* pictorialized and propagandized the killing of five Boston patriots by British Soldiers. It is said that Paul Revere probably copied the work of Henry Dellam since he was not an artist. However, his effectiveness in applying an engraving skill to the works in question made a hallmark in the evolution of modern pictorial communication.

Mathew Brady's portrait of Abraham Lincoln told Lincoln's story better. Brady used the picture to portray Lincoln as a serious-minded, thoughtful and dignified gentleman. This picture which was widely circulated before the presidential election of 1860 helped to dismiss the impression that Lincoln was a *"rough and uncouth backwoods character"* Lincoln attributed his election to presidency to Brady's portrait and his address to Cooper Union same day 27<sup>th</sup> February, 1860. It was reported that when the American civil war broke out, Brady got permission for coverage from Lincoln himself. This extract strongly portrayed pictorial communication as an instrument of socio-political reformation.

History has it that Joseph Pulitzer in 1883 published pictures of criminal and non-criminals led to the capture of some criminals. In this aspect, picture was used as a tool for checking crime waves.

Another land mark of yesteryears was the stage in USA nurtured by Lewis W. Hine (Sociologist) and Jacob A. Riss (a newspaper man) whose pictures (photographs) engendered the enactment of legislation against child labour and that of housing reform respectively. The

exploits of Hine and Riss highlighted the role of pictures in uplifting the standard of living even before this era of the emerging convergence and digitalization of pictorial roles in the mass media industries. Today's news may mean very little without the illustration of reality through pictures. Also, pictorial elements like cartoon has a unique communication role such that no amount of mastering a language can effectively convey feelings of a communication artist as cartoon does. In the views of Enendu et al. [5] pictorial humours such as cartoons are short and crisp, hitting directly at the point. Cartoons are often containing tact message while simultaneously entertaining, reinforcing, convincing and helping in individual decision making process.

The objectivity and preciseness of pictures in telling news finds meaning in Oduh's [6] proposition on what a video camera does. According to him, "*Camera looks at, looks into and as well creates*" from his view point, video camera does not tell lies since it inputs objectivity in its style of telling a story.

It is an established fact that our nationalist who fought for Nigeria's independence found pictures to be a veritable tool for espousing their political ideologies. Pictorial elements normally reduce the incidence of information overloading when properly employed in mass communication delivery process. The new digital cameras, machines and accessories (devoid of the usual manual cut and join, paste up, wet and dry zone) when in hand of experts can attest to this fact.

In Nigeria, the initiation of the bill which seeks to protect children and women from abuse was prompted when the legislators had viewed the pictures of sexual assault on Choba women as perpetrated by soldiers sent to cool the tension arising from the civil disturbances there in 1999. A reflection on our feelings when listening to a football match commentary without viewing it on television, hearing about big cities like London and New York without ever seeing their maps or viewing them on television, listening to lecture that has no provision for visual/graphic illustrations will tell us better what pictures had come to stand for in sustaining attention and memory recall. Think of how you felt when you heard about the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack on the United States of America before viewing it on television or even the recent claim of having captured the master mind of that attack (Osama Bin Laden) in which the US failed to portray the clear pictorial view of the killing in the name of security reasons.

To put it in a better perspective, pictorial elements whether in their soluble (reproducible) state of motion/still picture or in their first hand state (as pertain to a finished piece of designed cartoon, drawn map or designed sculpture or any other artistic masterpiece and graphics not yet subjected to the lens of camera) fulfill these four cardinal functions in the field of mass communication even in the midst of the emerging mass communication process.

- i. Clear and fast understanding: A frame of picture on a page of a newspaper or on a television/computer screen can give a meaning a billion words cannot give fast at a glance.
- ii. Memory Recall: Effective mass communication entails understanding and assimilation of what had been communicated. Therefore, pictures paint images of messages disseminated permanently on one's memory for easy recall.
- iii. Entertainment: Effective mass communication must provide for relief (Entertainment) for better understanding. So, a picture serves a relief which in turn helps the audience to understand the message better in a relaxed form.
- iv. Universality: Picture is a universal language that cut across all

human tongues. To communicate effectively with the masses of diverse languages, pictures readily come into play so that everyone whether literate and illiterates, black or white, can understand the disseminated message. In a nutshell, a story without a pictorial illustration looks boring and may lose audience, a picture allows people to grasp the story themselves; a picture is a means of communication per excellence.

### Challenges associated with pictorial communication

A good visual communicator knows that visual communication is a strong domain that is deeply rooted in aesthetic principles and that words or captions for introduction are merely aid that the main message lies on the visual impact made by the artist/technician as the case may be. The problem lies on how realizable and how practicable are they in making the needed visual impact for audiences' consumption. In the midst of emerging mass communication process how is pictorial illustration: allowing the audience to grasp the story themselves-is it a question of really educating, informing and entertaining or is it a question of intentional overloading, misinforming, and deceiving. As Stanley Baran [7] will put it, this calls for a critical thinking for a media literate mind.

In evaluating the challenges before pictorial communicators, Arthur Rothstein has this to say: "*for the photographer in this exciting field of visual communication, technical proficiency is not enough; it takes effort to keep up with the challenges in photographic technology such as new films and equipment, but this is relatively an easy task compared with the problem of maintaining high aesthetic standard and intellectual curiosity*".

In advertising in which pictorial elements play key role in creating reality, there is a strong argument against the overbearing effect of advertising on the audience. Advertising is contemporarily being accused of being intrusive, deceptive, exploits children; demean culture -that is creating a culture in which personal worth and identity reside not in one's self but in the products with which one surrounds himself or herself.

Baran [7] notes: "*Advertisers often use intentional imprecision in words and phrase to say something other than the precise truth, and they do so in all forms of advertising-profit and non-profit, scrupulously honest and less so. There are three categories of intention imprecision: unfinished statements, qualifiers and connotatively loaded words and expression.*" In these words of Baran, one can deduce that the connotatively loaded words and expressions to large extent points to pictorial elements because words and imageries are complementary in advert world.

Still on perceived weaknesses in advertising picture wise, our attention turns to Video News Release (VNR) which as a PR tool are used to project organizations' news through the available mass media. VNR is often accused of being stage-managed in favour of the organization it is emanating from. So, the issues of intentional imprecision and make-belief nature of VNR affect the credibility of pictorial elements generated from such source that are meant for news dissemination. Most media organs are accused of being after their profit and convenience thereby paving way for reckless influx of intentional imprecision through adverts and also make-belief VNR packages through PR publicity and promos.

From the foregoing, one can really agree that the issues of making the needed visual impact are seriously in jeopardy. It is a case that seems as if high aesthetic value, idealized fantasy and high subjective



expression are the order of the day and are being strongly aided by the new state-of-art technology in world of pictorial communication.

Friend et al. [8] added their own voices in pointing out the lack of harmonized training for pictorial communicators and also the tendency to misinformation and information overloading through pictorial elements in the course of news dissemination. They described the phenomenon as follows: *"The Risk: too much information, and Too little..... News organization often hired designers trained in graphic arts, who had advanced design skills but little knowledge of journalism's aim and method. Newspapers and magazines, eager to compete visually with television, sometime resorted to massive, full-paged illustration-based graphics on such phenomena as global warming, spaceflight and the effect of Alzheimer's disease on the brain. Some were successful; others were so complex and information heavy that most viewers had hard time knowing where to begin."*

Also, negative effect of introduction of digital pictures can be perceived in *attempt* to feel relevant as well seek attention such that people try as much as possible to snap shots (pictures) even at time when it is not necessary. For instance, an online report has it that during a crocodile attack, a friend who was meant to help was busy capturing of the event ([www.naij.com](http://www.naij.com)). Situations like this have been witnessed over time, at time when individuals were to play a role in helping out, they will be more concerned with taking photos/videos.

The issue of promotion of pornography as well as 'cloning' is equally not left out. It still raise moral question on the visual impact of such pictorial elements as promoted directly and indirectly by most modern mass media especially the social media networks. Indeed, the proliferation of pornography is viewed as negative use of the power of pictures.

### Pictorial communication in digital era

Invention of digital cameras and phones has made spreading newsy pictures very easy as one can snap/record current happenings (events) and upload it online at once, making it possible for people all over the world to see it at the same time. Phones that were originally made for calls now perform multiple tasks such as photo snapping, video recording, audio recording etc. Television stations as a result of these inventions have made provision for "Eye witness" report, in which people send in happenings from all over the world.

There is debate on relationship between seeing something in picture and seeing it face to face (Depictive competence of pictures). The debate also looks into other issues associated with structural nature of picture such as 'resemblance I', 'illusion', 'Dual invariant' etc. Picture may also be considered as factual or fictional, literal or metaphorical, realistic or idealized but the main focus here is on pictorialized images/diagrams/illustrations meant for disseminating news. Simply put, graphics, objects, scenes of events that have passed through the lens of still/motion picture cameras and as such are meant to reproduce and account for another person's experience or to be beamed as live event for non-participants or distant participants. Evolving mass communication process is the alterations and unfolding changes being brought about in mass communication domain as a result of convergence between the internet and the traditional mass media and their extensionaries. It is bringing about a redefinition in virtually all the components of mass communication process.

Pictorial elements (pictures) had and will continue pioneering the needed interface among the leading electronic and non-electronic media of mass communication. For example, satellite, internet and TV

convergence that has given rise to some other new media outlets (niche) that make meaning each, by the help of new pictorial values added to them respectively. Talk of the Net's world wide web, face book web pages, twitter web pages, you-tube web pages and cable transmission of movie channels, musical channels, sports channels, discovery channel's etc., are all created, packaged and valued differently by the help of pictorials-the impact of picture/pictorial devices are creating therein. The same can be said of non-electronic media such as modern books, magazines and newspapers-their innovative trend and value-added nature (like in E-library and E-publishing) of their packages arc all made possible by the help of digitalized pictorial elements.

Now, there is a market shift in mode of making money through even merely aesthetic pictures (non-journalistic pictures). But one may begin to wonder whether there is any picture that does not contain news material that can be tagged non-journalistic picture. For want of clarity there are certain pictures that are more of aesthetic value than news.

They were equally of the view that audiences reasonably expect and trust that the situation and events they see in news photos, video tapes, graphics and films are real and presented as objectively as possible. Flence, publishing or broadcasting images that are manipulated, stage-managed or distorted is a betrayal of that trust and undermines the credibility that is the heart of journalism. They advised that major changes to picture are better made with help of the camera man. They further stated that information graphics were being used frequently in newspapers, magazines and on televisions today more popular than ever, for several reasons which include: often, the most effective way to describe, compare, summarize or evaluate numbers is to depict them visually rather than in text form. Info graphics are part of trends among the news media to draw readers into stories through visual images. Infographics provide a lot of information in a relatively small space. Net-webbed computer has made it easier to create and update complex info graphics. Baran [7] still on the nature of the evolving mass communication process put it this way: *"because of the Net's impact, all the media industries are facing profound alteration on how they are structured and do business, the nature of their content, and how they interact with and respond to their audiences. Naturally, as these changes unfold, so too will the very nature of Mass Communication."*

It is these unfold changes and role pictorialised images are playing in spearheading the dynamics of the changes whether in electronic or print medium that gave rise to the subject matter being examined. The value-added difference lies on the impact of satellite and Net-webbed computer on all other forms of mass media. As earlier on mentioned, when one said pictorialised image, it refers to images that have passed through camera lens in the course of being reproduced for target audiences' consumption. We cannot see on screen of a television, computer or pages of newspaper except if it is pictorialised through still or motion picture camera. Value due to the way they are been rendered- they are mainly aware pictures and make-believe video works. In such case images are manipulated just to appear very fantastic for the owner's view/admiration with little or no attention to the newsy part of the rendition. This is akin to what John-Kamen [9] referred to in his book as picture meant for self-expression. Examples of such pictorial rendition are found in some shots/scenes captured in our campuses nowadays just for the satisfaction of the owners or the artists' subjective thoughts. Even some pictorial renditions can be drama-oriented as well as newsy. It depends on conceptualization, production and interpretation.

The evolving mass communication process is being propelled by

the convergence of the Net, satellite and traditional mass media but the Net seems to be the main driving force. The Net is fast, cheap, far reaching and as such everybody in it is a potential communicator. Each is only as powerful as his/her idea as regard to individual websites of persons/organizations. One can use one's Net connected I pad, I phone, Android, blackberry, Desktop, Palmtop, Laptop or any other 4G or 3G Network devices to send pictorial and non-pictorial information to any part of the world or to even any media organization of one's choice, today such trend is popularly regarded as Citizen Journalism or participatory journalism.

The Net has also provided portable way of rendering info graphics for easier comprehension. Friends, Challenger and McAdams [8] put it this way: *"Information Graphics-often called graphics or info graphics in the news room-combine images and texts to display facts visually often in a smaller space than equivalent story could. They work on the basic principle that some kinds of data are comprehended more easily when presented in spatial or pictorial form than when presented in words alone. Think, for instance how much easier it is to get to an unfamiliar destination by using a map rather than following a list of written directives?"*

As the internet-induced redefinition of the elements of the mass communication process had made it such that pictures are of high utility, serious attention still need to be focused on the use of pictorials for negative purpose as regard to pornographic/bizarre exposures.

In this aspect, Baran was of the view that the evolving mass communication process and its attendant retinue of possibility still call for attention on issues such as freedom of expression, privacy, responsibility, and democracy. Pictorial elements as an agent of the new mass communication order should also be preservative on the areas of culture and democracy; that is to say that freedom of expression should be responsively pursued by pictorial communicators whether professional or amateur. The reactions and counter accusations that trailed the nudity of Anita Hogan (Nigerian Star actress) as shown by an evening newspaper in Lagos and that of the Video clips of Theodore Orji of Abia State (former Governor) linking him with Okija shrine as shown during his court case are eye openers to caring minds on the present day possibilities in using pictures for smear campaign.

For entrepreneurial minded youth earning living through pictorial communication is possible whether as amateur or professional. In the light of this, Seyi Body Lawson [10], notes: *"Photography in Nigeria has experienced huge growth from the mid-90s to date bringing with it an emergence of a new crop of young talented photographers. A great gap existed in the industry between the older and younger generations of photographers. There was a need for excellence, quality, creativity and professionalism and this need was the galvanizing force for the movement. The world being a global village demanded international standards."*

It should also be noted that to get started, a single desire to be creative and passion for the profession is needed. A basic Degree/ Diploma in Mass Communication, photography or theatre art or any other related field is a start but in the absence of this, formal training can be gotten at reputable photography schools around the country, where you will be taught the basics of the profession, advantage; thus is not to say the sciences are left out. Literally any one can become a photographer irrespective of their academic certificate. The most important element is the "Passion". It is pertinent to make it clear that for one to be a pictorial communicator essential training in mass communication or any other allied field.

The basic equipments required are as follows:

- A digital SLR camera with on 18-200 mm lens,
- A dedicated flash head,
- A camera bag,
- A memory card (2 GB),
- A laptop or desk-top computer,
- A card reader, and
- Connecting cables.

The above are for starters. To take it a step further, you'll need,

- A tripod,
- A studio lighting kit of 3 lights,
- soft boxes/umbrellas,
- tripod stands,
- trigger,
- A reflector, etc.

Specialization and opportunities-Variations specializations abound in photography which include but are not limited to the following: Portraiture, Still life, Landscape, Fashion, Lifestyle, Architectural, Wildlife, Sports, Art, Photojournalism, Events (weddings, parties, etc.).

Your services as a photographer can be needed in all areas of life from advertising to events coverage, to abstract art, in which case, you can hold exhibitions and sell your works.

### Training and career development

Having known how to get started and the opportunities the profession offers, the next step is to get training and apprenticeship. As mentioned above there really is not any formal degree offering course in Nigeria, but various diploma professional courses and apprenticeship are offered by various institutes and pro-photographers. Having a mentor and access to books are the surest way to rise in this career. Practice makes perfect.

As a professional photographer it is always good to start small and work your way up the ladder. Your pricing must be reasonable but not below industry standards as recommended by the professional associations (Nigeria Professional photographers' Association of Nigeria). Undergo personal projects. In other words, never be idle. Build your portfolio even if you are not being paid for it. Make sure you carefully select your projects such that the cost does not exceed what you can bear. As your portfolio gets bigger and better, you begin to get more confident to show prospective clients, like art directors of magazines, brides, corporate organizations, event planners and the like, even family members and other pro-photographers. One job leads to one and the story goes on as you build your brand name like have done.

### Synopsis-possibilities and expectations in modern pictorial communication

The role played by pictorial technology and computer especially webbed computer (the internet fondly called 'Net') in advancing mass communication process contemporarily is being outbid for purpose of knowledge expansion in line with the agenda setting theory of the press. Attempt is made to highlight features of pictorial elements that made them stand unique and as well as being a blendable component of

any of the emerging media outlets in print or electronic domain. Also, attempt is equally made to clarify on the notion of pictures and pictorial elements while picture stands for both still image and motion images on our screen and pages of our tabloids, pictorial elements stand for generality of picture and picture related illustrations that can serve as visual aid to clarify text or spoken words in the course of effective mass communication delivery process.

It is clear that obsolete method of pictorial communication is fast giving way to scientific cum digitalized way of reporting. The modern day hi-tech has made lack of physical proximity to be no longer a barrier to accessing individual and also easy creation and distribution of pictorial elements and even other piece of information are much easier. Information can be transmitted in real time. That is to say that live beaming of an event even from your house is easily achievable. Now, content of pictures can be transmitted and transferred easily and fastly without loss of quality (except for slowness of most of the internet-network available in this part of the world).

As pertaining to still pictures: Today we no longer dwell in dry and wet zone in process of producing still pictures. The production pattern has advanced into what is regarded as 'Dye-sublime-thermal transfer process'-where the process of heat/light energy finishes the work of producing still pictures by act of pressing the right buttons and digits on the machines. A still picture can be shot and produced or sent to thousands of kilometers away from the source of the production for utilization in just few seconds. Though, an approach which can be described as hybrid format in which analogue and digital devices are married together still exist. These are common phenomenon in Nigeria and other developing countries because of the high cost of operating full-fledged digital production of still pictures. Generally, in editing of both motion picture (video) and still picture (photo), softwares such as core! draw, adobe, pinnacle, power point, u-lead etc., are presently helpful.

As the evolving mass communication process unfold and picture being at high premium in adding more flavours to the new mass communication order as occasioned by advances in technology care must be taken not to abuse the use of picture by editing or any other forms of manipulation. This is to enable the core pictorial values of objectivity and decency which are integral aspects of media culture to still be perceived in both video clips and still images meant for public consumption. Media literate mind should also be able to detect when there is derailing in the process.

All emphasis had been on the role of pictorial elements (pictorialised objects scenes of events, cartoons, maps and other graphic-oriented masterpiece) in adding new values and meanings in ever changing world of ICT. Indeed, pictures serve as linkage, hybrid and as well as booster in shaping the modern mass communication process and this is as a result of the persuasive power of pictorial elements. It enhances effective communication whether at interpersonal or mass level.

## Recommendation

Picture as means of conveying information to news audience in the quickest and clearest form possible can make or mar the intended information it is conveying depending on the rendition. In era where technology has made it that anyone that has access to modern hi-tech is a potential disseminator and receiver of information, the following recommendations can help to augment the course of pictorial communication in the face of changing terrain in mode of operating mass media industries.

Quality, quantity and detailing are not to be overlooked as these ingredients are complementary in making pictorial message a worthwhile piece: that is to say that attention should not all be on "how" the look should be but also on "why" the look should be so, and thereby giving way for reduction of information over loading and misinformation. It should be noted that in the course of assembling the key elements of a story especially in print media, producers should always go for eye-compelling pictures for a good blend of pictures and words.

Pictorial communicators should pose their relevance in the scheme of things by getting higher certificate, higher expertise skills and integrating literal artistry and high sense of scientific inquiry in their very act of proficiency. These will make them to be round character. Also, pictorial communicators in Nigeria should intensify effort towards building up a formidable society of academia just like their counter parts in other professional wings of mass communication and even other related disciplines. It will also help to draw the boundary line between the amateur and professional in the field (citizen journalists and civic journalists). On the other hand, it will help to articulate and streamline the opportunities pictorial communication has for a country like Nigeria, even such society of academia side by side with strong photographers union (wing) from labour union (NLC) can help checkmate cloning of pictures and other illicit tendencies inherent presently.

Government should establish a trust fund for the development of pictorial communication sector of the economy for example; government can subsidize the cost of pictorial facilities so as to make them affordable for our developing mass media units. Such a trust fund can equally help Internet service providers in Nigeria to have direct link with internet broadband base which is adjudged as the panacea to the perceived so much delay in downloading data in Nigeria.

There is still the need to rethink the concept of photojournalism as regard to name, scope and meaning-expanding the scope and meaning to give it a more befitting modern status in very essential. Whenever, photojournalism is mentioned, people's idea mainly goes to print media but the statuesque has made it that it has evolved into a bigger complex web involving the professionals and nonprofessional in generation and management of pictorial elements in any of the components of new mass communication process, though, history has favoured print media as it was the first to have used pictures but now there is a paradigm shift and as well a shift in value and relationships existing in the entire mass communication domain. This calls for a re-thinking of the concept and the meaning. Just as the entire discourse has tried to explore, the name "*pictorial communication or pictorial journalism*" is more suitable in place of *photo journalism* which seems to be narrow in scope and meaning.

Consumers of pictorial messages ought to be more media literate so as to be able to detect when picture is telling lies as technology has occasioned it so.

Producers ought to be better media cultured to reduce the tendency to over-loading, sensationalism and morally objectionable trends in pictorial communication. The National Film Censorship Board, The National Broadcast commission and other relevant government agencies should rise to the occasion by developing new orientation programme and stiffer penalties to checkmate indecency and vulgarity in the media outlets operating in Nigeria. For example some programme contents such as "Big Brother Africa and likes as being transmitted through our spectrum still need to be reviewed to

ascertain really their socio-cultural impact on the citizenry if we are serious to preserve our culture and democracy.

In the course of building a virile nation, the impact of pictorial communication in consolidating democratic ideals, values and norms cannot be neglected. In their daily living, the citizenry need to be properly informed so as to enable them make an informed decision and such proper information can be deeply enhanced by effective use pictorial elements in disseminating news as they affect the citizenry. For example, Sustainable Development Goal, NEPAD, REBRANDING NIGERIA THOUGH "CHANGE BEGINS WITH ME" CAMPAIGN, WHESTLE BLOWING POLICY, NEED, NAPEP, FADAMA PROJECT, AMNESTY PROGRAMME AND NATIONAL HEALTH INSURANCE POLICY etc., are laudable development programmes of Government and their donor partners. These laudable programmes need effective visual elaboration to internalize into the mind of the populace their objectives for optimum mobilization and result to be achieved. It should be noted that effective pictorial communication has helped USA and even Nigeria to make major legislative reforms in the past. These exciting wings of mass communication can still do more if more effort is put in place to augment its course as an economic industry and as well an academic discipline in our society.

Advancement in technology has made it possible that pictorial communicators can watermark their images as well as code (customize) their digital pictures plates (VCD/DVD) if the need arises for business protectionism.

The NTA and other leading picture-oriented media in Nigeria should explore their commercial opportunities so as to get self-support for the acquisition of more modern pictorial facilities. They should embrace the new trends in pictorial communication world such as the use of High Definition camera, faster internet connections, and consistent collaboration with news agencies both at local and international levels, using portable microphones which can neither constitute visual distortion on the side of the viewers nor pose psychological noise for information source. These will help Nigeria pictorial communication to match up with 21st century standard as Onyebuchi [11] rightly noted, the social media has more character base campaign in 2015 Nigerian general election which gave room for attack on candidates character. This calls for greater sense of civic responsibility from source of messages (citizens) especially during electioneering/election.

The current target of attaining full digitization in year 2017 by our mass media outfits in Nigeria must be taken serious as this will boost the lots of pictorial communication. Also Nigeria communication satellite should be fully located in Nigeria with update ground base station for us to access information direct from it. With this in place together with consistent electricity supply, pictorial communication industry and even other industries will witness a rapid growth.

Pictorial communicators whether amateur or professionals should always exhibit high sense of prudence and etiquette in their mode of operation knowing that they are serving in a delicate and exciting wing of mass communication. The very act of indiscriminate display of morally objectionable images should be shunned in keeping with the ethics of mass communication and even for the preservation of fundamental human dignity. Morality demands that you do not show all.

## Conclusion

This discourse entirely centered on challenges and expectations (possibilities) associated with pictorial media in the realization of the emerging mass communication process. It has revealed that the place of pictorial elements in the emerging mass communication process is invaluable; that picture is innate, integral and indispensable aspect of mass communication and even every other form of communication. It speaks direct and as such removes the barrier of language, ethnicity and nationality.

Although, pictorial communicators have a lot of challenges in their processes of generating pictures meant for news, they still value and utilize pictures to enhance their services to the masses.

Pictures and pictorial elements have contributed to development of human society in line with the goal of any effective form of mass communication. In the midst of the evolving mass communication process, there is still great clamor for effective mass communication to be upheld and pictorial elements are still poised to contribute more looking at the rate of world technological advancement. The ball is in the court of pictorial communicators to exploit the opportunities offered by this exciting wing of mass communication. The role of pictures in the evolving mass communication process cannot be over stressed as they are special hand tool for traditional mass media and social media alike, an undisputable partner that complements oral/written communication, divine ordained prime means of communication, means of mass communication par excellence and truly universal language that can communicate to diversified masses effectively when properly harnessed.

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