



**NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA**

**FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCES**

# **COURSE TITLE**

**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND  
THE MEDIA**

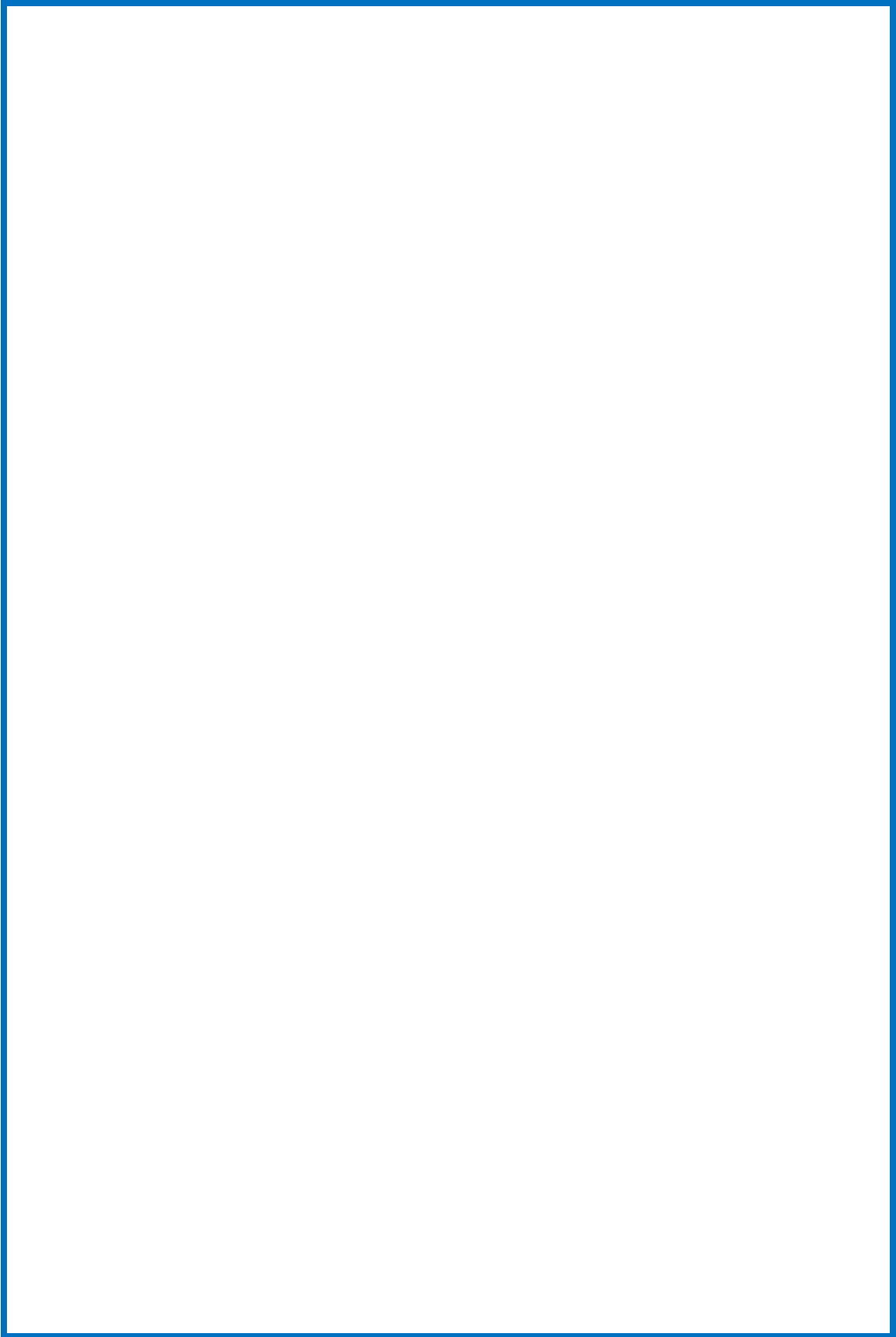
<b>COURSE CODE</b>	<b>CREDIT UNITS</b>
<b>INR 302</b>	<b>2</b>



**INR 302**  
**INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS AND THE MEDIA**

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## **INTRODUCTION**

INR 302: Media and International Relations is a one-semester course in the third year of B.Sc. (Hons) Degree in International and Diplomatic Studies. INR 302 is designed to give understanding of how the media facilitate the interaction and relationships amongst nations, the various types of media and their prospects and challenges in Nigeria. The course examines the development of international relations in Nigeria and its overview. The course further discusses about foreign missions, the roles of the media in foreign missions and the costs and benefits of diplomatic missions. The course further explores the role of the media in international relations, the influence of the media in international diplomacy, the media and international relations in building positive image and the media as vehicles for international relations.

The study units are structured into Modules. Each module comprises of 4 or 5 units. A Unit Guide comprises of instructional materials and also provides a brief description of the instructional material.

## **COURSE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The principal aim of this course (INR 302) is to give understanding of how the media facilitate interaction and relationships amongst nations. The objectives of each unit are specified at the beginning of each unit and are to be used as reference points and to evaluate the level of progress in the study. At the end of each unit, the objectives are also useful to check whether the progress is consistent with the stated objectives of the unit. The entire units are sufficient to completely achieve overall objectives of the course.

Meanwhile, the specific objectives of each study unit can be found at the beginning and you can make references to it while studying. It is necessary and helpful for you to check at the end of the unit, if your progress is consistent with the stated objectives and if you can conveniently answer the self-assessment exercises. On the whole, objectives of the course will be achieved, if you diligently study and complete all the units in this course.

## **WORKING THROUGH THE COURSE**

It is advised that you carefully work through the course, studying each unit diligently in a bid to understanding the workings and operations of the media and their impact on international relations and how the nature of international relations impacts on the activities of the media. It highlights the various theories of the media and international relations which would help the student gain a handle on the intricate relations between the media and international relations. good grasp of the course and of the interpretations and operations of international politics. Your questions should be noted and asked regularly at the tutorial classes. It is recommended that students also engage new ideas generated from unfolding events around the world. At the end of the course, you will be expected to write a final examination.

## **THE COURSE MATERIAL**

In this course, as in all other courses, the major components you will find are as follows:

1. Course Guide
2. Study Units

- 3. Textbooks
- 4. Assignments

### **STUDY UNITS**

There are 18 study units in this course. They are:

#### **Module 1: General Introduction**

- Unit 1: Conceptual Issues: Media and International Relations
- Unit 2: Origin and Types of Media
- Unit 3: Origin and evolution of international relations
- Unit 4: The Relationship between Media and Society

#### **Module 2: Theories of Media and International Relations**

- Unit 1: Traditional Theories
- Unit 2: Positivist Media Theories – The Media as Apolitical Observer
- Unit 3: Agenda Setting and Creating Public Opinion
- Unit 4: The Media in International Relations Theory

#### **Module 3: Relationships between the Media and International Relations**

- Unit 1 The Media's Power in the Domestic Politics
- Unit 2 The influence of the media in international diplomacy
- Unit 3 The media's power in international relations – The CNN effect
- Unit 4 The media's power in international relations – The Al Jazeera effect
- Unit 5 The general role of media in international relations

#### **Module 4: The Media and international relations of Africa – Some salient issues**

- Unit 1 Global media coverage of Africa - Implication for International Relations
- Unit 2 Coverage of African conflicts – Focus on the Darfur conflict
- Unit 3 The media and foreign policy formulation in Africa
- Unit 4 The media and foreign policy in Nigeria's fourth republic
- Unit 5: Africa and the future of digital diplomacy

From the above, we can see that the course starts with the basic definition of media and international relations and progresses subsequently into the roles they play in foreign missions and in the relationships that exist among the nations of the world. The instructions given in each unit contain objectives, course contents and reading materials. In addition, there are also self-assessment exercises and Tutor-Marked Assignments. All these are intended to assist you in achieving the objectives of each unit.

As you can observe, the course begins with the basics and expands into a more elaborate, complex and detailed form. All you need to do is to follow the instructions as provided in each unit. In addition, some self-assessment exercises have been provided with which you can test your progress with the text and determine if your study is fulfilling the stated objectives. Tutor marked assignments have also been provided to aid your study. All these will assist you to be able to adequately comprehend the role of the media in international relations.

### **TEXTBOOKS AND REFERENCES**

At the end of each unit, you will find a list of relevant reference materials which you may yourself wish to consult as the need arises, even though efforts have been made to provide you with the most important information you need to excel in this course.

However, you are encouraged to cultivate the habit of consulting as many relevant materials as you are able to within the time available to you. In particular, be sure to consult whatever material you are advised to consult before attempting any exercise.

**ASSESSMENT**

Two types of assessment are involved in the course: the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs), and the Tutor-Marked Assessment (TMA) questions. Your answers to the SAEs are not meant to be submitted, but they are also important since they give you an opportunity to assess your own understanding of the course content. Tutor-Marked Assignments (TMAs) on the other hand are to be carefully answered and kept in your assignment file for submission and marking. This will count for 30% of your total score in the course.

**TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENT**

At the end of each unit, you will find self-assessment exercises (SAEs). There is an average of four self-assessment questions per unit. This will allow you to engage the course as robustly as possible. You need to submit at least four assignments of which the three with the highest marks will be recorded as part of your total course grade. This will account for 10 percent each, making a total of 30 percent. When you complete your assignments, send them including your form to your tutor for formal assessment on or before the deadline.

**FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING**

There will be a final examination at the end of the course. The examination carries a total of 70 percent of the total course grade. The examination will reflect the contents of what you have learnt and the self-assessments and tutor-marked assignments. You therefore need to revise your course materials before-hand.

**COURSE MARKING SCHEME**

The following table sets out how the actual course marking is broken down.

<b>ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>MARKS</b>
Four assignments (the best four of the assignments submitted for marking)	Four assignments, each mark out of 10%, but highest scoring three selected, then total of 30%
Final Examination	70% of overall course score
<b>Total</b>	<b>100% course score</b>

**COURSE OVERVIEW PRESENTATION SCHEME**

Units	Title of Work	Week Activity	Assignment (End-of-Unit)
<b>Course Guide</b>	<b>MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>		
<b>MODULE 1</b>	<b>GENERAL INTRODUCTION</b>		
Unit 1	Conceptual Issues: Media and International Relations	Week 1	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Origin and Types of Media	Week 2	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Origin and evolution of international relations	Week 3	Assignment 1
Unit 4	The Relationship between Media and Society	Week 4	Assignment 1
<b>MODULE</b>	<b>THEORIES OF MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>		



<b>2</b>			
Unit 1	Traditional Theories	Week 5	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Positivist Media Theories	Week 6	Assignment 1
Unit 3	Agenda Setting Theory	Week 7	Assignment 1
Unit 4	The Media in International Relations Theory	Week 8	Assignment 1
<b>MODULE 3</b>	<b>RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN THE MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS</b>		
Unit 1	The Media's Power in the Domestic Politics	Week 9	Assignment 1
Unit 2	The influence of the media in international diplomacy	Week 10	Assignment 1
Unit 3	The media's power in international relations – The CNN effect	Week 11	Assignment 1
Unit 4	The media's power in international relations – The Al Jazeera effect	Week 12	Assignment 1
Unit 5	The general role of media in international relations	Week 13	Assignment 1
<b>MODULE 4</b>	<b>THE MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF AFRICA – SOME SALIENT ISSUES</b>		
Unit 1	Global media coverage of Africa - Implication for International Relations	Week 14	Assignment 1
Unit 2	Coverage of African conflicts – Focus on the Darfur conflict	Week 15	Assignment 1
Unit 3	The media and foreign policy formulation in Africa	Week 16	Assignment 1
Unit 4	The media and foreign policy in Nigeria's fourth republic	Week 17	Assignment 1
Unit 5	Africa and the future of digital diplomacy	Week 18	Assignment 1

### WHAT YOU WILL NEED FOR THE COURSE

This course builds on what you have learnt from the 100 and 200 Levels. It will be helpful if you try to review what you studied earlier. Second, you may need to purchase one or two texts recommended as important for your mastery of the course content. You need quality time in a study friendly environment every week. If you are computer-literate (which ideally you should be), you should be prepared to visit recommended websites. You should also cultivate the habit of visiting reputable physical libraries accessible to you.

### TUTORS AND TUTORIALS

There are 15 hours of tutorials provided in support of the course. You will be notified of the dates and location of these tutorials, together with the name and phone number of your tutor as soon as you are allocated a tutorial group. Your tutor will mark and comment on your

assignments, and keep a close watch on your progress. Be sure to send in your tutor marked assignments promptly, and feel free to contact your tutor in case of any difficulty with your self-assessment exercise, tutor-marked assignment or the grading of an assignment. In any case, you are advised to attend the tutorials regularly and punctually. Always take a list of such prepared questions to the tutorials and participate actively in the discussions.

### **TUTOR-MARKED ASSIGNMENTS (TMAs)**

Usually, there are four online tutor-marked assignments in this course. Each assignment will be marked over ten percent. The best three (that is the highest three of the 10 marks) will be counted. This implies that the total mark for the best three assignments will constitute 30% of your total course work. You will be able to complete your online assignments successfully from the information and materials contained in your references, reading and study units.

### **FINAL EXAMINATION AND GRADING**

The final examination for **POL 852: International Politics and Institutions** will be of two hours duration and have a value of 70% of the total course grade. The examination will consist of six essay questions out of which you will be required to answer three. The questions will reflect the practice exercises and tutor-marked assignments you have previously encountered. All areas of the course will be assessed. It is important that you use adequate time to revise the entire course. You may find it useful to review your tutor-marked assignments before the examination. The final examination covers information from all aspects of the course.

### **HOW TO GET THE MOST FROM THIS COURSE**

1. There are 18 units in this course. You are to spend one week in each unit. In distance learning, the study units replace the university lecture. This is one of the great advantages of distance learning; you can read and work through specially designed study materials at your own pace, and at a time and place that suites you best. Think of it as reading the lecture instead of listening to the lecturer. In the same way a lecturer might give you some reading to do. The study units tell you when to read and which are your text materials or recommended books. You are provided with exercises to do at appropriate points, just as a lecturer might give you in a class exercise.
2. Each of the study units follows a common format. The first item is an introduction to the subject-matter of the unit, and how a particular unit is integrated with other units and the course as a whole. Next to this is a set of learning objectives. These objectives let you know what you should be able to do, by the time you have completed the unit. These learning objectives are meant to guide your study. The moment a unit is finished, you must go back and check whether you have achieved the objectives. If this is made a habit, then you will significantly improve your chance of passing the course.
3. The main body of the unit guides you through the required reading from other sources. This will usually be either from your reference or from a reading section.
4. The following is a practical strategy for working through the course. If you run into any trouble, then put a call through your tutor or visit the study centre nearest to you. Remember that your tutor's job is to help you. When you need assistance, do not hesitate to call and ask your tutor to provide you necessary assistance.
5. Read this course guide thoroughly. It is your first assignment.
6. Organise a study schedule - Design a 'Course Overview' to guide you through the course. Note the time you are expected to spend on each unit and how the assignments relate to the units.

7. Important information; e.g., details of your tutorials and the date of the first day of the semester is available at the study centre.
8. You need to gather all the information into one place, such as your diary or a wall calendar. Whatever method you choose to use, you should decide on and write in your own dates and schedule of work for each unit.
9. Once you have created your own study schedule, do everything to stay faithful to it.
10. The major reason that students fail is that they get behind in their coursework. If you get into difficulties with your schedule, please let your tutor or course coordinator know before it is too late for help.
11. Turn to Unit 1, and read the introduction and the objectives for the unit.
12. Assemble the study materials. You will need your references for the unit you are studying at any point in time.
13. As you work through the unit, you will know what sources to consult for further information.
14. Visit your study centre whenever you need up-to-date information.
15. Well before the relevant online TMA due dates, visit your study centre for relevant information and updates. Keep in mind that you will learn a lot by doing the assignment carefully. They have been designed to help you meet the objectives of the course and, therefore, will help you pass the examination.
16. Review the objectives for each study unit to confirm that you have achieved them. If you feel unsure about any of the objectives, review the study materials or consult your tutor. When you are confident that you have achieved a unit's objectives, you can start on the next unit. Proceed unit by unit through the course and try to space your study so that you can keep yourself on schedule.
17. After completing the last unit, review the course and prepare yourself for the final examination. Check that you have achieved the unit objectives (listed at the beginning of each unit) and the course objectives (listed in the course guide).

### **Conclusion**

This is a theoretical as well as empirical course and so, you will get the best out of it if you can read wide, listen to as well as examine international relations and diplomacy. The course discusses about foreign missions, the roles of the media in foreign missions and the costs and benefits of diplomatic missions. The course further explores the role of the media in international relations, the influence of the media in international diplomacy, the media and international relations in building positive image and the media as a vehicle for international relations.

### **Summary**

This Course Guide has been designed to furnish you with the information you need for a fruitful experience in the course. In the final analysis, how much you get from it depends on how much you put into it in terms of learning time, effort and planning. I wish you all the best in INR 302 and in the entire programme.

I wish you all the best in INR 302 and in the entire programme!

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**LIST OF ACRONYMS**

APRM	African Peer Review Mechanism
ARPANET	Advanced Research Projects Agency's Wide Area Network
AU	African Union
BBC	British Broadcasting Corporation
CBS	Columbia Broadcasting System
CNN	Cable News Network
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
IGOs	Intergovernmental organisations
INGOs	International nongovernmental organisations
IR	International Relations
MNCs	Multinational Corporations
NBC	National Broadcasting Company
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's development
OAU	Organization of African Union
OIC	Organization of Islamic Countries
RAM	Random-access memory
UN	United Nations
WWW	World Wide Web



## **MODULE 1: GENERAL INTRODUCTION**

This module provides a general overview of the course. It provides conceptual clarification of the major terms in use in the course. It also traces the origin and evolution of both the media and international relations. It also analyses the relationship between the media and society.

Unit 1: Conceptual Issues: Media and International Relations

Unit 2: Origin and Types of Media

Unit 3: Origin and evolution of international relations

Unit 4: The relationship between media and society

### **UNIT 1: CONCEPTUAL ISSUES: MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

#### **Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Definitions of the Media
- 1.4 Meaning of International Relations
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

#### **1.1 Introduction**

This unit aims at providing the definitions of the terms: media; and international relations. The Unit is significant in that it aims to acquaint the students with proper understanding of both concepts, so as to enable them appreciate the relationships between them in the subsequent modules.

#### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Clearly define the term media.
- Understanding the media effects
- Explain the meaning of international relations.

#### **1.3 Main Section**

##### **1.3 What is the Media?**

When people communicate with one another, they do so by a means of a medium.

In other words, anything that people use to transmit information or to represent information is a medium of communication. Media is the plural form of medium, which (broadly speaking) describes any channel of communication. This can include anything from printed paper to digital data, and encompasses art, news, educational content and numerous other forms of information. Anything that can reach or influence people, including phones, television, and the Internet can be considered a form of media. In other words, the media is an umbrella term employed to define varying forms of presenting information, news and opinions to large audiences at the same time.



In the context of informatics, media means both the devices used to store data (hard drives, CD-ROMs, diskettes, etc.) as well the ones used to transmit it (cables, wires), or even propagate it in its many forms (videos, sounds, podcasts, etc.). In modern times, media are gravitating more and more towards the digital side of this field.

Modern digital media include all forms of communication that are transmitted electronically across the world through computer networks and fiber optic cables. Some of these modern forms of media, such as the Internet or social media (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, etc.) have completely revolutionized our world.

The collection of all forms of media that communicate information to the general public is called **mass media**. These include television, print, radio, and Internet. The term mass media according to Dennis McQuail (2000) is shortened to describe means of communication that operate on a large scale, reaching and involving virtually everyone in a society to a greater or lesser degree. It refers to a number of media that are long established and familiar, such as newspapers, magazines, radio, television etc.

According to Ifedayo (2005) mass media are impersonal sources and they reach large, heterogeneous and widely dispersed audiences. One key characteristic of mass communication is its ability to overcome the physical limitations present in face-to-face communication. This means that the mass media can reach millions of people over huge areas very quickly, by spreading news, information and propaganda, persuading people to buy certain things or to change their opinions on various matters. It is also a very powerful socializing agent. Mass media is also very educative. The media is used by individuals, corporate organizations and governments to transmit messages to the public. McQuail (2000) describes the mass media as the organized means for communicating openly and at a distance to many receivers within a short space of time.

Mass media started as print journalism but was subsequently supplemented by radio coverage, then network television, followed by cable television. Now, with the addition of the Internet, blogs and social media—a set of applications or web platforms that allow users to immediately communicate with one another—give citizens a wide variety of sources for instant news of all kinds. The Internet also allows citizens to initiate public discussion by uploading images and video for viewing, such as videos documenting interactions between citizens and the police, for example. Provided we are connected digitally, we have a bewildering number of choices for finding

information about the world. In fact, some might say that compared to the tranquil days of the 1970s, when we might read the morning newspaper over breakfast and take in the network news at night, there are now too many choices in today's increasingly complex world of information. This reality may make the news media all the more important to structuring and shaping narratives about public affairs. Or the proliferation of competing information sources like blogs and social media may actually weaken the power of the news media relative to the days when news media monopolized our attention.

#### **1.4 Media Effects**

Media effects are the intended or unintended consequences of what the mass media does (McQuail, 2010). Many of the key theories in mass communication rest on the assumption that the media has effects on audience members. The degree and type of effect varies depending on the theory. In general, we underestimate the effect that the media has on us, as we tend to think that media messages affect others more than us. This is actually so common that there is a concept for it! The third-party effect is the phenomenon just described of people thinking they are more immune to media influence than others. If this were true, though, would advertisers and public relations professionals spend billions of dollars a year carefully crafting messages aimed at influencing viewers?

There are certain media effects that are fairly obvious and most of us would agree are common (even for ourselves). For example, we change our clothes and our plans because we watch the forecast on the Weather Channel, look up information about a band and sample their music after we see them perform on a television show, or stop eating melons after we hear about a salmonella outbreak. Other effects are more difficult to study and more difficult for people to accept because they are long term and/or more personal. For example, media may influence our personal sense of style, views on sex, perceptions of other races, or values just as our own free will, parents, or friends do. It is difficult, however, to determine in any specific case how much influence the media has on a belief or behavior in proportion to other factors that influence us. Media messages may also affect viewers in ways not intended by the creators of the message. Two media effects that are often discussed are reciprocal and boomerang effects (McQuail, 2010).

The reciprocal effect points to the interactive relationship between the media and the subject being covered. When a person or event gets media attention, it influences

the way the person acts or the way the event functions. Media coverage often increases self-consciousness, which affects our actions. It's similar to the way that we change behaviour when we know certain people are around and may be watching us. For example, the Occupy Movement that began on Wall Street in New York City gained some attention from alternative media and people using micro media platforms like independent bloggers. Once the movement started getting mainstream press attention, the coverage affected the movement. As news of the Occupy movement in New York spread, people in other cities and towns across the country started to form their own protest groups. In this case, media attention caused a movement to spread that may have otherwise remained localized.

The boomerang effect refers to media-induced change that is counter to the desired change. In the world of twenty-four-hour news and constant streams of user-generated material, the effects of gaffes, blunders, or plain old poor decisions are much more difficult to control or contain. Before a group or person can clarify or provide context for what was said, a story could go viral and a media narrative constructed that is impossible to backtrack and very difficult to even control.

### **1.5 Concept of International Relations**

There are two senses in which the term International Relations (IR) is to be understood. The first is as a field of study. In this sense, the term IR could be defined as the scientific study of interactions between sovereign states. In a broader sense, it involves the study of all activities between states—such as war, diplomacy, trade, and foreign policy—as well as relations with and among other international actors, such as intergovernmental organisations (IGOs), international nongovernmental organisations (INGOs), international legal bodies, and Multinational Corporations (MNCs). IR is widely classified as a major subdiscipline of political science, along with comparative politics and political theory. However, it often draws heavily from other fields, including anthropology, economics, geography, law, philosophy, sociology, and history. International Relations as a discipline contains within it several subfields of study. According to Juanita Elias and Peter Sutch (2007) International Relations is a descriptor for a complex, multidisciplinary subject area which include: International Politics; Foreign Policy analysis; Diplomacy; Strategic Studies; International Organizations; and International Economic Relations.

While international politics has been analysed since antiquity, international relations did not become a discrete field until 1919, when it was first offered as an

undergraduate major by Aberystwyth University in the United Kingdom. After the Second World War, international relations burgeoned in both importance and scholarship—particularly in North America and Western Europe—partly in response to the geostrategic concerns of the Cold War.

The second sense in which international relations is to be understood, and which forms the major concern of this course, is as the actual interactions among states and between states and state-based actors across state boundaries. Traditionally, International Relations was viewed strictly as the relationship between and among sovereign states. However, it has since come to encompass the gamut of interactions that take place across the boundaries of states and other sovereign entities. This includes the relationships between and among states, social groups, non-group social categories as well as interactions involving international organizations created to mediate such relationships. Even though the term has often been compared with international politics, international relations is wider than international politics.

Definitions of international relations as proffered by some notable scholars include: Prof. Charles Schleicher who defined international relations as the relation among States. Quincy Wright defines international relations as "relations between groups of major importance in the life of the world at any period of history." According to Prof. Hans J. Morgenthau, international relations is a struggle for power among nations. Norman Podelford and George Lincoln define international relations as the interaction of State politics with the changing pattern of power relationships. Padelford and Lincoln define it as the "Interactions of state policies within the changing patterns of power relationships".

A good working definition of international relations as given by Harold and Margaret Sprout conceived international relations as "those aspects of interactions and relations of independent political communities in which some element of opposition, resistance or conflict of purpose or interest is present." A more acceptable definition of international relations must however encompass the interrelationships of the various states of the world, non-State organizations, international organizations, war and peace, disarmament, alliance formation, terrorism and the whole intercourse within the international system.

## **1.5 Summary**

This unit proffered definitions of the Media as well as International. It reflected the two senses in which international relations is conceived and also captured media

effects as a prelude for the discussion of the role of the media in international relations in subsequent modules in the course material.

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 1**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *When people communicate with one another, they do so by a means of a .....*?
2. *The collection of all forms of media that communicate information to the general public is called .....*?
3. *..... are the intended or unintended consequences of what the mass media does?*
4. *The ..... effect refers to media-induced change that is counter to the desired change?*
5. *The first sense in which the term International Relations is to be understood is as .....*?
6. *Hans J. Morgenthau defined international relations as a .....*?
7. *A more acceptable definition of international relations must encompass the interrelationships of the various .....; .....; ....., war and peace, disarmament, alliance formation, terrorism and the whole intercourse within the international system?*
8. *International relations and international politics mean one and the same thing. True or False?*

**1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

IfedayoD. (2005). *Mass Media and Society. Lagos:* Rothan Press Limited.

McQuail, D. (2000). *Mass Communication Theory 4<sup>th</sup>ed.* London: Sage Publication Ltd.

Sutch, Peter and Elias, Juanita (2007). *International Relations: The basics.* London & New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis

**1.7 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 1**

1. *Medium*
2. *mass media*
3. *Media effects*
4. *Boomerang*
5. *a field of study*
6. *struggle for power among nations*
7. *states of the world, non-State organizations, international organizations*
8. *false*

**UNIT 2: ORIGIN AND TYPES OF MEDIA**

**Unit Structure**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Origin of Media
- 2.4 Types of Media
  - 2.4.1 Print media
  - 2.4.2 Broadcast media
  - 2.4.3 Internet (New Media)
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

## 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

### 2.1 Introduction

The media play very important role in the society. They are equally powerful because the information they disseminate influence people either positively or negatively. The kind of information transmitted by the media can be one-to-one communication, one-to-many communication or many-to-many communication. Hence, there are different types of media that are in use for the purpose of communication. This unit is significant in that it traces the origin of the media and also identifies and discusses the various types of media that are in use.

### 2.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Trace the origin of the media.
- Identify and discuss the types of media

### 2.3 Main Section

#### 2.3 Origin of Media

About forty thousand years ago, some human ancestors painted on the walls of a cave on the Indonesian island of Sulawesi. They left stencils of their hands and other markings. Cave paintings in France and Spain have been dated to a couple of thousand years later. Experts don't know exactly what purpose the artwork had, but some suggest they might be the first examples of communicating through a medium. The "audience" for such paintings was very small.

The so-called "mass media" had to wait for the creation of new technologies before coming to life. The first of these was paper, invented in China in about 100 BCE. However, another 1,500 years had to pass before Johannes Gutenberg built the first printing press around 1440 in Germany. This meant that books could be mass-produced whereas before each one had to be handwritten.

By early in 17th century, the first newspapers appeared but, because few people were literate, readership was limited. As more people learned to read and write the reach of mass media grew. By the early 1800s, high circulation newspapers such as The Times of London were developing huge readerships. High-speed rotary printing presses churned out large volumes and the development of railways made for wide distribution.

In addition to the breakthroughs in audio broadcasting, inventors in the 1800s made significant advances in visual media. In 1862, Matthew Brady held an exhibition of photographs he had taken of the U.S. Civil War. Shocked Americans stood and stared at Brady's images of the dead at the Battle of Antietam. The New York Times noted that Brady

brought “home to us the terrible reality of war.” (A similar impact was observed when Americans saw films of the war in Vietnam being beamed into their living-room televisions). By late in the 19th century, new technology allowed newspapers to print photographs.

The 19th-century development of photographic technologies would lead to the later innovations of cinema and television. In 1895, the Lumière brothers gave the first public demonstration of moving pictures in Paris. Some members of the audience were frightened. As with wireless technology, several inventors independently created a form of photography at the same time, among them the French inventors Joseph Niépce and Louis Daguerre and the British scientist William Henry Fox Talbot. In the United States, George Eastman developed the Kodak camera in 1888, anticipating that Americans would welcome an inexpensive, easy-to-use camera into their homes as they had with the radio and telephone. Moving pictures were first seen around the turn of the century, with the first U.S. projection-hall opening in Pittsburgh in 1905. By the 1920s, Hollywood had already created its first stars, most notably Charlie Chaplin; by the end of the 1930s, Americans were watching color films with full sound, including *Gone with the Wind* and *The Wizard of Oz*.

Television—which consists of an image being converted to electrical impulses, transmitted through wires or radio waves, and then reconverted into images—existed before World War II, but gained mainstream popularity in the 1950s. In 1947, there were 178,000 television sets made in the United States; 5 years later, 15 million were made. Radio, cinema, and live theater declined because the new medium allowed viewers to be entertained with sound and moving pictures in their homes. In the United States, competing commercial stations (including the radio powerhouses of CBS and NBC) meant that commercial-driven programming dominated. In Great Britain, the government managed broadcasting through the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). Funding was driven by licensing fees instead of advertisements. In contrast to the U.S. system, the BBC strictly regulated the length and character of commercials that could be aired. However, U.S. television (and its increasingly powerful networks) still dominated. By the beginning of 1955, there were around 36 million television sets in the United States, but only 4.8 million in all of Europe. Important national events, broadcast live for the first time, were an impetus for consumers to buy sets so they could witness the spectacle; both England and Japan saw a boom in sales before important royal weddings in the 1950s.

In 1969, management consultant Peter Drucker predicted that the next major technological innovation would be an electronic appliance that would revolutionize the way people lived just as thoroughly as Thomas Edison’s light bulb had. This appliance would

sell for less than a television set and be “capable of being plugged in wherever there is electricity and giving immediate access to all the information needed for school work from first grade through college.” Although Drucker may have underestimated the cost of this hypothetical machine, he was prescient about the effect these machines—personal computers—and the Internet would have on education, social relationships, and the culture at large. The inventions of random-access memory (RAM) chips and microprocessors in the 1970s were important steps to the Internet age. As Briggs and Burke note, these advances meant that “hundreds of thousands of components could be carried on a microprocessor.” The reduction of many different kinds of content to digitally stored information meant that “print, film, recording, radio and television and all forms of telecommunications [were] now being thought of increasingly as part of one complex.” This process, also known as convergence, is a force that’s affecting media today.

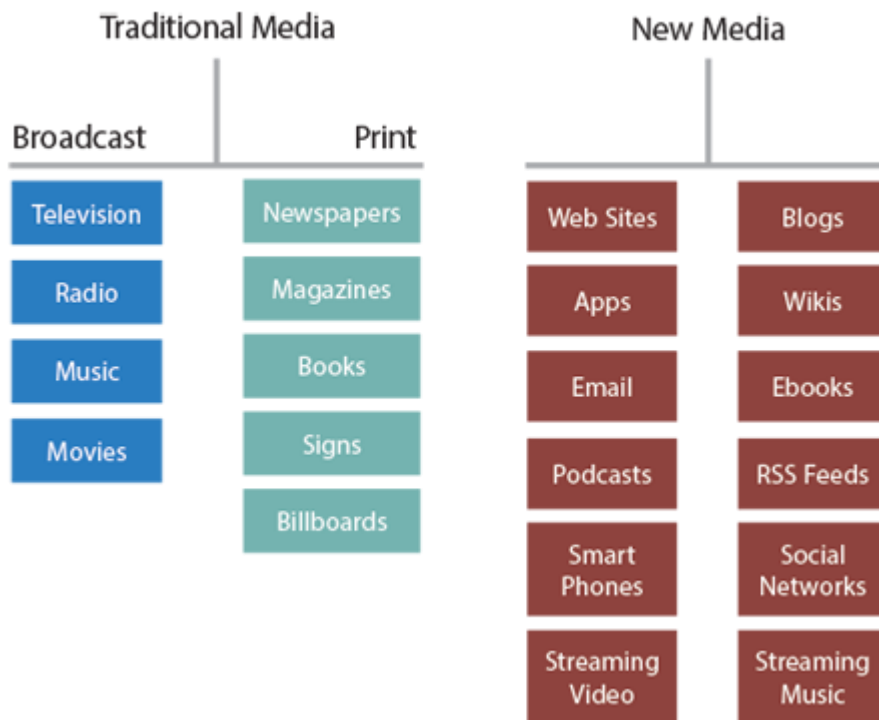
#### **2.4 Types of Media**

Broadly, media types fall under two broad categories: traditional and new. The traditional media include the print and broadcast formats, while the new media include the ever-changing digital formats, such as blogs and podcasts.

Not so long ago there existed a clear distinction between the two categories. Today, they are evolving closer together. Traditional media have begun to embrace the interactive, adaptable, and social nature of new media, while new media are boosting their reputation as outlets for hard news. In fact, journalists often break new stories on Twitter before they appear on television or in a newspaper. As technology advances, traditional media and new media will resemble each other even further.

Below is a graphic presentation of the two types of media:





**2.4.1 Print Media**

Print media can be defined as the industry associated with the printing and distribution of news through newspapers, magazines and journals. Print media is distinguished from broadcast or electronically transmitted communications. The print media include all newspapers, newsletters, booklets, pamphlets, magazines, and other printed publications, especially those that sell advertising space as a means of raising revenue. Most print media are national newspapers and trade publications that have become quite successful. Newspaper is one of the most important and effective print media of mass communication. It was first published in Germany and later spread its roots to the rest of the world. Its valuable services to the community like information, education, entertainment, persuasion, cultural transmission, record facility etc., have made it an inevitable medium for the contemporary world. Magazines on the other hand, have always been national. Also included in the print media category are directories, church and school newspapers and yearbooks, and programs at theater presentations and sporting events. A person that sources for information and writes for newspapers or magazine companies or prepares news to be broadcast on radio or television is known as a journalist.

In the contemporary world, a book is one of the most effective mass media. It is the best source of education. It is the best and cheapest means of storing and transmitting to others the records, knowledge, literature speculations and

entertainment characteristics of the human society. It represents the conscience of time and people gone by, and it speaks to each reader individually. Books provide permanent records. Some books printed several years ago are still in existence. Books, from their beginning, have demonstrated their capacity to bind traditional societies together and to give rise to new and sometimes revolutionary thought patterns. Examples of these books are trade books, paper-back books, text books, professional books.

#### **2.4.2 Broadcasting**

Broadcasting refers to a method of transferring a message to all recipients simultaneously. This means that broadcasting occurs when a transmitted data packet is received by all network devices. The scope of the broadcast is limited to a broadcast domain. Furthermore, to communicate or transmit a signal, a message, or content, such as audio or video programming to numerous recipients simultaneously over a communication network is known as broadcasting. Broadcasting is the distribution of audio and video content to a dispersed audience via any electronic mass communication medium but typically one using the electromagnetic spectrum in a one-to-many model. Broadcasting began with AM radio broadcasting which sprang up spontaneously around 1920. Before this time, all forms of electronic communication, radio, telephone and telegraph were one-to-one with the message intended for a single recipient.

Moreover, to broadcast is to cast or throw forth something in all directions at the same time. A radio or television broadcast is a program that is transmitted over airwaves for public reception by anyone with a receiver tuned to the right signal channel. Other forms of broadcasting include routing schemes, broadcast, multicast and unicast.

#### **2.4.3 Internet**

A means of connecting a computer to any other computer anywhere in the world via dedicated routers and servers. When two computers are connected over the Internet, they can send and receive all kinds of information such as text, graphics, voice, video, and computer programs. No one owns the Internet, although several organizations the world over collaborate in its functioning and development. The high-speed, fiber-optic cables (called backbones) through which the bulk of the Internet data travels are owned by telephone companies in their respective countries. The Internet grew out of the Advanced Research Projects Agency's Wide Area Network

(then called ARPANET) established by the US Department of Defense in the 1960s for collaboration in military research among business and government laboratories. Later, universities and other US institutions connected to it. This resulted in ARPANET growing beyond everyone's expectations and acquiring the name 'Internet.'

The development of hypertext-based technology (called World Wide Web, WWW, or just the Web) provided means of displaying text, graphics, and animations, and easy search and navigation tools that triggered Internet's explosive worldwide growth. Internet is a global computer network providing a variety of information and communication facilities, consisting of interconnected networks using standardized communication protocols. The Internet has indeed revolutionized communications. Carpenter and Daniel Drezner (2010) describe it as “the second revolution in communications technology that redefined the relationship between producers and consumers of online information” has recently developed both in its technological capabilities and its global reach. Web 2.0 includes online tools such as blogs, micro--blogs, photo and video---sharing platform as well as social media networking websites. Christopher Bronk accurately summarizes the definition of Web 2.0 to encompass the meaning of social media,

The Internet has provided better opportunities to help students take their learning experience outside the classroom to wherever they are. Today, many students and educationists are using sites like Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Youtube, MySpace, Flickr, Netlog, Slideshare and tools such as Skype, Ovoo, and Yahoo messenger to connect students to learning opportunities in new and exciting ways. Within seconds, a lecturer can retrieve information through the internet. Critics of the structured school learning have argued in favour of a more flexible way to pass knowledge from instructor to learners at the learners' convenience. What that implies is that the learners are expected to have a choice in the learning environment of where, when and how learning should take place. This is what experts call flexible learning or personalized learning. The Macquarie University in Australia defines flexible learning as the one which, “aims to meet individual needs by providing choices that allow students to meet their own educational requirements in ways suiting the individual” (Barbazon, 2007 p.80).

Hence, in Nigeria today, the internet has made it possible for as many who did not have the opportunity to get a degree in a conventional university to have it through the flexible learning by the National Open University of Nigeria.

## 2.5 Summary

This unit traced to origin of media. It also presented the different types of media which have broadly been categorized into traditional and new media. It also noted that increasing, the dividing line between traditional and new media is being blurred.

### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 2

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *The origin of the media is remotely traceable to painting on a cave wall about forty thousand years ago in the island of Sulawesi in.....?*
2. *..... built the first printing press around 1440 in Germany?*
3. *The development of photographic technologies in the 19th-century led to the later innovations of .....and.....?*
4. *In 1969, management consultant Peter Drucker predicted the development of.....?*
5. *Broadly, the two types of media are.....and.....?*

## 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Brabazon, T. (2007). *The University of Google: Education in the post information age*. England: Ashgate Publishing Limited.

Oluwalanu, S. B, Adelabu. O, Okunade J.K, (2014). Adapting social media for formal learning in Nigeria: Challenges and prospects. *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review (OMAN Chapter)*, 3(9).

Taylor, Ruppert (2022). A Short History of Media.  
<https://owlcation.com/humanities/A-Short-History-of-Media>.

## 2.7 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 2

1. *Indonesia*
2. *Johannes Gutenberg*
3. *cinema and television*
4. *computers*
5. *traditional and new*

## UNIT 3: ORIGIN AND EVOLUTION OF INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Origin of and evolution of international relations
- 3.4 Summary
- 3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

### 3.1 Introduction

International relations as an activity refers to any kind of a relationship among and

between the states in the world and non-state actors acting from across the boundaries of states. Even before the emergence of states, relationships took place between actors operating across the boundaries of relatively autonomous political units which were harbingers of the state system. From the day states were formed, those states have built and maintained relationships with external states. This unit is significant in that it explores the origin and evolution of international relations beginning from the pre-state to the state system.

### **3.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Identify the origin of international relations.
- Trace the evolution of international relations

### **3.3 Main Section**

#### **3.3 Origin and Evolution of International Relations**

In ancient times, Aristotle said: “Man by nature and necessity is a social animal.”

According to him, a man who claimed he could live without other beings is either a god or a beast. In modern times we can safely say that no nation or country can live in isolation. The co-existence of nations is the order of the day. No doubt, every nation is independent and sovereign; nevertheless, it counts on other nations of the world in several respects. Cordial relations and understanding among nations have become an important phenomenon of modern life. International Relations have thus assumed great pragmatic and academic significance in present times.

Though International Relations as an academic discipline is of a recent origin, relations among nations were as history itself. As an activity, one of the earliest examples for international relations among states can be found in ancient Greece. Written evidence has been found that Greek city states had always kept relationships between each other. These relationships have mostly been military in nature. But even though the city states were constantly at war with each other, in many instances they formed alliances in the name of their security to fight and eliminate threats. And also, in Greece, at the time of Olympics all city states called for a truce and ceased fighting until the games were over (Rhodes, 2007).

Other ancient civilizations like the Egyptians, the Sumerian, the Assyrian, the Indian, the Chinese as well as the Romans had evolved a distinct code of inter-state conduct and a pattern of international relations. But in the ancient world, international relations were incidental sporadic, and limited in nature. Mostly they were not global but merely regional in character. They were therefore often described as parochial due to their sporadic nature.

With the Renaissance and the reformation, international relations assumed a new character. After the Peace of Westphalia in 1648, statehood became an ideal unit of humanity. With this, territorial sovereign and nation-state emerged as a basic political unit and an effective international relations actor. These sovereign states were very much aware of their independence, yet they were also conscious of the reality of interdependence in the modern world. Modern international relations, therefore, began to grow in the paradoxical situation of independence and inter-dependence, separateness and closeness, individuality and mutuality, nationalism and internationalism. They continued to develop as a process of cooperation and conflict. More than the Peace of Westphalia, the Treaty of Utrecht of 1713 is thought to reflect an emerging norm that sovereigns had no internal equals within a defined territory and no external superiors as the ultimate authority within the territory's sovereign borders. The centuries of roughly 1500 to 1789 saw the rise of the independent, sovereign states, the institutionalization of diplomacy and armies. The French Revolution added to this the new idea that not princes or an oligarchy, but the citizenry of a state, defined as the nation, should be defined as sovereign (Khan, 2019).

There was a manifold increase in the wants and needs of the various countries after the Industrial Revolution. And this was accompanied by considerable improvement in transport and communications. Trade, transit, and transactions between the nations became the order of the day. Scientific and technological revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries further brought the nations nearer and closer. All these developments made international relations more regular, more comprehensive, more valuable day by day. Their character became more and more global and broadened instead of regional and narrower.

Industrial and scientific innovations also had an impact on war technology and armaments. The trauma of the First World War, together with the demand for democratic control of foreign policy, stimulated the public urge to better understand foreign relations. The issues of war and peace came to the forefront. These developments attracted people's attention to the growing importance of international relations and provided the ground for the emergence of international relations as an academic discipline.

### **Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 3**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *The saying "Man by nature and necessity is a social animal" is attributable to.....?*
2. *The practice of international relations as an activity preceded its emergence as an academic discipline. True or False?*
3. *The Olympic games started in .....*

4. *International relations assumed a new character following the.....and.....?*
5. *The ....., together with the demand for democratic control of foreign policy, stimulated the public urge to better understand foreign relations.*

### 3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Acharya, Amitav and Buzan, Barry (2019). *The Making of Global International Relations: Origins and Evolution of IR at Its Centenary*. Cambridge University Press

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Khan, Awarls (2019). International Relations: Introduction.

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### 3.7 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 2

1. *Aristotle*
2. *True*
3. *Athens, Greece*
4. *Renaissance and the Reformation*
5. *trauma of the First World War*

## UNIT 4: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA AND SOCIETY

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 The Relationship between Media and Society
- 4.4 Media Influence on Laws and Governance
- 4.5 Summary
- 4.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 4.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

#### 4.1 Introduction

The relation between media and society is very interesting and complex in its nature. As society is dynamic and heterogynous, so also is media technology evolving. Thus, no theory has been able to solely describe the relationship. The available evidences show the connection between media and society are contextual across time and place and heterogeneous across societies and media type. This unit is significant in that it examines the nature of that relationship.

#### 4.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Discuss the Relationship between media and society
- Explain how media influence on laws and governance.

### 4.3 Main Section

#### 4.3 The Relationship between Media and Society

John Dewey in *Democracy and Education*, 1916 – “Society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication.” This shows how much communication/ media is so crucial phenomena in the human (society) survival. According to Poepsel (2018), communication systems can be used as weapons. The evolution of mass communication tools is the story of increased capacity to do the same good and evil things people have always done in societies and between them.

Looking beyond technological utopianism — the idea that new technologies (particularly ICTs) will lead to greater social understanding and better conditions for the global population — we are left with a tedious but massively meaningful project. We must find ways to coexist with other societies even as we are constantly aware of our differences and of possible threats that may have existed before but now are much easier to see.

In understanding media and society, the most important part to be discussed is - Power! What role the media play in power and what role the powers play on media are quite interesting and complicated. Final issue worthy of note is the politics of representation in media industry and content. Mostly the society segments/groups like race, gender, age, class, etc are portrayed and included in the production and dissemination of meaning in the media industry. McQuail (2010) depicted four basic themes in connecting media and society. These are: 1. Power role and Inequality; 2. Social integration and identity; 3. Causing social change and development; and 4. Bridging space and time. These roles are, however, not always and universally positive or negative. Often, culture variations determine the theoretical and practical nature of media role. For example, critical and post modernists may be critical of media power role and positivists may have pro-power assumptions. These four themes provide a comprehensive lens to discuss the relationship between media and society, power and representation.

#### 4.4 Media Influence on Laws and Governance

Media have long had a voice and a role in politics. Even some of the earliest newspapers and magazines used their pages as a forum for political discourse. When broadcast media emerged during the 20th century, radio briefs and television reports entered the conversation, bringing political stories to the public’s living rooms.

In addition to acting as a watchdog, media provide readers and viewers with news coverage of issues and events, and also offer public forums for debate. Thus, media



support—or lack thereof—can have a significant influence on public opinion and governmental action. There is, therefore, an ongoing debate over media’s role in politics. Many individuals wonder who is really behind certain stories. William James Willis, author of *The Media Effect: How the News Influences Politics and Government* frames this debate thus:

Sometimes the media appear willing or unwitting participants in chasing stories the government wants them to chase; other times politicians find themselves chasing issues that the media has enlarged by its coverage. Over the decades, political scientists, journalists, politicians, and political pundits have put forth many arguments about the media’s power in influencing the government and politicians (Willis, 2007).

**4.5 Summary**

The unit examined the complex relations between media and society. It analyzed the how the media impacts on and is impacted by laws and governance

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. ....postulated that society not only continues to exist by transmission, by communication, but it may fairly be said to exist in transmission, in communication?
2. According to Poepsel (2018), communication systems can be used as .....
3. In understanding media and society, the most important part to be discussed is .....
4. McQuail (2010) depicted four basic themes in connecting media and society as.....;.....;.....and.....?

**4.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

Eytan, Gilboa (2005). The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations. *Political Communication*, 22:1, 27-44, DOI: 10.1080/10584600590908429.

McQuail, Dennis. 1987. *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*. Sage: London

**4.7 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

1. John Dewey
2. weapons
3. Power
4. 1. Power role and Inequality; 2. Social integration and identity; 3. Causing social change and development; and 4. Bridging space and time.

**MODULE 2: THEORIES OF MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**Introduction**

The media’s role is to disseminate accurate and objective information about particular phenomena but the media itself is rarely an objective institution. In international

relations, the media exists as a non-state actor, able to exert power through its representation, reinforcement and the possibility to challenge the narrative of a particular conflict or intervention. The media's description of such international relations phenomena, its interpretation of events and even the decision to highlight one issue over another show that the media is a contested space. In this module, we outline and discuss the various theories that have been applied in the explanation of the media in international relations.

## **UNIT 1: TRADITIONAL THEORIES**

### **Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Realist theory
- 1.4 Liberal theory
- 1.5 Summary
- 1.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 1.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

### **1.1 Introduction**

This unit is significant in that it analyses the traditional theories that have been applied to the explanation and understanding of the relationship between the media and practice of international relations. These theories are realist and liberal theories.

### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Relate realist theory to the discussion of media and international relation
- Apply liberalism to the understanding of the relationship between media and international relations.

### **1.3 Main Section**

#### **1.3 Traditional Theories of Media and International Relations**

Within the realist framework, policy is created at the level of the elite and so policymakers have little interest in the perspective of the public or the media. Realism views international politics as an interstate struggle. For them, therefore, domestic actors should not influence an inherently self-interested foreign policy. Practically, public opinion should not be allowed to interfere with state interest in the international arena. This assumption is reliant on the idea that the public are largely not interested or simply ignorant of foreign issues and that policy makers act from a morally acceptable position because they act in the interest of the state, which is at the centre of realist theory (Robinson, 2012:179-180).

On its part, the liberal theory of international relations encourages the role of public opinion and the participation and feedback from the media on foreign policy. Based on the

democratic peace theory (Robinson, 2012:181) first argued by German philosopher Immanuel Kant and later formulated by Michael Doyle, the democratic peace hypothesis argues that democratic states avoid the use of force due to a number of factors such as the inherent liberal desire to cooperate and the role of a participatory public that serves to curb executives (Hill, 2003:235-237).

In their view, although the media exists as an independent entity from government, within international relations the media also facilitates the spread of liberal values such as democracy. For example, Nye (1996 in Robinson, 2012:181) argues that the United States Information Agency has used the Voice of America news service to access audiences abroad and communicate a particular message or facilitate a democratic agenda. However, it is important to note that countries that are not necessarily example of liberal democracies also have similarly structured state-owned international media agencies, such as China's CCTV and the Russian agency RT. These can still be seen as examples of soft power, through which great powers spread influence through ideas rather than force.

As the liberal framework is open to direct influence from the media and public opinion, this approach has also allowed civil society to play a more active role in policy making. Activist groups have in certain instances successfully lobbied policymakers to intervene in humanitarian crises (Robinson, 2012:182). For example, groups like the Save Darfur coalition were able to lobby the American congress that contributed to the conflict becoming a foreign policy issue that both Houses of Congress voted on to implement sanctions on Sudan and a position that reflected when the American Ambassador to the United Nations used his position on the United Nations Security Council to lobby for intervention in the Darfur conflict.

## **UNIT 2: POSITIVIST MEDIA THEORIES – THE MEDIA AS APOLITICAL OBSERVER**

### **Unit Structure**

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 The Relationship between Media and Society
- 2.4 Media Influence on Laws and Governance
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 2.7 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

### **2.1 Introduction**

The media serves as one of the main source of information for the public on issues in

international relations and thereby serve to bear witness to events and bring the public's attention to particular occurrences and in turn to spark and ventilate debate that would otherwise have happened behind closed doors among political elites. This unit is significant in that it presents the views of positivist media theorists on the nexus between the media and international relations.

## 2.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Discuss the positivist media
- Apply the tenets of the theory to the discussion of the media and international relations

## 2.3 Main Section

### 2.3 Positivist Media Theories

One of the fundamental theoretical frameworks of media is functionalism, a positivist model that outlines the basic functions of the media in society. Positivist media theory is reliant on the assumption that society functions in an objective reality that exists independently of human beings. This interpretation lends itself to analysis through scientific means with the expectation of an observable, objective result. McQuail argues that functionalism provides a basic structure about the role of the media in society. From the functionalist perspective, all militaristic, economic and cultural institutions, private or state-owned, serve to maintain social equilibrium (Fourie, 2007:186). In this holistic society, the media is just one of the wholes that contribute to a harmonious and cohesive society (Fourie, 2007:119).

One of the most prominent functionalist models of the mass media is that developed by C.R. Wright who argued that the main function of the media is to inform and entertain people. In this way, the media contributed to the cultural growth for individuals and society either manifestly or latently (Fourie 2004, 265). Media scholar Robert Merton was the first to distinguish between the latent and manifest functions of the media within a holistic society, arguing that one function of the media may benefit one sector of society, while damaging the other (Luke and Tuathail, 1997: 709; Fourie, 2007: 186).

Due to the assumed objectivity of a positivist theory, functionalism positions itself as an apolitical media theory and so because of this perspective often fails to take into account the role the media plays in creating a hegemonic culture through reinforcing a dominant message. As McQuail argues, functionalism has a conservative bias so much so that the media is seen as a “means to maintaining society as it is rather than as a potential source of change” (McQuail, 1987:69). The functionalist model fails to account for those

outside of the dominant culture, which is seen as a democratic, monotheistic modern society.

Further, critics argue that Wright's model does not adequately address the political functions of the media. That is true of functionalism as a whole, as it fails to account for the fact that the media does not function in the same way for all individuals or groups. The linear model of functionalism often fails to account for feedback and therefore in doing so fails to interpret social change and transformation (Fourie, 2007:187). It fails to account for the social impact of the media and how the media exerts power within the sphere of international relations as a non-state actor. With regard to the Darfur conflict, for instance, understanding how the narrative around the conflict was created is key in understanding the role of the media as a non-state actor. Despite this inherent criticism of functionalism, the models it has created contributes to understanding the role of the media, especially through its attempt to illustrate the direct effects of mass media and reporting.

## 2.4 Summary

This unit examined the views of positivist media theorists with a view to enhancing understanding of the interface between the media and international relations.

### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *One of the fundamental theoretical frameworks of media is .....*
2. *Positivist media theory is reliant on the assumption that society functions in an ..... that exists independently of human beings?*
3. *From the functionalist perspective, all militaristic, economic and cultural institutions, private or state-owned, serve to .....*

## 2.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Chutel, Lynsey (2014). The Media as a Non-State Actor in International Relations: A case study of the New York Times' coverage of the Darfur conflict in 2004. Dissertation submitted for the award of degree of Masters of Arts in International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. Available at:

[https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/17069/FINALSUBMISSION\\_LCHUTEL\\_330194.pdf?sequence=1](https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/17069/FINALSUBMISSION_LCHUTEL_330194.pdf?sequence=1)

Eytan, Gilboa (2005). The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations. *Political Communication*, 22:1, 27-44, DOI: 10.1080/10584600590908429.

## 2.6 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *functionalism*
2. *objective reality*
3. *maintain social equilibrium*

## UNIT 3: AGENDA SETTING THEORY

### Unit Structure

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Agenda setting theory
- 3.4 Summary
- 3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 3.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

### **3.1 Introduction**

Agenda-setting describes the "ability of the news media to influence the importance placed on the topics of the public agenda". The study of agenda-setting describes the way media attempts to influence viewers, and establish a hierarchy of news prevalence. Nations judged to be endowed with more political power receive higher media exposure. The agenda-setting by media is driven by the media's bias on things such as politics, economy and culture, etc. The evolution of agenda-setting and laissez-faire components of communication research encouraged a fast pace growth and expansion of these perspectives. Agenda-setting has phases that need to be in a specific order in order for it to succeed. This unit examines the tenets of the theory in detail.

### **3.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Explain the agenda setting theory in detail
- Apply the theory to the discussion of the media and international relation

### **3.3 Main Section**

#### **3.3 Agenda Setting Theory**

The theory of agenda setting describes the media's ability to identify and communicate to a society which issues are important and therefore worthy of the individual's and system's attention. Due to the media's surveillance function it provides information to the audience about the conditions of the world outside of their immediate social context, in a sense bearing witness. The argument of proponents of the agenda-setting theory is that in deciding which stories to cover and how to convey that message the media decides the significance of particular issues in the broader social context, thus setting the agenda (Infante et al. 1997, 365-367).

Lomax et al (1983:17) define agenda setting as "the process by which problems become salient as political issues meriting the attention of the polity." In this definition, the media's capacity to set the agenda of public policy is based on a temporal sequence of events in which the news media report on an event, which in turn influences the public perception of the importance of this particular event and the issues related to it, which in turn serves to influence how public policy makers react to that particular issue (Lomax et al, 1983:17).

Referring specifically to the framing of a media narrative, McCombs and Ghanem (2003:67) argue that "the media's agenda sets the public's agenda" defining agenda setting as "a theory about the transfer of salience from the mass media's picture of the world to

those in our heads.” McQuail (1984:276) describes this theory as a “plausible but unproven idea” and this is arguably because it remains impossible to measure the response of the individual and the structural system to the angle of a particular message because interpretation is such a subjective phenomenon. Still, researchers have employed a number of methods in order to assess whether media reportage is in fact able to influence public opinion and subsequently public policy. Lomax et al (1983) created a research design that emphasized pre-test and post-test measurement of the reaction of control groups in order to measure agenda-setting capacity. In the past, pre- and post-testing have been difficult because journalists do not reveal their stories or their sources before publication.

In this specific study, the researchers made up of sociologists, political scientists and communication researchers worked with a television news programme that was set to publicise the results of an investigation into fraud in home-based healthcare. The group was able to prove that while exposure to the issue had influenced how a targeted audience viewed the topic, the same exposure and increase in public awareness did not influence policymakers in a uniform manner. The report showed greater influence among government elites than among interested elites. However, the issue still had low importance on the policy agendas of these government elites (Lomax et al, 1983).

Wood and Peake (1998) assessed agenda setting specifically from the perspective of a state president. Evaluating the economy of a president’s attention to foreign policy, Wood and Peake (1998) monitored the reaction of American presidents in the Bosnian conflict, issues involving the then Soviet Union and the ongoing Arab-Israeli conflict using a comparative analysis based on data collected from the ‘Public Papers of the President’ and a television news search, using the PANDA data set to measure the perceived attention presidents paid to particular foreign policy issues. The aim of the study was to measure foreign policy agenda and the study revealed that a combination of factors influenced how foreign policy issues came to dominate the agenda, among these issues was the role of competing media topics and other geopolitical issues.

The findings of the Woode and Peake (1998) study are relevant to this research paper too. For example, as a dominating geopolitical discourse, the narrative on the War on Terror, informed by American President George W. Bush’s post-September 11th foreign policy influenced much of how the media reported on the role of religion in inter- and intrastate conflict, in particular what was described as fundamentalist Islam. Sudan was at the time identified as one of the states who were potential training grounds for global terror network Al-Qaeda and under the War on Terror policy, humanitarian intervention was often part of

the military intervention of the United States government (Mamdani, 2009:274). It is for this reason that Mamdani argues that the media, civil society and lobby groups framed the conflict as an 'Arab versus African' dichotomy.

In an attempt to explain decision-making in international relations, foreign policy analysis has focused on the role of media and public opinion in shaping policy. Foreign policy analysis has outlined two perspectives on the agenda-setting role of the media, namely the pluralist and the elite model. The pluralist model is based on the assumption that power is dispersed throughout society and no one group dominates the public policy decision-making process and therefore assumes that while public opinion and the media are able to influence policy, the media and public opinion cannot in turn be influenced by domestic and international political systems. The elite model in turn argues that power is concentrated with elite groups who dominate both society and political systems and therefore influence the media (Robinson, 2008:169).

One of the methods the media uses to set the agenda and create or influence public opinion on a particular topic is through framing. According to Entman (Reese, 2003:10) to frame is to select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in communicating text, in such a way as to promote a particular problem or definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation. Outlined in *Projections of Power* (2003), Entman's model of cascading network activation argues that this perceived reality or framing of an international relations phenomenon, begins with the administration, then is communicated to elites who may then reinterpret or reframe it and then it is passed along to the media who turn the phenomenon into a news item and communicate it to the public. Public feedback is perceived through voting behaviour, opinion polls and similar measures (Gamson, 2005:324; Lindner, 2009:26).

However, Gamson (2005:324) argues that this model largely ignores the role of civil society influencing the message about a particular movement. Gamson (2005:325) argues that feedback is also perceived through protest or disagreement with the administration's message. For example, while the Bush Administration was quite successful in creating a narrative that justified the invasion of Iraq on the War on Terror and the aftermath of the September 11th attacks, the protest from the anti-war movement created a new media frame that essentially set a new agenda. Similarly, Mamdani (2009:34) argues that the Save Darfur protests and awareness campaign influenced the narrative on the Darfur conflict, arguing that the movement "globalised" the conflict.

McCombs and Ghanem (2003:67) expand the definition of agenda setting as a theory



that describes the “transfer of salience from the mass media’s pictures of the world to those in our heads so that the elements prominent in the media’s pictures become prominent in the audience’s picture.” This happens on two levels: Firstly, the media communicates the importance of an object such as a political issue or event or public institution; and then the media communicates the attributes of that object, in which the media may attempt to tell the audience how to think about that particular event, issue or institution (McCombs and Ghanem (2003:68- 69). For example, at the beginning of 2004 the New York Times communicated to its audiences that it was important to shift focus from the conflict in the south of Sudan, to the growing conflict in the west, specifically Darfur. The manner in which the conflict was framed attempted to communicate how the public should perceive the conflict, such as whether it was genocide, the level of brutality, and who the victims and perpetrators of this violence were. The newspaper employed various linguistic frames to create this picture in the minds of its audience.

### 3.4 Summary

This unit outlined the basic assumptions of agenda setting theory as it applies to the mass media. It evaluated its analytic utility for understanding the relationship between the media and international relations.

#### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *The study of agenda-setting describes the way media attempts to .....*?
2. *One of the methods the media uses to set the agenda and create or influence public opinion on a particular topic is through .....*?
3. *Public feedback is perceived through ....., opinion polls and similar measures?*
4. *Gamson (2005:324) criticized the agenda setting model on the ground that it largely ignores the ..... influencing the message about a particular movement?*

### 3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Chutel, Lynsey (2014). *The Media as a Non-State Actor in International Relations: A case study of the New York Times’ coverage of the Darfur conflict in 2004*. Dissertation submitted for the award of degree of Masters of Arts in International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. Available at: [https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/17069/FINALSUBMISSION\\_LCHUTEL\\_330194.pdf?sequence=1](https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/17069/FINALSUBMISSION_LCHUTEL_330194.pdf?sequence=1)

Mamdani, Mahmood. (2009). *Saviours and Survivors: Darfur, Politics and the War on Terror*. Cape Town: HSRC Press.

McQuail, Dennis. 1987. *Mass Communication Theory: An Introduction*. Sage: London.

### 3.6 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *influence viewers, and establish a hierarchy of news prevalence*
2. *framing*
3. *voting behaviour*

## UNIT 4: CRITICAL MEDIA THEORY

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 Critical media theory
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources
- 4.6 Possible Answers to Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs)

### 4.1 Introduction

Critical media theory can be traced back to the development of critical theory by thinkers associated with the so-called Frankfurt School in the 1920s and 1930s. The critical theory of the Frankfurt School was generally neo-Marxist and Hegelian, and established powerful critiques of positivist, mainstream forms of social science and philosophy. The Frankfurt School's approach to theorizing the emergent 20th century "mass media" therefore founded a powerful critique of mainstream, positivist, "administrative" mass communication research that became dominant in the early decades of the discipline. This unit is significant in that it evaluates the contributions of the theory to the discussion of the media and international relations.

### 4.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to

- Explain the basic assumptions of critical media theory
- Analyze its applicability to the explanation of the relationship between the media and international relations.

### 4.3 Main Section

#### 4.3. Critical Media Theory

Within the media, critical theory is also situated in the constructivist approach and in its broadest is concerned with the political economy of media, arguing that the media and subsequently public opinion are subject to the goals of the elite in order to maintain the status quo or ideology. The media thus creates a message that reinforces hegemonic ideology (Robinson, 2010:182). The propaganda model is a constructivist approach that argues that the media serves the goals of the dominant elite even in democratic societies. Herman and Chomsky argue that the economic structure of the mass media – characterised by size, ownership, its reliance on advertising as a source of income and sources such as government

officials and business people – ensure that the media creates a message that reinforces the dominant message while marginalising minority voices (Herman and Chomsky, 2001:280).

The propaganda model is most often used in analysis of the role of ownership and the market in the creation of message and creates a framework through which to discuss the relationship between the media and society as producer and consumer. While this theory is fundamental in the critique of the mass media this paper is concerned with agenda setting through reportage and so will not directly apply the propaganda model. Still, this is particularly helpful when discussing the role of sources in creating representations (Chutel, 2014).

Critical media theory has also broadened to demonstrate and critique how the specific message created by the media contributes to the status quo. Cultural studies is situated “between the theoretical concerns of structuralism and political economy...[with] emphasis on different frameworks of knowledge that encode and decode a programme” (Sardar, 2000:59). Cultural studies is concerned with how texts reinforce hegemony, rooted in the idea that ideology – “the dominant ideas and representations in a given social order” – is reinforced through the “consent of the majority of subaltern or subordinate groups to a given socio-political constellation” (Kellner and Durham, 2001:6-7).

In analysing media texts, the assumption of cultural studies is that every text is site of contestation in which the message and the meaning created by the signs of linguistics that make up the text either reinforce the dominant hegemony, is negotiated but showing slight disagreement or is oppositional to the dominant or intended message or meaning (Sardar, 2000:59). This understanding demonstrates the role of the media as an institution that contributes to the creation of meaning and social interaction, as demonstrated in the critical understanding of international relations.

Within cultural studies, Althusser interprets ideology as a “representation of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence” (Heck, 1992:122). As in the communicative action theory within the critical framework of international relations that argues that communication is a form of socialised learning that relies on the beliefs and values that a particular individual holds in society (Roach, 2010:63), ideology in the mass media represents a set of “rules which determine an organisation and the functioning of images and concepts” within that organisation (Althusser in Heck, 1992:123). In other words, the images and concepts are subject to ideology in that they create and reinforce society as a structure, and the individual negotiates and creates her own meaning within this structure.

#### 4.4 Summary

This unit discussed the origin and core assumptions of the critical media theory. Some criticisms against the theory were also identified.

##### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *Critical media theory can be traced back to the development of critical theory by thinkers associated with the so-called ..... in the 1920s and 1930s?*
2. *Critical media theory has also broadened to demonstrate and critique how the specific message created by the media contributes to the .....?*
3. *Cultural studies is situated “between the theoretical concerns of .....and.....?”*
4. *Within cultural studies, Althusser interprets ..... as a “representation of the imaginary relationships of individuals to their real conditions of existence?”*

#### 4.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Chutel, Lynsey (2014). The Media as a Non-State Actor in International Relations: A case study of the New York Times’ coverage of the Darfur conflict in 2004. Dissertation submitted for the award of degree of Masters of Arts in International Relations at the University of the Witwatersrand, South Africa. Available at:

[https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/17069/FINALSUBMISSION\\_LCHUTEL\\_330194.pdf?sequence=1](https://wiredspace.wits.ac.za/bitstream/handle/10539/17069/FINALSUBMISSION_LCHUTEL_330194.pdf?sequence=1)

Eytan, Gilboa (2005). The CNN Effect: The Search for a Communication Theory of International Relations. *Political Communication*, 22:1, 27-44, DOI: 10.1080/10584600590908429.

#### 4.6 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *Frankfurt School*
2. *status quo*
3. *structuralism and political economy*
4. *ideology*

## **MODULE 3: RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

### **INTRODUCTION**

The rise of the media across the globe has increased the complexity of an already rapidly evolving communications landscape. This complexity presents both obstacles and opportunities for international relations as traditional business and political conventions are constantly challenged. This Module explores the various ways in which media interacts with and impact international relations as well as the ways in which it is impacted by the nature of international relations.

- Unit 1 The Media’s Power in the Domestic Politics
- Unit 2 The influence of the media in international diplomacy
- Unit 3 The media’s power in international relations – The CNN effect
- Unit 4 The media’s power in international relations – The Al Jazeera effect

### **UNIT 1: THE MEDIA’S POWER IN THE DOMESTIC POLITICS**

#### **Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 The Media’s Power in the Domestic Politics
- 1.4 Summary
- 1.5 References/Further Readings.
- 1.6 Possible answers to SAEs

#### **1.0 Introduction**

Without an understanding of the media’s political functions and their influences on the nations, it is not possible to provide a comprehensive picture of their impacts on the states and international relations. Thus, this unit is devoted to explain five political functions of the media (Kuhn 2007:21), which include information provision, agenda setting, public watchdog, political mobilization and regime legitimating.

#### **1.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the five political functions of the media namely:
  - Information provision;
  - agenda setting;
  - public watchdog;
  - political mobilization; and
  - regime legitimating

#### **1.3 Main Content**

#### **1.3 The Media’s Power in the Domestic Politics**

In the first function, the roles of media in expressing, reproducing and spreading information, ideologies and values to wider social and international structures constitute a crucial relationship between society and the media (Richardson 2007:114). These roles make them ideological instruments that produce meanings and naturalize power relations; they become the means to realize domination. The politicians would want to influence the information with the aim of maximizing their voters in order to promote desirable situations and definitions.

Thus, the role of media discourse is crucial in the expression of ideas regarding how people think about themselves and other nations. The media select, organize and emphasize particularly news in order to decide what a significant subject for public discussion is. The media cannot force us what to think; but they certainly influence what we think about and how we think about it by their function of agenda building. Sometimes the media act as a window on the political affairs or as megaphones for the messages of politicians. In this case, intensive visibility of an issue in the news is an outcome of shaping the media agenda can be used to persuade or manipulate the public.

According to Nye (2004:53), increased information flows through the media have caused the loss of government's traditional control over information in relation to politics. The speed in moving information has created a system in which power over information is much more widely distributed, which means decentralization and less official control of government agendas. In that spirit, the media are not just the means of reproduction of power relations, but also pluralizing forces which work against the government's ability to influence and control. The media's acting as the public watchdog works out a check on elite behaviour, thus it can help make political actors accountable to the public, assisting in the empowerment of the latter as citizens and voters.

Furthermore, the media can be used for political mobilization by political parties and pressure groups for the purposes of membership recruitment, calling for a public meeting, local party canvassing, protesting, campaigning or a demonstration. The final political function of the media, regime legitimation helps to socialize citizens into acceptance of prevalent social norms and the institutions that embody them; by this way they contribute to the legitimating of the political system. On the other hand, the media can trigger to increase levels of political cynicism and voter apathy which can result demobilizing effect or delegitimizing effect at least for some of their audiences (Kuhn 2007:30).

It can be argued that the media's potential is based on the extent to which there is political control in the hands of politicians in policy making process in the linkage of media-

source balance. The key question in this context is who determines what can be addressed and what cannot. This question is answered in various ways in different theories, in particular in political communication and political economy (Herman and Chomsky 2002). The first one focuses on the power of the words, sounds and images in the media which might have influences on policy. Contradictory, political economy approach uses the power and ownership relations that determine the structural constraints and communication to analysis the 'influence' on the decision-making process.

According to this approach, privately owned media within a liberal state with legal protection of free speech is different from the press which is owned and operated by the political parties or state. For instance, pluralist and democratic governments face more competition in shaping the news than nondemocratic governments. The media would be used for justifying policy decisions of elites and having popular support for it (Roselle 2006:9). In democratic regimes, leaders' powers rely on the public for votes. Thus, they use media to explain and legitimize policies, which means media are the fourth estate acting as a protector against unrestrained power, in other words they are independent watchdogs of the system.

In addition to democracy, unlimited freedom of the news market does not guarantee the ideal of freedom of communication (Keohane 1991). Marketing justifies privileging of corporate speech and of more choice to investors than to citizens. Here, the most important point is the empowerment of citizens and not just the satisfaction of citizens as consumers. In this context, a third way can be purposed: 'heterarchy' (ibid: 150) of communication media which are controlled neither by the state nor commercial market. Functioning of healthy public sphere can be improved in publicly founded, non-profit and legally guaranteed media institution of civil society. The rise in non-state actors offers competing views, information, and foreign policies to government views, information, and foreign policy that may undermine states' ability to influence media coverage of foreign policy. The development of a plurality of non-state media of communication which both functions as permanent thorns in the side of political power and serves the primary means of communication for citizens' living, working, loving, quarrelling and tolerating others within a genuinely pluralist society. In a nutshell, what is spoken and known in a society depend on the role of the television, freedom of expression, accession to media and news values in the society.

In addition, it should be highlighted that there is a media-politicians' relationships into a co-evaluation. Media are not just used by politicians for tactical purposes and interests, but also media have their own motivation and interests which they have them into a more

complex relationships and interactions with individuals and institutions.

### 1.4 Summary

In this unit, we discussed the five political functions of the media namely: information provision; agenda setting; public watchdog; political mobilization; and regime legitimating. This is to enable us set the tone for proper understanding of the role of the media in international relations.

#### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *The five political functions performed by the media are:.....;.....;.....;.....; and.....?*
2. *The roles of media in expressing, reproducing and spreading information, ideologies and values to wider social and international structures constitute a crucial relationship between .....and.....?*
3. *Sometimes the media act as a window on the political affairs or as ..... for the messages of politicians?*
4. *According to Nye (2004:53), increased information flows through the media have caused the loss of .....?*

### 1.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Coban, Filiz (2016). The Role of the Media in International Relations: From the CNN Effect to the AI –Jazeera Effect. *Journal of International Relations and Foreign Policy*, 4(2), December, pp. 45-61, ISSN: 2333-5866 (Print), 2333-5874 (Online) Published by American Research Institute for Policy Development. DOI: 10.15640/jirfp.v4n2a3; URL: <https://doi.org/10.15640/jirfp.v4n2a3>

Robinson, P. (2000) ‘The policy-media interaction model: Measuring media power during humanitarian crisis’ *Journal of Peace Research*, 37(5): 613-633.

World Bank (2002). *The Right to Tell: The Role of Mass Media in Economic Development*. WBI Development Studies; Washington: DC. World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/15212> License: CC BY 3.0 IGO.”

### 1.6 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *information provision; agenda setting; public watchdog; political mobilization; and regime legitimating*
2. *society and the media*
3. *megaphones*
4. *government’s traditional control over information in relation to politics*

## UNIT 2: THE INFLUENCE OF THE MEDIA IN INTERNATIONAL DIPLOMACY

### Unit Structure

#### 2.1 Introduction



- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 International Diplomacy
- 2.4 Influence of the Media
- 2.5 Summary
- 2.6 References/Further Readings
- 2.7 Possible Answers to the SAEs

## **2.1 Introduction**

International diplomacy usually refers to the conduct of international relations through the interactions of professional diplomats with regards to issues of peace-making, trade, war, economics, culture, environment, and human rights. Simply put, diplomacy is the art and practice of conducting negotiations between representatives of states. This Unit is significant in that it explores the practice of diplomacy as well as the influence of the media in the course of diplomatic intercourse.

## **2.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss International Diplomacy
- Evaluate the Influence of the Media on international diplomatic practice

## **2.3 Main Content**

### **2.3 International Diplomacy**

Diplomacy can be defined as the conduct of international relations by negotiation and dialogue or by any other means to promote peaceful relations among states. Besides this widely accepted single definition, and more comprehensively, diplomacy is also a set of practices, institutions, and discourses which is crucial for the basic understanding of the historical evolution of the international system and its evolving functional and normative needs (Brown, 2001).

Diplomacy is the art of obtaining agreement between countries who need to cooperate to produce results in which each has an interest. Conventionally equated with negotiation to resolve conflict, diplomacy is widely regarded as an alternative to war—and war as a failure of diplomacy. But diplomacy can also assume the form of non-adversarial interaction to obtain the best results in a common project. While diplomacy itself is mostly a nonviolent bargaining process, it can involve inducements that are value additive or coercive, with the latter sometimes including threats, even the application of force, to affect participants' assessments of the benefits and costs of accepting or rejecting

particular arrangements. The rules and rituals of diplomacy are not self-contained, but constitute a subsystem of the international political relationships prevailing during a particular era.

Accordingly, diplomacy has evolved from a system of maneuvering and secretive deal-making by monarchies to the public diplomacy and democracy in which foreign policy is a continuation of domestic politics. The ‘new diplomacy’ also features efforts by governments, international organizations, and nongovernmental actors to affect conditions within other countries. Successful international and transnational coalition-building has become the most important requisite of effective diplomacy (Brown, 2001).

Modern diplomacy extends its activities into many spheres, but today it is subject to unprecedented influences and restrictions. An example of its diversifying influence is reflected in the expansion of the framework and themes of traditional multilateral diplomacy. Issues such as climate and health, which in the past were by no means part of the foreign policy realm, are handled by diplomatic means today as a matter of course. At the same time, in some areas of international relations, policy makers are turning away from multilateralism – and it is not just U.S. President Donald Trump, who assumes that foreign policy issues are better solved bilaterally.

Finally, the public, in turn, is more directly –often mediated by social media – placing demands on diplomacy, be it to stop whaling, halt the flow of refugees, or any other issue on the contemporary agenda. Such change has become increasingly noticeable in the decades since the end of the Cold War, or perhaps it is an altogether recent emergence (Stanzel, 2018).

#### **2.4 Influence of the Media on International Diplomacy**

The mass media are very powerful in international relations because they can cover many people during a short period of time. Furthermore, oftentimes, points of view that are represented by the mass media of any country are perceived as opinions of the state. Moreover, the media can easily influence the minds of people through photos, video and comments. The best examples of such impact are “CNN effect” that are used by politicians to persuade world communities.

The main point of “CNN effect” is 24-hour news coverage of any event such as war, disaster, international conflicts, etc. using photos and video from the place of incident. It puts pressure on governments and compels them to take immediate decisions that can be spontaneous and thoughtless. As a result, it can lead to escalation of conflicts because of misunderstanding. If for 24 hours a day, the media say that Iran, for example,

has nuclear weapons, anyone unconsciously will believe it. An intervention to this country will be perceived as a logical decision. But also “CNN effect” can attract attention of the world community to the concrete event. For instance, according to the article of Piers Robinson, *The CNN Effect: The Myth of News, Foreign Policy and Intervention*, US Balkans diplomat Richard Holbrooke said thanks to the media for their help to attract attention to the conflict between Bosnia and Kosovo.

Moreover, the mass media can be used as cover for international intelligence. For instance, *The Independent Military Review* argues that Secret Intelligence Services have members in such London newspapers as *The Economist*, *Observer*, and *Sunday Times*. As a result, the mass media are a very powerful “weapons” that can very easily have influences on decision-makers as well as people of the world. In conclusion, the best method of communication between states is using of diplomacy that has real power to solve crisis, control situation and obtain information and mass media that can represent opinion of the states or be a mean to promote and achieve economic, cultural and political interests of states.

## 2.5 Summary

In this unit, we discussed about international diplomacy. We also looked into the influence of the media on a country and the world community at large.

### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *The art of obtaining agreement between countries who need to cooperate to produce results in which each has an interest is generally referred to as.....?*
2. *Diplomacy can and often involves threats and even the application of force. True or False?*
3. *The mass media are very powerful in international relations because .....*
4. *The mass media can be used as cover for .....*

## 1.9 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Brown, S. (2001). Diplomacy. In: *International Encyclopedia of the Social & Behavioral Sciences*. Accessed from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/diplomacy>

Matos, C. (2012). Globalization and the mass media. In: *Encyclopedia of Globalization*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. doi: 10.1002/9780470670590.wbeog369

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## 1.10 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *Diplomacy*
2. *True*

3. *they can cover many people during a short period of time.*  
 4. *international intelligence*

### **UNIT 3: THE MEDIA’S POWER IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS: THE CNN EFFECT**

#### **Unit Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 The power of the media in international politics since the advent of satellite television
- 3.4 Evaluate the media effect in the conduct of war and maintenance of global peace of the Media
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings
- 3.7 Possible Answers to the SAEs

#### **3.1 Introduction**

For policy-makers and academics, the 1990s appeared to be an era of media empowerment. The ending of the Cold War anti-communist consensus between journalists and policy-makers and the spread of real-time news reporting technology seemed to disrupt traditional patterns of media deference to foreign policy elites and expand the power of the media. Interventions during humanitarian crises in northern Iraq 1991, Somalia 1992, Bosnia 1995, and Kosovo 1999, often preceded and accompanied by emotive media attention to human suffering, confirmed to some the thesis that media was driving foreign policy formulation.

This unit is significant in that it aims to find out how the media flow from the U.S. to the rest of the world, the so-called CNN effect, constituted a soft power and made the U.S. a global hegemonic power in the 1990s. This is particularly significant because in the 2000s, the broader range of information technology frames and new networks have been taking place in the form of contraflows against American hegemony.

#### **3.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the power of the media in international politics since the advent of satellite television
- Evaluate the media effect in the conduct of war and maintenance of global peace

### **3.3 Main Content**

#### **3.3 The Power of the Media in international politics – the CNN Effect**

The domestic and global public opinion have become key factors in the formulation of foreign policy in the age of mediation. Before this period, international politics were carried out mostly behind closed doors in secrecy and covert maneuverings (McNair 1998: 177). Throughout the twentieth century, the media have been used by governments to influence public opinion on foreign policies of states in their favour. By an examination of the British Foreign Office, Cohen (1986) found that at the level of policy implementation, government departments, individual officials and ministers use mass media as direct channels to foreign societies in the purpose of explaining policy to overseas publics to advance or conceal policy opinions. Cohen (1986: 52) noted that politicians use mass media in international negotiations in order to manipulate international public sphere and other governments. It can be described as an indirect media impact that mainly depend on pressure from the government's supporters and interest groups that can result to policy change at the planning stage of a decision in foreign policy

Specifically, during the Cold War the United States had used the media in getting its ideological message out in the rest of the world. Together with its hard power and economical means, the media had contributed to the empowerment of US hegemony. The media flows from the US to the other countries worked to spread its anti-communist propaganda and to provide reassurance to its alliances that the transatlantic perspective was valid against the Soviet threat. Tactical disinformation about opposing forces undermined the Soviet attempts and manipulated international public opinion.

Regarding this, McNair (1998:178) worked on the examples from the East-West relations in the Cold war period and claimed that the nature of 'the enemy' changed because of manipulating symbols and images in the media. His work illustrated that the media made an important contribution to international relations as the tools of distribution of political actors' images. CNN began in the 1980s with a goal of the 24-hour span of international news available with the local reporters from the different parts of the world. During China's Tiananmen Square uprising in 1989, CNN deserved respect through its 24-hour report.

As another remarkable success, in 1991 CNN could broadcast from the front lines of the war zone during the Persian Gulf War. CNN's coverage helped the international society to figure out what was happening in Iraq. It began to take attention to conflict areas and change people's minds. For instance, it is known that the pictures of starving children in the

Somalia crisis pushed President Bush toward action.

CNN International still remains influential as it broadcasts to a global audience on TV and via internet. In Taylor's (1997:58-59) summary of the historical development of the media and international political relationships, the television station CNN is presented as being a direct channel of diplomacy among politicians, the public and the rest of the world:

Much has already been written by historians about that increasing role, from the Anglo-German press 'wars' in the build-up to the First World War to the role of newspapers, the cinema and radio in the program of 'moral rearmament' prior to the Second World War. A growing amount of literature also now exists about how the media came to be deployed as a psychological weapon, at home and abroad, first between 1939 and 1945 and then subsequently during the Cold War. Today, however, if a statesman wants to make a public statement or send a message across the world, he has the option of doing so on CNN rather than through traditional diplomatic channels.

As Taylor noted, government departments, individual officials and ministers use mass media as direct channels to societies with the purpose of explaining policy to their nation and overseas publics to advance or conceal policy opinions. Therefore, the media seems to enable the evaluation of international society by distributing information that builds bridges between groups and individuals around the world. This makes the media an integral part of international relations. With a departure from Taylor's this summary of the historical development of media-politics relationship, in the following section the role of mass media is indicated in two fields of international relations: the studies of war and peace.

### **3.4 The Media Effect in War and Peace**

Since the 1990s, the dominant debate on the media-politics relationships has centred on the so-called "CNN effect". Three different approaches of the CNN effect are defined by Steve Livingston (1997: 4-6). He suggests that the media would act as a pitfall agenda setting agent in related to the choice and selection for the sake of national interests. They would become an accelerant in shortening response time for decision and policy making or they would move as an impediment actor that operates through the impact of public opinion.

As an agenda setting agent, the news media have an important job in defining issues, primarily to help the public understand the newest array of priorities and alliances. In this context, the news coverage can be useful for justifying state actions by shaping what people around the world think of it. For instance, in 2003 the U.S. war against Iraq was defined as a war of liberation by the White House and produced a media campaign to support that idea. In this case, modern media acted as considerable allies in selling the war and sustaining public support for it. When the media become an accelerant, they influence the strategies

and behaviour of those in power by creating sense of urgency, increasing public awareness and anxiety, leading to pressure to “do something”. But media coverage alone does not guarantee a particular effect on foreign policy, regardless of how or whether the media may exert a direct effect on policy-making elites both at home and abroad. The media coverage does not guarantee a policy response. For example, despite the media coverage of Bosnian atrocities and the genocide in Rwanda, none of the major Western powers intervened for years.

As the third approach of the CNN effect, when the media act as an impediment actor, they help to spread multiple frames, bring third parties into conflict and help to shape public opinion which in turn affect policymakers’ decisions on political conflicts. The opposition to government’s foreign policy can be an outcome of the media coverage which is sourced by the domestic political division. In this circumstance, the media’s power to distribute the reaction against official policy in public, pressure and interest groups can led the change of balance of power due to administration fail into control the process of the crises management (Wolfsfeld 2004:69).

For an illustration, it can be argued that the collapse of America’s will to fight in Vietnam resulted from the media’s reporting of foreign policy. In this case, the media coverage was affected by the domestic political divisions and spread a demoralisation of involving in an unsuccessful limited war. The media caused the Johnson administration’s failure to explain to the American public and Congress why the U.S. troops were fighting in Vietnam; thus, the strong public reaction occurred against the government's foreign policy.

It can be argued that in the linkage between the media and foreign policy, public opinion is the key component in the media’s effectiveness on a certain foreign policy decision. The media’s contribution in conduct of policy is its power to create a favourable climate for the officials in decision making by the coverage of certain issues which can attract large audience attention to gain public support. This proposition is however rejected by some scholars who argue media influence on the public is not adequately clarified by a theory.

As it is given with the examples, “the CNN effect” concerns mainly situations of media influence on international interventions. In addition to these, the news media can serve as a forum for peace building in which a wide and representative proponent and opponent set of voices are encouraged to express their views in an open and democratic public debate involves the perspectives of leaders, activists, and citizens. Therefore, the media’s impact on creating an environment that is conducive to compromise and

reconciliation is important for the political atmosphere surrounding the peace process (Wolfsfeld 2004:12).

Otherwise, the media can also serve as destructive agents in the peace process. They can emphasize the risks and dangers associated with compromise, raise the legitimacy of those opposed to concessions, and reinforce negative stereotypes of the enemy. In addition, the media can influence peace process in a negative way. This would be by decreasing public support for key peace objectives, by decreasing the secrecy needed for delicate foreign policy initiatives, or being a tool of carrying out war or genocide. Thus, giving too much access to the news media can reduce the chances for success of resolution. It should not be forgotten that the media are not the neutral communication channels due to they have their own motivations which define the frame through which they present the coverage of an issue. Hammond (2007:11) contributed a remarkable point by noticing the changing character of war since the Cold War. He argues that the politics of fear and 'risk society' have provoked the new understanding of war. Particularly, the 9/11 terror and the images of the planes hitting the World Trade Centre towers and their collapse, were mediated repeatedly by the mass media and the media coverage of this traumatic event increased the feeling of insecurity and war hysteria (Kellner 2003:144).

In the academic literature the role of American media in the Bush administration's "the war on terror" and how the national media constructed a link with the events and Saddam regime in Iraq were indicated in the various attempts (Bennett et al. 2007; Rampton and Stauber 2003). Washington's surge morality tale (King and Wells 2009: 158) offered all the components of a complete and substantive frame to gain the public support for the Iraq war. The era of post- 9/11 has provided Western leaders a preventative measure to preempt possible risks and threats which has produced rationale new forms of humanitarian and human rights-based intervention. In doing so, they hoped to recapture a sense of purpose and meaning for themselves and their society. Therefore, it can be argued that the staging war or acts of terrorism as the media events feed the change in the character of war. This fundamental shift in the politics of Western societies has given rise to importance of media coverage by intensive emphasis on image, spectacle and media presentation.

### **3.5 Summary**

In this unit, we discussed the media's power in international politics with focus on the CNN Effect. It analyzed how the emergence of 24-hour satellite television networks beginning from the 1980s transformed the conduct of international relations. It



also examined the role of the media in the conduct of war and in the maintenance of peace.

### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. ....refers to the media flow from the U.S. to the rest of the world?
2. .... about opposing forces undermined the Soviet attempts and manipulated international public opinion?
3. During the Cold War the United States had used the media in getting its ..... message out in the rest of the world?
4. Since the 1990s, the dominant debate on the media-politics relationships has centred on the so-called .....?

### 3.6 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Matos, C. (2012). Globalization and the mass media. In: *Encyclopedia of Globalization*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. doi: 10.1002/9780470670590.wbeog369

Mowlana, Hamid (2015). The role of media in contemporary international relations: culture and politics at the crossroads. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses*, DOI: 10.1080/17447143.2015.1032296 from: <https://www.sciencedirect.com/topics/social-sciences/diplomacy>

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### 3.7 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *The CNN effect*
2. *Tactical disinformation*
3. *ideological*
4. *“CNN effect”.*

## UNIT 4: THE NEW MEDIA’S POWER IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS: THE AL –JAZEERA EFFECT

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 The power of the new media in international relations
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 References/Further Readings.
- 4.6 Possible answers to SAEs

### 1.0 Introduction

International media networks foster solidarity within an information audience by creating virtual communities. Namely CNN, BBC and Al-Jazeera are increasing people’s awareness in their religion, culture and place in the world. In addition, faster and easily accessible information within global media had triggered the information wars among the states which have changed power politics. This Unit is significant

because it shows how the emergence of Al Jazeera and other non-Western media networks has transformed international power struggle and have enabled the rise of the rest against the Western hegemony.

### 1.3 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the effect of the power of the new media's Power in International Relations with a focus on the 'Al Jazeera effect'.
- Explain how the emergence of Al Jazeera and other non-Western media networks has transformed international power struggle and have enabled the rise of the rest against the Western hegemony.

### 1.3 Main Content

#### 1.3 The New Media's Power in International Relations – The Al Jazeera Effect

As a fact of the 21st century, the evaluation of power is dependent on information, which is supplied through communication and mass media. Whilst the dependency of the international system on developing information and communication technologies is regularly and rapidly increasing, the army, politicians, state officials, international institutions, NGOs and other international actors are making use of communication as a power source.

In the new millennium, the statesmen are aware of performance in international politics can change the image of state in the eyes of global audiences and even their voters. The success in foreign policy can affect the popularity of the leaders and their re-election chance in domestic politics. On this literature framework, this study highlights that beside the military and economic power, the media are vital to gain power and influence over other states in international relations. More importantly, by focusing on the concept of "Al Jazeera effect", this section argues that the United States' global hegemony has been challenged in the power struggle on information.

First of all, Seib (2008) used the concept of the Al Jazeera effect in reference to its impacts on the Arab world. In particular, the trend of empowering the silenced or marginalized nations and groups is called as Al Jazeera effect. Subsequently, this notion has been used to indicate the effects of new transnational networks and internet-based news media on international relations (Seib 2012).

In 1996 Al Jazeera was founded by the emir of Qatar in order to spread uncensored and critical coverage of news in the Middle East with the slogan of 'the opinion and the other opinion'. It aimed to break the hegemony of the pro-western international news gathering of CNN and BBC World. By offering a counter-hegemonic resource and power, it claimed to provide a new perspective to the world reached beyond the lens of the West. In

2003 Al Jazeera became accessible through its website for English speakers in order to reach greater audience and greater influence.

Al Jazeera has played a major role providing a platform for discussing the problems of Arab societies and has triggered the demands of democratic change which means it has a power to impact policy and public opinion. Moreover, it has challenged American perspectives and actions around the world with extensive local news networks as it was seen during the Iraq War. The non-Western journalists and networks brought the Iraqi perspective to the discussion; hereby the world simply could see what was going there from different viewpoints. Broadcasting the events internationally broke the monopoly of Western media on reporting and defining the war. In 2012 Al Jazeera America began to broadcast to American audiences in New York to secure access to cable and satellite distribution in the US.

Despite the fact that all these are the aspects of a new post-American world's reality, Zakaria (2008:74-78) notes that the West still offers a role model for advancement and modernity which the rest of world have admired and emulated. For instance, Al Jazeera English follows a CNN model with its political talk shows, anchors, on-air experts and debates. The rest of the world is challenging the US hegemony in a Western-looking way.

Not just Qatar's Al Jazeera English, but also China Central Television (CCTV) and Russia Today's (RT) English broadcasting distribute different views on global views which serve to reduce the West's monopoly on information and in particular the hegemony of the U.S. (Xie and Boyd-Barret 2015: 71-73). CCTV, the state network in China started to work as the mouthpiece of the Chinese Communist Party in 1958. But it enjoyed rapid development toward an ambitious global expansion with its Chinese Mandarin, English, Spanish, French, Arabic and Russian languages services. In addition, CCTV officially launched to its service of CCTV America headquartered in Washington DC, and CCTV Africa based in Nairobi, Kenya in 2012.

Today's CCTV reflects Beijing's policy preference for non-interventionism and inoffensiveness. Unlike CCTV, RT has provided international news from a critical perspective to the U.S. economy and politics since it came out at the end of 2005 to supply a Russia-friendly view point in English. Furthermore, Kremlin fund to establish the Arabic language channel Rusya Al-Yaum in 2007, the Spanish language channel RT Actualidad in 2009 and RT America in 2010. This plurality of sources reveals the information war among international broadcasters and countries.

Beyond the cable and satellite carriers, Al Jazeera English and all other new

international networks actively use the advantages of broadband, social media and mobile applications to reach wider audiences. They have remarkable popularity both on Facebook and YouTube. This is to say that new media has taken the information war to another level by Al Jazeera effect.

It is clear that the new system of communication has impacts on politics (Street 2011). The citizens are no longer just consumers of communication, thanks to the internet they also create their own coverage of politics and create new aspects of political activism and leadership by using social network sites. It can be said that one of the crucial areas in which the internet's impact has been felt is that to be enabling new forms of social and political activism (Coban, 2016).

Another area where the impact of new media is seen in journalism by the rise of the blog and so-called blogosphere where enable every citizen to act as journalist, interpret and distribute news reports. Also, the network communications and organizations empower the ways of text messaging, micro-blogging and blogging for the campaign and propaganda has emerged the impact in the conduct of politics. As another considerable area in which the new media impact on politics is that using internet technologies are configuring the state-citizen relationship. Internet is changing the operation of government in delivering services, distributing information and consulting citizens and implementing policy. However, it enables the authorities monitor and control to ever more effectively act as an Orwellian 'Big Brother' (Xie and Boyd-Barret 2015: 264).

According to Nye (2004: 53) increased information flows through new media cause the loss of government's traditional control over information in related with politics. The speed of internet and the speed of information create a system in which power over information is much more widely distributed that means decentralizing and less official control of government's agenda. The private armies or arm industry too evoke the decentralization. The information revolution has enhanced the role of markets in the means of to accelerate the diffusion of power away from governments to private actors (ibid: 51). Nye describes power relations today as a three-dimensional chess game, comprising from the top down, the military board, the economic board and, at the bottom, the 'soft power' of information.

The new communication and mass media revolution are increasing the importance of soft power, namely the ability to achieve desired outcomes in international affairs through attraction by convincing others rather than coercion. Thus, it can be argued that in the 21st century world politics, the new communication and mass media, so-called Al Jazeera effect,

are significant channels for the empowerment of states and citizens in setting the political agenda in politics, distributing a particular discourse and convincing people to improve cultural, political and economic cooperation among nations.

#### **4.4 Summary**

In a summary, the media's CNN effect function as the channels of communication can be used to give a response to foreign affairs by politicians or they can be used to gain public support for policy as well. The exchange of information occurs between the sides of politicians, public and media. It is therefore media's power to influence the political process depends on their relations to and impacts on the public's perception of foreign affairs. On the other hand, the governments need the media for the achievement of publicity. The aspects of this relationship tie the media with politicians and public in reporting of political issues. This serves to provide a particular understanding of the media's profile as a player in the shaping of foreign policy.

If we are to discuss the impact of media coverage on policy, we should ask whether a particular decision would have been made if media coverage had been different. What is more, argumentation of media caused making a particular decision is to claim that it was one of the necessary factors (not only one) in multiple factors in the process. It cannot be said that all policy is driven by the media, however, the question that it may affect it. How the public opinion can affect governmental policy making provides a crucial place to look in order to find out whether it has happened for analysing the influence of media.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the internet is changing sovereignty while transnational communication is opened to many millions of cyber communities. Moreover, national security is changing, states are facing a growing list of threats and attackers may be states, groups, individuals or some combinations. Some states are weaker than the private forces within them. The private organizations, the NGOs, industry and unions can compete for the attention of media from major countries in a transnational struggle over the agenda of world politics.

In this context, this research highlighted that beside Al-Jazeera, Russia's RT and China's CCTV have challenged with CNN International's hegemony in international news coverage. Both this trend of information struggle between the states and the new media's impacts in international relations is called as the Al Jazeera effect. With a departure from these aspects, it is argued that the media and its soft power in the world politics have been displaced the American hegemony in the last decade which can be characterized by the notion of post-American world. In a nutshell, it revealed how the new media have been

contributed to change power relations in the 21st century.

#### Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. Seib (2008) used the concept of the Al Jazeera effect in reference to its impacts on the .....
2. Beside Al-Jazeera.....and..... have challenged with CNN International's hegemony in international news coverage?
3. Al Jazeera was founded in .....by the emir of Qatar in order to spread uncensored and critical coverage of news in the Middle East?
4. ....and..... enable every citizen to act as journalist, interpret and distribute news reports?

#### 4.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources

Matos, C. (2012). Globalization and the mass media. In: *Encyclopedia of Globalization*. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell. doi: 10.1002/9780470670590.wbeog369

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#### 4.6 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. Arab world
2. Russia's RT and China's CCTV
3. 1996
4. Blog and so-called blogosphere

## UNIT 5: THE GENERAL ROLE OF MEDIA IN INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

### Unit Structure

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes
- 5.3 An Increasingly Connected, Complex World
- 5.4 Political Mobilization on a Global Scale
- 5.5 Transparency in International Diplomacy
- 5.6 Compelling Narratives for International Development
- 5.7 Opportunities and Challenges for International Business
- 5.8 Summary
- 5.9 References/Further Readings.
- 5.10 Possible answers to SAEs

### 5.1 Introduction

The rise of the media across the globe has increased the complexity of an already rapidly evolving communications landscape. This complexity presents both obstacles and opportunities for international relations as traditional business and political

conventions are constantly challenged.

## **5.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the effect of An Increasingly Connected, Complex World
- Explain Political Mobilization on a Global Scale
- Identify Transparency in International Diplomacy
- Evaluate the Compelling Narratives for International Development
- State the Opportunities and Challenges for International Business

## **5.3 Main Content**

### **5.3 An Increasingly Connected, Complex World**

An increasingly interconnected world has emerged due to globalization and rapid advances in information technology. Social media, mobile technology and the Internet continue to spread globally, accelerating and expanding the free flow of information. This interconnectivity enables influencers to create deep transnational networks and impact on a global scale. Global communities can also be created virtually and conversations can start anywhere at any time, mobilizing audiences that transcend borders and geographic distance.

The mass media are seen today as playing a key role in enhancing globalization, facilitating culture exchange and multiple flows of information and image between countries through international news broadcasts, television programming, new technologies, film and music. If before the 1990's mainstream media systems in most countries of the world were relatively national in scope, since then most communication media have become increasingly global, extending their reach beyond the nation-state to conquer audiences worldwide. International flows of information have been largely assisted by the development of global capitalism, new technologies and the increasing commercialization of global television, which has occurred as a consequence of the deregulation policies adopted by various countries in Europe and the US in order to permit the proliferation of cable and satellite channels.

Globalization theorists have discussed how the cultural dimension of globalization has exercised a profound impact on the whole globalization process. The rapid expansion of global communications in the 21st century can be traced back to the mechanical advancements of technologies during the course of the 18th and 19th centuries, which started mainly with the invention of the telegraph in 1837, and included the growth in postal services, cross-border telephone and radio communications and the creation of a modern mass circulation press in Europe.

It was however the evolution of technologies capable of transmitting messages

via

electromagnetic waves that marked a turning point in advancing the globalization of communications. The emergence of international news agencies in the 19th century, such as Reuters, paved the way for the beginnings of a global system of codification. Nonetheless, it was not until the 1960's, with the launch of the first geo-stationary communication satellites, that communication by electromagnetic transmission became fully global, thus making the globalization of communications a distinctive phenomenon of the 20th century (Thompson, 1995: 159).

#### **1.4 Political Mobilization on a Global Scale**

The Arab Spring, which began in Tunisia in response to corruption and economic stagnation, is often considered as one of the social media's breakout moments. Sometimes referenced as the "Twitter Revolution," participants used social networks such as Facebook\*, Twitter and YouTube both to mobilize and inform the world as the story unfolded. In Egypt, Libya and more recently in Syria, government leaders temporarily cut off Internet access, indirectly recognizing the role the social media and other connective technologies played in accelerating the social movements. These movements demonstrate the power of a digitally empowered public and how technology can be leveraged for global influence.

#### **1.5 Transparency in International Diplomacy**

The social media have emerged in a period marked by the dispersion of authority, the fragility of trust and a crisis in leadership, all of which contribute to a greater public demand for transparency from government and business institutions. While diplomacy has traditionally taken place behind closed doors, the social media provide new tools for world leaders to communicate with each other and with citizens. In the U.S., former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton adopted a 21st Century statecraft agenda, enlisting a dedicated staff that now manages 301 Twitter feeds and 408 Facebook accounts to communicate with over 20 million individuals around the world. As technology continues to change how institutions communicate with their publics, government institutions can leverage the social media to conduct diplomatic engagement that "broadens global participation."

#### **1.6 Compelling Narratives for International Development**

The social media are important spaces for nonprofit organizations and NGOs working in international development to tell compelling stories. The rise of visual storytelling – along with visual and video- based networks such as YouTube, Instagram,



Pinterest, Tumblr and Vine – provide an outlet for developing powerful narratives that resonate with social media users around the world and compel them to action. Rich content shared across the social media can dramatically expand the reach of these narratives, allowing users to engage with issues such as poverty, health, conflict and sustainability in a concrete, emotional way. The social media can also be effective platforms for partnerships between nonprofit organizations and businesses to collaborate on social good programs.

**1.7 Opportunities and Challenges for International Business**

With an immense global reach – Facebook alone boasts 1.11 billion users worldwide – the social media can potentially provide businesses with a line of direct communication with millions of connected individuals in new markets. However, the social media on a global scale also present a wide range of challenges, including different cultural approaches to using social media, different social media platforms commonly used and language and time zone issues. Additionally, negative brand sentiment can now achieve global scale almost instantly. Effective social media for international business requires a nuanced, well-researched and localized strategy, as well as expertise in the various markets being reached.

In conclusion, the rise of the social media across the globe has increased the complexity of an already rapidly evolving communications landscape. This complexity presents both obstacles and opportunities for international relations as traditional business and political conventions are constantly challenged.

**1.8 Summary**

In this unit, we discussed the five ways the media are transforming international relations- namely transparency in international diplomacy, political mobilization on a global scale, opportunities and challenges for international business, an increasingly connected complex world and compelling narratives for international development.

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

5. *Over the past decades, an increasingly interconnected world has emerged due to .....and.....?*
6. *The ..... is often considered as one of the social media’s breakout moments?*
7. *Communication by electromagnetic transmission became fully global following the launch of the first ..... in the 1960s?*
8. *The Arab Spring began in .....?*

**1.9 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

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**1.10 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

1. globalization and rapid advances in information technology
2. Arab Spring
3. geo-stationary communication satellites
4. Tunisia

**MODULE 4: MEDIA AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS OF AFRICA – SOME SALIENT ISSUES**

**UNIT 1: GLOBAL MEDIA OF AFRICA - IMPLICATION FOR INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS**

**Unit Structure**

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Learning Outcomes
- 1.3 Implications of patterns of media reporting for Africa
- 1.4 Economic implications
- 1.5 Political implications
- 1.6 Socio-cultural implications
- 1.7 Summary
- 1.8 References/Further Readings.
- 1.9 Possible answers to SAEs

**1.0 Introduction**

Global news agencies have played vital roles in the growth and development of mass

communication, they provided on -the spot reports of events from around the globe, in-depth investigations and analysis of events that have shaped the world. But the imbalance of their reportage has not gone down well with developing countries who have alleged that their part of the world is being under reported and unfairly treated in terms of content. It is argued that this negative reportage has led to some implications on the economic, political and socio-cultural aspects of their lives. This unit is significant because it highlights these claims and verifies their authenticity.

### **Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Discuss the patterns of media reporting of African by the global media
- Economic implications of media reporting for Africa
- Political implications of media reporting for Africa
- Socio-cultural implications of media reporting for Africa

### **1.3 Main Content**

#### **1.3 Patterns of Coverage of Africa by Global Media Agencies and Implication for International Relations**

Scholars, politicians and other relevant stakeholders from Africa and other developing countries have complained about the biased and negative coverage of their regions by the mass media of developed countries including some of the global broadcast stations already mentioned. According to Uche (1996), “the complaint of the developing countries is that the media of the advanced countries particularly Western nations continue to portray their regions in the negative as areas of earthquakes, military coup d’état, economic chaos, conflicts, hunger, famine, humanitarian crises, political instability, HIV/AIDS, inefficiency, and corruption among others”

Makunike (2011), corroborates the above point when he states that in the United States of America for instance, for listeners or viewers to be interested in news out of Africa it must be negative; conform to the traditional stereotype in its spotlight on grotesque and sensational events; it must show misery and woe, corruption, mismanagement, starvation, primitive surroundings and in the case of Nigeria, chaos and outright anarchy. He further elaborates on the coverage pattern of Africa in the American media: We hear of famines and coups but not the rejuvenation of the cities and the cultural vitality of its village life; about oppression and massacres but not education, self-help and political development; about poaching and habitat destruction, but not ongoing action or efforts at conservation, reforestation and environmental awareness. (Makunike 2011).

Kalyango (2011), compared the news gathering goals of gatekeepers (editors) with public attitudes regarding the coverage of Africa by CNN. Results showed not only dissonance but also a disconnect between CNN news producers and Uganda's viewers' perception of their two major local stations. Although CNN was the main source of international news in 2004 in Uganda, its appeal had diminished with viewers by 2008 as they considered its coverage largely biased and ill-motivated towards Africa.

It was these previewed negative and biased reports about Africa and other developing countries by the mass media of the developed countries of the West that led to the New World Information and Communication Order (NWICO) debate. According to Uche (1996), "NWICO was a clamour or intellectual discourse of the 1970s and 1980s by the countries of the South or less developed countries at the United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Non-Aligned Movement which centered on the nature, content, direction, quantity, fairness, balance and objectivity in transnational news flow that was dominated by the media and news agencies of the industrialized West." African delegates at that conference supported by the defunct Soviet Union argued that the bulk of the news or reports generated and disseminated by the major Western mass media were negative or unfavourable to developing countries in quantitative and qualitative terms.

There have been implications of the biased coverage of Africa and other developing countries by the dominant Western mass media. We shall look at them in four phases which include; Economic, political and social-economic implications. In the first place, the biased pattern of coverage has created a very negative and pessimistic perception of developing countries by citizens of the industrialized societies particularly those that have never been to the African continent. According to Garrick (2012), "for the average person in the Western world who has never ventured to Africa, his information about the continent is largely sourced from the powerful mass media of the West. Such people tend to view the African continent as one that lacks borders, countries and identities. Thus, issues in Africa are usually referred to as issues in Africa while being country specific is optional."

#### **1.4 Economic Implications**

The first consequence of this pessimistic view of Africa is the negative effect on foreign direct investment (FDI). The emphasis on FDI is crucial as it has been asserted

that it is investment and not Western aid that will help turn the African continent around. The biased or redundant coverage of Africa reinforces the negative images of the continent and this affects the flow of FDI into it. To illustrate this point, Garrick (2012), cites the Africa Attractiveness Survey recently conducted by Ernest & Young. In this study, over 500 business leaders from the Western world were divided into two groups, consisting of those doing business and those not doing business in Africa. When they were interviewed, findings highlighted a significant perception gap between the two groups. Those not doing business on the continent had a largely pessimistic view of the continent and their prospect of doing business there was very low while those already doing business there were confident in the region's growth.

Renowned Nigerian entrepreneur, Tony Elumelu re-echoed the same point in a recent CNN interview when he stated that negative portrayal of Africa in Western media has scared away several foreign investors from Africa in some critical sectors except areas such as telecommunications and extractive industries. This is a problem that was deliberately created to keep Africa in check and continually hinder her growth and development. Furthermore, through the constant promotion of standard stereotypes in which the continent is portrayed as a place of major natural disasters such as (volcanic eruptions, droughts, floods etc) and violent social conflicts like militancy, as well as a breathtakingly beautiful wide habitat. It becomes very difficult for the westerner who depends on these media for information to venture into any kind of investment in a place described like this. In his eyes, Africa is filled with danger.

This negative reportage makes governments and enterprises very reluctant to invest in the continent because they have been very negatively influenced by the report of a corrupt Africa overtaken by conflict and diseases. This is not to disregard the image created by our African brothers who find it great to talk down on the continent at will.

### **1.5 Political Implications**

Politicians of developing countries allege that there is a Western bias to the news that is printed about their countries. People from the Third World seem to make news in Europe and the USA only when they die of starvation or kill each other. Riots, gory deaths, the marriage scandals of an Idi Amin or a Soekarno hit the headlines of the Western press, while positive news about development projects or industrial growth are ignored. Even the language used in reports is heavily loaded in favour of the Western establishment. Guerillas fighting racist regimes in Africa or military dictatorships in Latin America are described as 'terrorists'. Not till the last years of the war in Vietnam

did the Western news agencies explain that the National Liberation Front enjoyed widespread popularity, and was fighting what the Vietnamese people considered an occupying army. Likewise, the names of many independent minded nationalist leaders of the Third World - like Mosaddeq or Allende - are invariably prefixed by terms like 'Leftist' or 'Marxist', but a Reagan or a Pinochet is hardly described as a 'Rightist' or 'capitalist'.

The effects of the constant use of terminology should not be underrated. It tends to reinforce stereotypes that have been built up over generations - the Far East as an area constantly ablaze with revolts and carnage, the Middle East seething with Sheikhs and their harems and Africa steaming with strange animals prowling through the bungle. Such a bias moulds public opinion to the point where Western military intervention in Vietnam or El Salvador is made quite acceptable. Tailoring news to meet Western self-interest often means cultivating the idea of a threat from without.

Reporting on a meeting of Third World bauxite producers, a UPI dispatch added that some experts feel this could be the first step in the establishment of a series of international cartels for controlling raw materials essential to the industrialized nations, which could set United States' economy back more than 40 years. Such alarmist reports create the feeling that the industrialized countries must defend themselves by obstructing such organizations of producers from the Third World. With agencies like UPI getting 80 percent of the revenue from Western newspapers it is not surprising that they look at the globe in terms of the West's needs. Vietnam continued to be front page news as long as American soldiers were killed but receded after a US withdrawal until events like last year's famine barely got a mention. This bad light sets up the developing countries for disregard and disrespect from the powerful west. Negative reportage, incorrect information and blind assimilation of it have contributed to the woes of developing countries like Nigeria.

During his time as British Prime Minister, David Cameron had in a private chat with the Queen and the Archbishop of Canterbury called Nigeria and Afghanistan fantastically corrupt. He had never been to Nigeria, what he knew was what he was told, no thanks to the powerful media who feeds him with those things he knew. He could be wrong, but he believed the source from which he got the information and that is the problem. And that has the capacity to destroy diplomatic relations among countries. The tacit conclusion is that nothing can work in Africa and no form of government is possible, let alone a democratic one. Africa has therefore been mostly described as a continent of

missed growth opportunities, and the 'paradigm of doom' (Chege, 1997) has permeated economic and social analyses of the continent (Akyüz & Gore, 2001). The influential British Magazine, *The Economist* of May 13-19, 2020 ran a cover story titled 'Africa: The Hopeless Continent', as a portrayal of the perilous condition of most of sub-Saharan Africa.

The implication is an image of a continent that is perpetually in crisis, without any hope of advancing without palliative and charitable aid, or at the best, without assistance provided and managed by good willed (non-African) actors.

### **1.6 Socio-cultural Implications**

The first report given by the nineteenth century explorers described a continent where the people were different to us, their pigmentation was different, their anatomy were different, their traditions were different. According to Corby (1995), they depicted the inhabitants as “simple, hospitable, authentic and kind in line with the myth of the “good savage.” It is also a land where time is believed to flow differently, if at all.” This recurrent stereotype of African people strengthened by the media is a weapon the West has used over the years in severing the socio-cultural relations between the West and other developing countries. Some of those antics include the representation of the African continent as the “dark continent” which extends to take in the supposed darkness, dullness, impenetrability and the occult side of the world.

Furthermore, the Western perception of African people is that of primitive, irrational, superstitious, lazy as well as incapable to plan or care for themselves. When these characteristics are transferred to “know how” and professionalism, the result is a picture of individuals and groups possessing poor cognitive and operative capacity, ill-suited for managerial positions and depending on outside aid for any emergency.

Turning the other side of the coin, the mindset down here in the developing world especially Nigeria where people especially young people want to be like the people of the West because they are superior. A good example played out in South Africa during the burial of the late South African leader Nelson Mandela, preference was accorded all the Western/foreign media such as CNN, BBC, Al Jazeera and the likes, over the local news media coming from other parts of Africa, one of which is TVC News, a PAN African station based in Lagos Nigeria. Most of these foreign media correspondents were allowed entry into the main venues of all the centres used for the burial of the late icon, while most, if not all other news agencies having African origin were shot out, and allowed to make do with scanty reports they could possibly grab or gather from around

the South Africa venues.

In a similar situation, the stadium venue that hosted all of the world leaders in attendance, including the U.S. President Barack Obama, none of the four TVC News’ correspondents was allowed access into it. That, from experience, was because anything and everything coming from the Western world is considered superior to those with African origin. This is because of the global media’s impact. They have greater capacity to send information down here as much as they desire as against the media in developing countries that have no capacity to send their own message across. Because of this, the richer media have the liberty to send and receive whichever content they desire and by so doing, they acculturate people in this part of the world, change their perception and implant in them the ideas they want without a uniform reciprocation from the developing world media agencies.

This imbalance is what creates the problem and when the system is like this, it hinders international cooperation and interventions as well as creates a barrier between the citizens of developed and developing countries of the world with the former feeling superior and the later feeling inferior because of disparity in exposure.

**1.6 Summary**

In this unit, we examined the pattern of coverage of African affairs by the international media. We highlighted the economic, political and socio-cultural implications of such coverage for Africa’s international relations.

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

- 1. Gate keepers in news gathering are the .....?*
- 2. NWICO menas.....?*
- 3. Former British Prime Minister, David Cameron, referred to .....and..... fantastically corrupt?*
- 4. The average Westerner views the African continent as one that lacks .....;.....and.....?*

**1.7 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

Akagu, Joseph Ifeanyichukwu (2020). Global News Agencies: Economic, Political and Socio-Cultural Implications of Their Negative Reportage of Developing Nations Like Nigeria. *International Journal of International Relations, Media and Mass Communication Studies*, Vol.6, No.2, pp.40-52, August.

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## 1.8 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *Editors*
2. *New World Information and Communication Order*
3. *Nigeria and Afghanistan*
4. *borders, countries and identities*

## UNIT 2: MEDIA COVERAGE OF AFRICAN CONFLICTS: A FOCUS ON THE DARFUR CONFLICT

### Unit Structure

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Learning Outcomes
- 2.3 Brief historical perspective of the Darfur conflict
- 2.4 Reporting on the Darfur Conflict
- 2.5 Analysis of News Coverage of the Darfur Conflict
- 2.6 Summary
- 2.7 References/Further Readings.
- 2.8 Possible answers to SAEs

### 2.1 Introduction

The media's role is to disseminate accurate and objective information about particular phenomena but the media itself is rarely an objective institution. In international relations, the media exists as a non-state actor, able to exert power through its representation, reinforcement and the possibility to challenge the narrative of a particular conflict or intervention. The media's description of such international relations phenomena, its interpretation of events and even the decision to highlight one issue over another show that the media is a contested space. This means that often, the media does not play the role of neutral observer in a conflict. This unit is significant in that it highlights how the New York Times' coverage of the Darfur conflict portrays the media as a non-state actor.

### 2.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Provide a brief background of the Darfur conflict
- Describe the media reporting of the Darfur.
- Analyze the news coverage of the Darfur Conflict

### 2.3 Main Content

#### 2.3 A Historical Perspective of The Darfur Conflict

Modern Sudan began as a colony shared by Egypt and the United Kingdom, which divided the country between north and south, with Egypt ruling the north of the country and the United Kingdom the south. After 1956, power was centred among the elites in the northern Nile Valley region of the country, whose ethnicity, loosely described as Arab, only

made up two per cent of the population. Power was soon challenged and the country's governance has been characterized by instability with the first civil war erupting soon after independence and ensuing conflicts after communist elite took power in 1971 and then an Islamic elite in 1976. In 1983, a second full-scale civil war broke out between the Islamic northern government and a southern rebellion movement known as Sudanese People's Liberation Movement, which militarized and became the SPL Army, which gave rise to the twenty year north-south conflict. A smaller rebellion in the east of the country also took shape during this conflict which saw the then overwhelmed government first make use of paramilitary forces, later known as the Janjaweed (Brosche, 2003:3-4).

This marginalization and unhappiness by less dominant tribes was also seen in the west of the country. By the early 2000s a combination of marginalization and ethnic identity saw members of the Fur, Zaghawa and smaller groups band together to form the SLA. The SLA began its military campaign before concretising its political strategy and so when the group required political and logistical support it turned to John Garang and the Sudan People's Liberation Army who were locked in ongoing battle with Khartoum from the country's south (Flint and De Waal, 2005:77; 81). At this time another Darfur rebel group emerged, the Justice and Equality Movement.

Rejecting what it viewed as the SLA's failure to develop a proper political identity, JEM had its roots in the National Islamic Front that brought Omar al-Bashir to power and many of the leaders of JEM had supported Hassan al Turabi. Many of JEM's members belonged to the Kobe branch of the Zaghawa tribe as well as smaller tribes of the Darfur region but what united them now was a disappointment in the Khartoum government for failing to end the marginalisation and resultant poverty of the region (Flint and De Waal, 2005:88-89). It is important to note that while elements of both these groups identified as Arab, the government still embarked on a campaign to crush the rebellion, showing that the source of the violence was more political and economic than it was ethnic.

Both rebel groups carried out a series of attacks on government assets such as police stations as the rebellion spread across the region. The al-Bashir government chose to ignore the political solution put forward by some of its ministers and instead embarked on a military campaign that had seen success in the Massalit rebellion from 1996 to 1999. The government had unleashed the Janjaweed on the region – militia groups that had formed throughout the ongoing Sudanese and Chadian civil wars (Mamdani, 2009:255-256).

Going ahead of the military, the Janjaweed ignored the rebel troops in the Jebel Mara Mountains and instead chose to terrorize villages in some of the most brutal methods. Over

two years the Janjaweed carried out a brutal and systematic attack on civilians while the army and Sudanese government did little to stop them, making use of sexual violence, mutilation, abduction, extortion and committing mass atrocities in a calculated attempt to deter civilians from supporting the rebel groups (Flint and De Waal, 2005:38-39).

#### **2.4 Media Reporting on the Darfur Conflict**

The Sudanese conflict began in 2003 and yet the main reportage of the conflict only occurred almost a year afterward. Much of the mainstream media coverage of the Darfur conflict only occurred after much of the fighting had occurred and journalists and analysts argue that this was due to the al-Bashir regime's efforts to hide the conflict from global attention by creating a media blackout. This was first done by overtly preventing the media from covering the conflict as was the case when the government shut down the Khartoum bureau of the Qatari English and Arabic 24-hour news network Al Jazeera and expelled its correspondent for what the Sudanese National Security Authority described as "preparing and transmitting a number of programmes and materials stuffed with false information and poor, biased analyses and with pictures and scenes selected to serve its ends" about events in the Darfur region (Sudan Tribune, 2003; Bacon, 2004).

Later, as media attention on the Darfur conflict became more intense, the al-Bashir government introduced strict visa regulations that took months to process. In many instances journalists were not allowed to travel to Darfur without a government escort which further limited access to scenes and sources that may have been important to in order to portray an accurate picture of the conflict (Kristoff 2004; Bacon, 2004). In instances when the media were able to travel to Darfur, it was often as part of a United Nations envoy however even this was not free from government interference despite the al-Bashir's pledges to cooperate with the United Nations. For example, early in the coverage, the government is accused of relocating a large refugee camp before the visit of then Secretary General Kofi Annan, moving more than a thousand people to a location with better living conditions for the sake of the UN inspectors. New York Times Journalist Mark Lacey's main source is an unnamed Sudanese government official who confirms that hundreds of displaced people were in fact evacuated from the site (Lacey, 2004).

Still, while news reporters struggled to gain access to the area, public opinion on the issue gained momentum through a number of opinion-editorials that focused on the moral obligation of the international community to intervene in the then growing crisis (Bacon, 2004). Human Rights activists John Prendergast, was one of the first writers on the topic publishing an essay title "Sudan's Ravine of Death" in the New York Times (2004).

Prendergast, who would later go on to found the Save Darfur campaign, travelled to Darfur with then activist Samantha Power, who was then working on her book, *A Problem from Hell: America and the Age of Genocide*. The essay is an account of Prendergast's visit to what he describes as rebel-held areas in the Darfur region. The activist describes a "sinister scene" in which the bodies of civilians are piled up after they have been executed by "the Arab-led government" placing the blame on the al-Bashir government, and describes the United Nations efforts to create a roadmap to peace with the Sudanese governments as a "plan in which the wolf will guard the henhouse."

Prendergast also draws parallels to the 1994 Rwandan genocide and argues that immediate intervention is necessary in order to ensure that such an event is not repeated. In fact, much of the early narrative on Darfur draws on parallels to the Rwandan genocide. Comparing the United Nations Security Council's reaction to the Darfur crisis to that of the Rwandan genocide, Melvern (2006) assessed the decision-making process of the council and found that in both conflicts the United Nations Security Council failed to communicate with the media over the dimensions of the conflict and actions taken to stop it.

The assumption that the conflict in Darfur may be classified as genocide is further echoed in an essay by contributor James Traub (who authored the books *The Best Intentions: Kofi Annan and the UN in the era of American Power* in 2006 and in 2008, *The Freedom Agenda: Why America Must Spread Democracy – Just not the way George Bush did*). In his essay "Never again, no longer?" long form journalist Traub draws a comparison to Kosovo rather than Rwanda, using phrases such as 'pogrom' to draw clear similarities between the Darfur and the Balkans conflict (Traub 2004).

It is important to note however that while he does not call it a genocide, Traub's writing echoes the New York Times' argument that origins of the conflict along ethnic lines necessitates international intervention. Traub describes Bush's unwillingness to send troops as a consequence of realist politics and specifically the advice of Colin Powell reflected in a 2000 campaign debate in which Bush said if a similar situation to Rwanda in 1994 were to occur under his presidency, he would not favour sending troops. Traub argues that this is a reflection of the policy of Colin Powell who as Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, at the time of the Balkans conflict, opposed sending troops to Kosovo in the 1990s, in spite of then Ambassador to the United Nations Madeleine Albright's view that this was moral timidity (Traub2004).

Much of the narrative and public opinion created by the Darfur conflict was based on the international experience of the Rwandan conflict in what was seen as the failure of

the international community to take notice of and prevent genocide. Calls for intervention in Darfur

were based on the opportunity to stop what could be the first genocide of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Similarly, the early coverage of the Darfur conflict centred on the world's failure to take note of the atrocities in Darfur and the media's failure to learn the lessons of failing to bring attention to this humanitarian disaster (Malvern, 2006:101; Kothari, 2010:222; Tsatsou and Armstrong, 2014:9)

The parallels drawn to Rwandan and other genocides are what has provided the basis for the emphasis on ethnicity in the Darfur conflict. In an attempt to create public opinion around the conflict, a number of activists groups arose with the purpose of spreading information and pressuring government to act against the genocide in Darfur. These groups often made use of a simplified narrative of Arab perpetrator versus African victim and drew on parallels to Rwanda in order to spur action. In many instances, these non-governmental organisations funded research projects and information brochures to spread public information about what they referred to as genocide in with the aim to encourage the public, especially the American public, to pressure their government officials to intervene in Darfur.

One of the most prominent of these civil society organizations was the Save Darfur campaign. In what became a New York Times bestseller, activist John Prendergast teamed up with Hollywood actor and star of the film *Hotel Rwanda* (which depicted the 1994 Rwandan genocide) to pen the book *Not On Our Watch*, with the foreword written by World War II Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace Prize winner, Elie Wiesel. Published in 2006, the book gives a brief description of the conflict as a genocide written from the perspectives of Cheadle and Prendergast as they come to know of the conflict and become part of a campaign to bring awareness to what they describe as a hitherto ignored conflict (Cheadle & Prendergast, 2006:xi-xiii).

With the subheading 'The mission to end genocide in Darfur and beyond' the book not only focuses on raising awareness but also encourages readers to become active campaigners against genocide and outline steps to becoming a successful activist on Darfur. Educating a burgeoning civil movement against genocide in Darfur, the book lists the political obstacles to peace, naming the government as the main perpetrator for using the Janjaweed to exterminate particular tribes in the south of the then Sudan but also laying blame at the feet of the rebels (Cheadle & Prendergast, 2006:64-75). They also list the top ten reasons for inaction from the United States (Cheadle & Prendergast, 2006:91-97).

## **2.5 Analysis of News Coverage of the Darfur Conflict**

Due to the parallels drawn between the then recent Rwandan genocide and the Darfur conflict and the perceived failure of the media to sound the alarm on the unfolding crisis in Rwanda, the media coverage of the Darfur conflict is often analysed. Existing analysis has looked at how the media created the image of the Arab perpetrator versus the African victim in what was described as an unfolding genocide that the world failed to take notice of. In an interview with *The International Journal of Press/Politics* (Waisbord, 2008), United Nations Special Envoy to Darfur Jan Eliasson noted the difficulty the international press faced when covering Darfur. For example, journalists required government issued permits to enter Darfur and security protection and were also further challenged by environmental factors such as the size of the area and ongoing violence in the southern parts of the then Sudan. Eliasson further criticized what he called an exaggeration of the ethnic factors driving the conflict arguing “it is hard to make a distinction between different sides based on skin colour (Waisbord, 2008:77).

The use of religion as a cause of conflict by the media was also a worrying factor as Eliasson argued “everyone in Darfur are Muslims” which contradicts the idea that the victims of the conflict were black Christians, a narrative that formed the basis for a number of religious campaigns in the United States particularly. Eliasson’s primary complaint about the coverage of the Darfur conflict is that it failed to adequately describe the political situation in the country, choosing to focus on the humanitarian crisis rather than the political situation. He however acknowledged the media’s “enthusiastic” coverage of UN Resolution 1769, which authorized a peacekeeping intervention in Darfur (Waisbord, 2008:79).

Other coverage of the conflict chose instead to focus on the imaging of the humanitarian crisis, as Eliasson pointed out. Much of how the issue was framed drew on the message from non-governmental organizations working in the area. Ali, James and Vultee compare how the United Nations Children’s Fund and the international news agency the Associated Press used the imaging of children to create differing messages on how the humanitarian conflict was unfolding, on the premise that the “images of children are critical sites in which narratives about the legitimacy, justification and outcomes of war are inscribed” (Wells, 2008:55 in Ali et al., 2013:3).

Analysts found that UNICEF chose to remove affected children from backgrounds of dilapidated tents in refugee camps in order to create the image that the UN-run programmes in the region were in fact a success while the photographs of the Associated Press maintained a certain environmental context for the purposes of news media. Further,

while the press photographs had a commercial goal as well as being bound by the professional norm of truth-telling, the agency's photographs served instead to reinforce the humanitarian work the aid agencies were doing in the region and especially the successes they had achieved (Ali et al, 2013:19). This, it could be argued, was due to the symbiotic relationship between aid agencies and the media.

Writing for the European Sudanese Public Affairs Council, veteran BBC journalist Martin Bell assesses the coverage of the Darfur conflict in the New York Times as well as influential American newspaper the Washington Post, Britain's Sunday Times Magazine, and the BBC current affairs television programme Panorama. In an episode titled 'The New Killing Fields', Bell argues that Panorama fell short of its usual journalist standards in failing to portray both sides of the conflict thereby failing to uphold the broadcaster's commitment to accuracy and to reflect "all significant strands of opinion" (Bell, 2005). Bell's greatest indictment of the coverage is that it did not give adequate exposure to sources who may have contradicted the 2004 broadcast that already described the conflict as a genocide, citing specifically the failure to quote aid organisation *Medicines Sans Frontieres* as well as any African Union officials who may have disputed this classification.

Bell's criticism of the print media is equally withering. He argued that the Sunday Times' use of racialized images made use of factually incorrect and culturally insensitive descriptions while the Washington Post is accused of publishing incorrect figures of the death-toll as well as demonizing the al-Bashir regime in order to justify military intervention. The former journalist is especially critical of what he described as the New York Times determination to call the conflict a genocide, using ethnic tropes such as black and Arab and describing that whole villages of black Africans had been wiped out by Arab Janjaweed militia in order to illustrate that the killing was systematic and therefore in line with genocidal practices. Bell points out that while the New York Times had described the conflict as a genocide, the paper also admitted that "it is impossible to travel in Darfur to verify these claims" (Reeves, 2004 in Bell, 2005).

Bell (2005) is especially critical of New York Times columnist Nicholas Kristof who he accused of blatantly ignoring sources and evidence that may have refuted his claim that the conflict was in fact an example of ethnic cleansing. While he credited the former columnist's coverage for bringing attention to the conflict, Bell argued that Kristof's message would bring prestige for American foreign policy rather than address the root causes of the conflict (Bell, 2005).

## **2.6 Summary**

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *The media mostly an objective institution. True or False?*
2. *In international relations, the media exists as a ....., able to exert power through its representation, reinforcement and the possibility to challenge the narrative of a particular conflict or intervention?*
3. *The media’s description of international relations phenomena, its interpretation of events and even the decision to highlight one issue over another portray the media as .....*
4. *A major criticism of New York Times columnist, Nicholas Kristof’s coverage of the Darfur conflict is that it would ..... rather than .....*

**1.9 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

Charountaki, M. (2022). Conceptualising Non-State Actors in International Relations. In: Charountaki, M., Irrera, D. (eds) *Mapping Non-State Actors in International Relations. Non-State Actors in International Relations*. Springer, Cham. [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91463-9\\_1](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-91463-9_1)

**1.10 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

1. *False*
2. *non-state actor*
3. *contested space*
4. *bring prestige for American foreign policy rather than address the root causes of the conflict*

**UNIT 3: THE MEDIA AND FOREIGN POLICY FORMULATION IN AFRICA**

**Unit Structure**

- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Learning Outcomes
- 3.3 Outline the role of the media in foreign policy making in Africa
- 3.4 Describe the influence of the media in foreign policy making in post-cold war Africa.
- 3.5 Summary
- 3.6 References/Further Readings.
- 3.7 Possible answers to SAEs

**3.1 Introduction**

This unit is significant in that it presents data regarding the role of the media in foreign policy formulation in Africa. It traces the history of media and foreign policy making in the continent before focusing attention on the role of the media in foreign policy making in post-cold war Africa.

**3.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Provide a brief historical evolution of the media and foreign policy making in Africa
- Describe the role of the media in foreign policy making in pots-cold war Africa.



### 3.3 Main Content

#### 3.3 Historical Evolution of the Media and Foreign Policy Formulation in Africa

In the early 1960s at the wake of decolonization, Africa was experiencing extreme constraints in expressing itself through foreign policies. This was a result of limited control

of domestic interests of African states as well as pressure exerted externally to the newly democratized states by the colonial masters who had unmatched influence to their immediate former subject. At this point therefore, foreign policy was influenced by subordination and dependence created by colonial ties. To overcome these recurrent challenges, African leaders led by Pan Africanist Kwame Nkrumah and Haile Selassie sought to establish a continental institution that would accord the weak African states leverage over the world affairs. This led to establishment of organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963 hence bringing to light the African concerns and even gave more power to individual state foreign policy formulations (Robert, 1990).

The regional leadership was based on states resource capability hence ability to push for independent foreign policy formulation. This was meant to avoid the repeat of what was

witnessed during the struggle for leadership of East African Community amongst Kenya, Uganda and Tanzania leading to its eventual collapse in 1977. At the time, African foreign

policy making process was entirely the duty of the presidency and the elites loyal to the regime. In states where political parties were so opposed that they could not approve the foreign policy plan at hand, the leader of the day had absolute power to source, draft and ratify a foreign policy. The regional organizations strengthened principal foreign policy formulators within African states. Throughout the era of African decolonization, the economic prosperity of independent states was used to measure the success of African states.

Overtime the continent underwent transformations throughout the 1990s when the cold war and the apartheid came to an end, the two major issues that majorly influenced and shaped the African foreign policy. The cold war did not take into account the sources of African foreign policy instead regarded the assistance from the superpowers more paramount. The war aimed at retaining Africa aligned phenomena that were witnessed by fall of notorious regimes like in Somalia and Zaire that were sustained by the war superpowers. The Breton Woods institutions namely the International

Monetary Fund and World Bank subsequently executed the Structural Adjustment programmes which saw further decline of the already weak African economies. They termed African states corrupt and incapable of responding to African challenges due to improperly structured foreign policies and economic crisis. The media censorship witnessed in Gabon and Togo saw unpopular leadership take up leadership roles. This translated to development of controlled African states foreign policy that further threatened the survival of the weak states.

The influence of media to foreign policy decision making process has largely been overlooked. Media has been central in influencing governments to develop policies that have been seen to go against the much-upheld state sovereignty approach. Based on real time broadcasts through news media, major responses have been arrived at by both domestic and international actors leading to formulation of policies that include armed interventions that are perceived to be costly and radical (Seaver, 1998). O'Heffernan (1991) argues that just like the government, media in the contemporary state, is part of the policy making process stating that the two entities interconnect to achieve the desired policy.

Media power is admittedly characterized by far fetching influence that range from domestic to foreign matters. African ruling regimes have historically relied on media to provide relevant information for decision making and at the same time used to relay government decisions. In some cases, media has been used to relay misleading information with ultimate goal of creating vagueness in the media industry and hence portray it as unreliable source of policy base. Media has in the recent past been used to advance diplomatic interests. According to Cohen (1986), the technological advancements has heightened the role of media in advancing a state's foreign policy by enabling public pressure a more pronounced dimension due to real time coverage of events.

Media has substituted the old diplomacy as it plays not only an informative role in foreign policy formulation but also enables a drastic transfer of public opinion to the policy makers (Enns & Cresswell, 1999) believes that an inclusive and complete foreign policy must please the general populace. Further to Enns opinion, Gilboa (2002c) outlines that global technological advancements have revolutionized media constraining its role in that despite influence to foreign policy process by the global media, A few authoritarian African

leaders

remain adamant to change implied by the media. In ideal situation however, modern media

through visual images should manifest its power towards changing the government position

in line with the public opinion.

The widespread economic improvements and formulation of foreign policies in Africa can identified to have occurred from the 1990s onwards. Most African governments occasionally yielded to the increasing internal demands for political amendments caused by dissatisfaction by party regimes. Most of the leaders in African states realized that it was a challenge to practice dictatorship following the political revolutions that occurred outside Africa after the cold war. The media played a huge role in creating awareness through news bulleting that influenced the opinions of the people on leadership and need for intervention by international states. The link between financial help by the foreign states especially then West and multilateral firms for the economic and political transformation of Africa was vital in the creation of foreign policy across most of the African states in the 1990s.

For the African leaders, the new force demonstrated that survival would be based on political transformation towards liberalism. As such, structural changes brought about by the new aspects of foreign policy symbolized political pluralism and economic reforms in most of the African countries. According to Voltmer (2013), democracy resulted to be synonymous with the general elections resulting into a law instead of the omission in almost all African states. The development of democracy during this period paved way for better formulation of foreign policies due to improved relations between countries. As a result of this, a decade later, the beginning of this reform started in Africa and countries that had not started democratic path openly admitted that politically Africa is ahead of long-term responsibility to the liberalism values. For that reason, almost all African states had to follow suit and embrace pluralism and consolidate democracy. This involved aspects such

as supporting democracy, allowing citizens to vote for leaders regularly, and giving the media freedom among other aspects. These aspects have seen an increase of the African media especially television and print media, which have been effective in steering for a better African society through promoting international relations. The media has been important in the transformation of democracy since it operated in undefined, unreceptive,

and often-changing political, economic, technological, and social environment. For example, the media in Kenya strongly came out during the coverage of the Hague charges due to the post-election violence in 2007. The local media was broadly opposed to the proceedings of the court and undertook its responsibility to inform Kenyan citizens and the world in general about the occurrences that were termed subjective. On the other hand, the international media significantly continued to carry its duty of informing people what it deemed appropriate and this was critical in shaping the foreign policies of Kenya in the aftermath of the case.

Cohen (2015) asserts that despite the importance of the media in foreign policy especially in Africa, it should be given more attention to investigative journalism to carry out detailed coverage with evidence instead of depending on live events. This is essential because it would give room for carrying out background checks regarding the international relations issues in order to promote cohesion after certain events. Historically, the media especially in Africa lacked experience and resources to cover important issues affecting the African states, which resulted to citizens missing out on critical information regarding foreign policies. However, there have been improvements over the years since journalists have been trained on how to cover events especially on international relations, which are essential in the formulation of foreign policies.

**3.4 Summary**

This unit evaluated the origin and evolution of the interactions between the media and foreign policy formulation in Africa. It highlighted the ebbs and tides of that relationship over the decades.

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *In the early 1960s at the wake of decolonization, Africa was experiencing extreme constraints in expressing itself through .....*?
2. *Africa’s constraint was a result of limited control of domestic interests of African states as well as .....*?
3. *To overcome these recurrent challenges, African leaders led by Pan Africanists .....and..... sought to establish a continental institution that would accord the weak African states leverage over the world affairs.*
4. *This led to establishment of .....in.....?*
5. *Africa’s regional leadership was based on .....*?

**3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

- Chan, S. (2017). *Meditations on Diplomacy: Comparative Cases in Diplomatic Practice and Foreign Policy*. E- International Relations Publishing, 1-121.
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- Thuranira, Patrick Mwirigi (2019). Role of media in foreign policy formulation in Africa: the post-cold war perspective. Being A thesis submitted to the school of humanities and social Sciences (SHSS) in partial fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Arts in International Relations (MIR), United States International University, Africa.

### 3.5 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4

1. *foreign policies*
2. *pressure exerted externally*
3. *Kwame Nkrumah and Haile Selassie*
4. *Organization of African Unity (OAU) in 1963*
5. *states resource capability*

## UNIT 4: THE MEDIA AND FOREIGN POLICY IN NIGERIA'S FOURTH REPUBLIC

### Unit Structure

- 4.1 Introduction
- 4.2 Learning Outcomes
- 4.3 The media and foreign policy formulation in Nigeria
- 4.4 Summary
- 4.5 References/Further Readings.
- 4.6 Possible answers to SAEs

### 4.1 Introduction

The question of as to whether there is a link between the media and foreign policy has long been resolved. Myriads of disciplines that cut across mass communication, sociology, psychology, political science and international relations have entered into the fray of the debate from the angles of their different professional knowledge and background. This unit is significant in that it draws from disciplinary inspiration of political science and international relations to examine the relationship between the media and foreign policy formulation in Nigeria.

### 4.2 Learning Outcomes

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Explain the relationship between the media and foreign policy making.
- Discuss the impact of the media in the formulation of Nigeria's foreign policy in the fourth republic.

### **4.3 Main Content**

#### **4.3 The Media and Foreign Policy in Nigeria's Fourth Republic**

There can be no little doubt that the media play important roles in the foreign policy system of the modern state. The difference that may likely separate the quality of intervention of the media across nation-states is a difference of degree not kind. In the case of Nigeria, the media has proven to be a factor in the foreign policy making and implementation process (Akinyemi 1979; Fafowora,1990; Udeala 2016). In the Fourth Republic, the Nigerian media has played important roles in the honing and shaping of foreign policy in a number of ways.

Firstly, the restoration of Nigeria's poor international image. In our background analysis of the period preceding the advent of the Fourth Republic we alluded to how a combination of political and social factors sullied the image and reputation of Nigeria. The image crisis of Nigeria was worsened by the rising tide of petty crimes, scam letters, armed robbery, kidnapping and the Hobbesian-like state of insecurity that pervaded the country. Salamone (2014, p:75), an American anthropologist and specialist on Nigeria, in his comment on Nigeria's image in America at the time states that: The general view of Nigeria portrayed in the American media is that of a dangerous country, filled with internal sectarian interests. Christians are pitted against Muslims. Men are opposed to women. The Sharia law is seen as repressive and outmoded, a medieval device to keep women subjected to men. The men are oversexed and even brutish, having four wives to do their bidding. Men are seen to keep their wives at home, at least Muslims men. Moreover, the sharia allows men to stone their wives or daughters for disgracing the family. Even if raped, women can be stoned for disgracing their families. Indeed, Americans feel that with all their regional, religious, ethnic, and linguistic divisions, it is somewhat of a miracle that Nigeria remains a nation today.

The description couldn't have been gorier. With poor international image and a pariah status, Nigeria was psychologically crestfallen and lacking in the requisite moral stamina and political energy to pursue her foreign policy objectives. The immediate foreign policy agenda of the government was the restoration of Nigeria's battered image and the restitution of her political carriage, dignity, and respectability. Given the media's professionalism, publicity and propaganda resources, the government mobilized the media both to facilitate in the execution of this onerous assignment. The federal government established sixty-seven digital television stations and thirty-two digital FM stations across the country in what the then minister of Information, Jerry Gana had

termed ‘federal government effort in regarding information dissemination as an internal part of democracy in the country.’ The government also commenced the process of recovery of the Abacha loot; in order to achieve this foreign policy agenda, President Olusegun Obasanjo embarked on so many shuttle diplomacies.

The Nigerian media was not in doubt of the onerous task that lay ahead if the it had to play any meaningful role in the exorcising of the ghost that hovered on the firmament of Nigeria’s global image. The media deploying its agenda-setting and framing power embarked on massive editorializations, feature commentaries, columns, letter writings, public relations, publication of critical opinions on Nigeria’s international relations and the engagement in plethora of media diplomacy all aimed at remobilizing the citizenry and galvanization of internal opinion to support Nigeria’s foreign policy drives especially as it related to her image reengineering agenda. This strategy paid off. No sooner than it had started, Nigeria’s traditional allies lent support to her and this translated into assisting Nigeria to track Abacha loot and return same to Nigeria; she began to be courted in international cycles and concomitantly her confidence level rose exponentially and she had begun to exert influence on global issues.

At the African level, she resumed her position of prominence in African affairs—bilaterally and multilaterally—and this is emblemized by the leading roles Nigeria played in the formation of the New Partnership for Africa’s development (NEPAD) in 2001 and the transformation of the Organization of African Union (OAU) into African Union (AU) in 2002. It is also worthy to note that at the time too, Nigerians began once more to be elected into major positions in international organizations such as the United Nations and African Union.

Secondly, the Nigerian media played a key role in setting and framing the debate on Nigeria-Cameroun conflict over the Bakassi peninsula. In an empirical study on the involvement of the media in the Bakassi conflict, Alemoh and Udoh (2015) demonstrated how the Nigerian media— particularly The Guardian, Punch, New Nigerian and Vanguard—were critically crucial in shaping the conflict. The findings of the study indicated that 62.5% of respondents agreed that the editorial boards of their newspapers were honestly convinced that press coverage could facilitate a non-violent resolution of the Bakassi peninsula conflict. In point of the media intervention and Nigeria’s foreign policy, the study underscored a convergence (Alemoh and Udoh 2015, p: 10):

... there seem to be a convergence in the newspaper coverage of the Bakassi Peninsula conflict and the principles outlined in the Nigeria

foreign policy thrust. The main area of convergence is in keeping of peace in the African continent which is a paramount tenet of the policy thrust...enshrined in the policy thrust derived from the basic principles in the 1999 Constitution Section 19 (a)- (e) of the Federal Republic of Nigeria: promotion and protection of the national interests; b.) promotion of African integration and support for African unity; c.) promotion of international cooperation for the consolidation of the universal peace and mutual respect among all nations, and elimination of discrimination in all its manifestations; d.) respect for international law and treaty obligations as well as the seeking of settlement of international disputes by negotiation, mediation, conciliation, arbitration and adjudication, and e.) promotion of a just world

Thirdly, the Nigeria media was critical in the mobilization of public opinion to support foreign policy pursuits. The importance of public opinion in foreign policy is crucially central (Rosenau, 1961). The Nigerian media is noted to have been a major factor in the galvanization of public opinion to support foreign policy issues. It is a measure of the effectiveness of the media in this regards that the Nigerian publics on many occasions have risen to engage on key foreign policy issues. According to Iroh (2005, p:347) ‘... our foreign policy makers tended to react to negative public opinion towards new policy initiatives, as for instance, in the case of OIC, Anglo-Nigeria Defence Pact, Nuclear Test in the Sudan, and the September 11 attacks in the United States.’

The making and implementation of foreign policy is usually not opened to inputs from the generality of the people. It is almost always an arena of exclusive operation by the foreign policy elite. It is the media that explicates on the nature of the policy and mobilizes public opinion. It is when this policy is well understood by the people that they react. In Nigeria, this has been the case of the Anglo-Defence Pact, the Nuclear Test in the Sahara by France and Nigeria’s parting of relations with Egypt in 1973 (Iroh 2005). In the Fourth Republic, the media have played crucial roles in the mobilizing of public opinion on such important foreign policy issues as acronymy anti-corruption, economic development, poverty, education, social vices cannot be gainsaid.

Although the Nigerian media have played critically important roles in the agenda-setting and framing of foreign policy matters, it is not yet Uhuru. Foreign policy is a highly specialized area and as such it requires that media analysts commenting on foreign policy matters should be well trained and informed about the issues and nuances of international politics. What this entails is that the media houses must deliberately embark upon specialized training for journalists covering the foreign desk. For media houses that don’t have foreign desks it is advised that they would do so without hesitation. Pursuant



to the realization of this objective it is important that the media houses and the Federal Ministry of Foreign Affairs enter into protocols of harmonious and cooperative working relationships. The foreign policy elite must wean themselves of intellectual snobbishness. The idea that the foreign policy arena is a highly technical, professional, and secretive should be discarded post-haste. The media must be incorporated into the inner recesses of the foreign policy machinery as critically partners. As noted by Alimi (2005, p:338) the cause of the failure of acknowledgement by recipients of Nigeria's assistances and diplomatic gestures is due to the fact that 'there has been no systematic attempt to mobilize popular consciousness through the media in favour of the country's foreign policy.'

**Conclusion**

The media is one of the critical pillars that upholds the pursuit of the foreign policy goals and objectives of any modern state. This is especially truer in a democracy. This unit examined the nature of the nexus between the media and foreign policy in Nigeria's Fourth Republic. According to Pine (2020), the Nigerian media is one of the most vibrant and dynamic media on the African continent; however, a combination of factors have stifled its ideological and philosophical vision. It was especially strangled under the successive regimes of military rule in Nigeria. However, the return to democratic rule in Nigeria in 1999 appeared have energized the media to pursue its professional responsibilities with renewed vigour and commitment. It has therefore been noted that in the Fourth Republic, the Nigerian media deployed its agenda-setting and framing power in putting issues relating to Nigerian foreign policy on the front burner of public discourse. This was done using platforms such as editorializations, feature commentaries, columns, letter writings, public relations and publication of critical commentaries on Nigeria's international relations. These efforts paid off as Nigeria's poor image was restored; and her pariah status eradicated.

This saw her participating actively at both the bilateral and multilateral levels in honing and shaping the trajectory of global affairs; in Africa particularly, she was instrumental in the establishment of New Partnership for the Development of Africa (NEPAD) and the transformation of the Organization of African Unity (OAU) to African Union (AU). The Nigerian media reportage was critical in the peaceful resolution of the Bakassi Peninsula and mobilization of public opinion to support foreign policy issues. To a considerable level the media was successful in these dimensions. The media was constrained by lack of professional knowledge on the foreign policy making and implementation process, this was exacerbated by the snobbishness of the foreign policy

elite that reflects in shrouding of foreign policy matters in secrecy and unwillingness to cooperate with the media. In most cases, the relevance of the media is only known in the event of backlash. To put paid to this scenario, the paper recommended that professional training in the area of foreign policy making and implementation should be given to journalists; foreign desks should be established in the editorial departments of those media houses that have none; cooperation should be established between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the media. In the event, the media would be placed in good stead to make meaningful contributions to the pursuit of Nigeria foreign policy objectives as encapsulated in Chapter 2, Section 19 (a-e) dealing with the Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of State Policy.

**4.5 Summary**

This unit evaluated the origin and evolution of the interactions between the media and foreign policy formulation in Africa. It highlighted the ebbs and tides of that relationship over the decades.

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *The general view of Nigeria portrayed in the American media is that of a .....*?
2. *The ..... is seen as repressive and outmoded, a medieval device to keep women subjected to men?*
3. *NEPAD stands for .....*?
4. *APRM stands for .....*?

**3.5 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

Chan, S. (2017). *Meditations on Diplomacy: Comparative Cases in Diplomatic Practice and Foreign Policy*. E- International Relations Publishing, 1-121.

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Pine, Atah (2020). *The Media and Nigeria’s Foreign Policy in the Fourth Republic*. <https://www.modernghana.com/news/1050116/the-media-and-nigerias-foreign-policy-in-the-four.html>

**3.5 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

1. *dangerous country, filled with internal sectarian interests*
2. *Sharia law*
3. *New Partnership for the Development of Africa*
4. *African Peer Review Mechanism*

**UNIT 5: AFRICA AND THE FUTURE OF DIGITAL DIPLOMACY**

**Unit Structure**

- 5.1 Introduction
- 5.2 Learning Outcomes

- 5.3 Meaning of digital diplomacy
- 5.4 Africa and the future of digital diplomacy
- 5.5 Challenges of digital diplomacy in Africa
- 5.6 Digital Diplomacy in Practice: An Example of Nigerians in Diaspora Commission
- 5.7 Summary
- 5.8 References/Further Readings.
- 5.9 Possible answers to SAEs

### **5.1 Introduction**

Digital diplomacy, also referred to as Digiplomacy and eDiplomacy is concerned with the interplay between internet and diplomacy, ranging from Internet driven-changes in the environment in which diplomacy is conducted to the emergence of new topics on diplomatic agendas such as cybersecurity, privacy and more, along with the use of internet tools to practice diplomacy. This unit is significant because it explores the meaning and utilization of digital diplomacy among African countries.

### **5.2 Learning Outcomes**

At the end of this unit, you should be able to:

- Define digital diplomacy
- Explain the utilization of digital diplomacy in Africa
- Outline the challenges of digital diplomacy in Africa
- Cite concrete examples of digital diplomacy in practice in Africa

### **5.3 Main Content**

#### **5.3 Meaning of Digital Diplomacy**

Diplomacy plays an important role in the implementation of foreign policies of countries in the international community. According to the realist theory of international relations, states seek security and power within the international system. In order to acquire these, they build strategic relationships with one another, constructing alliances in the pursuit of their own national interests. Their vulnerability, desire for power, common interests with other states, and their realization of the benefits of trade motivate states to partake in diplomacy. Countries conduct relations through bilateral and multilateral channels, which, traditionally, are by person-to-person, face-to-face or by non-technological means.

Diplomacy is, however, undergoing fundamental changes. Countries across the globe are increasingly embracing the use of digital technologies in diplomacy and to efficiently carry out the functions of diplomats: a practice often referred to as digital diplomacy. Digital diplomacy refers to the broad use of technology, particularly the

internet and other information and communication technologies (ICTs)-based innovations, in the conduct of diplomacy. With new technology providing access to instant information and interactive online communication, the use of these tools by diplomats and government officials is becoming widespread. digital diplomacy is conceived as the continuation of foreign policy by technological means. It is “seen as an important tool in furthering a nation’s foreign policy as it enables direct interaction and engagement with foreign publics”.

Digital technologies, including social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and so on, facilitate communication, accelerate decision-making, multiply the quantity of rapidly available information and provide platforms for communication with the public. Digital diplomacy thus denotes, among other things, taking advantage of digital technologies by incorporating social media platforms in the activities of heads of states, ministries of foreign affairs, embassies, agencies of governments etc. Social media is providing a new diplomatic space for public participation and expression, as it involves dialogue and engagement with information as opposed to the one-way flows of information that characterized traditional forms of diplomacy. Due to the acceleration of communication, decision-taking becomes more urgent, which imposes considerable pressure on decision-makers in engaging stakeholders concerning local and national positions.

In fact, the internet has had three fundamental impacts on diplomatic relations: First, it multiplies and amplifies the number of voices and interests involved in international policymaking. Second, it accelerates and frees the dissemination of information—accurate or not—about any issue or event. Third, it enables traditional diplomatic services to be delivered faster and more cost effectively.

Thus, it can be argued that, from the perspective of soft power, social media platforms can provide the opportunity for countries to build positive image through engagement and dialogue as they provide new tools for facilitating engagement with audiences in an evolving information environment. Thus, decision makers are increasingly under pressure to use social media and are open to public criticism through digital platforms. Through social media exchanges, government officials and the interested publics, both domestic and international, are able to create collaborations and relationships.

## **5.5 Africa and the Utilization of Digital Diplomacy**

During this disruptive time, African countries have embraced digital diplomacy

through these virtual processes. For example, despite the pandemic, African governments, the African Union (AU), and non-governmental organizations have held several virtual peace and security conferences, bringing together thousands of African stakeholders. In May 2020, the AU successfully hosted a “Silencing the Guns” online conference, which was spread over three weeks. Participants attended both physically and virtually, contributing to the debate and making new connections. African leaders—e.g., AU Chairman President Cyril Ramaphosa of South Africa—have been holding online meetings with stakeholders since the beginning of the pandemic. These online discussions have not only reduced the costs of bringing together key stakeholders, they have also enabled faster decision making, as more participants, who may not have attended ordinarily for various reasons, are available for negotiations.

The COVID-19 pandemic has further revealed the great extent to which the modern world depends on technology and digital tools. Like every other aspect of life, diplomacy also had to go “digital,” with many activities transferred online due to pandemic-related gathering restrictions. Zoom, Google Meet, and other such platforms became important platforms for global decision-making gatherings, diplomatic meetings, and conferences as travels became impossible or infeasible. In many ways, the pandemic’s disruptive element has helped unleash new forms of virtual decision-making processes.

However, these successes do not necessarily imply that virtual meetings should replace the tradition of face-to-face interactions. Instead, they should be complementary. Physical meetings are important because negotiations often take place on the sidelines of international gatherings, through impromptu discussions between global leaders at tea or lunch breaks, or a chance encounter in the corridor or rest room and so on. Also, physical meetings provide an opportunity for participants to observe and interpret body language and emotions of the parties, which may help in decision making. Thus, hybrid format of physical interactions and online meetings seem to be the best approach for diplomatic engagements. Meetings should be held physically as they become more focused on decision making and high-level representation, such as issues that demand high level of secrecy, involve conflict situations, or complex negotiations.

At the same time, social media platforms—including Twitter, Facebook, WhatsApp, and Instagram—have proven to be powerful instruments for influencing the public, especially in terms of enhancing a country’s image, among many other uses. For example, many African leaders, ministries of foreign affairs (MFAs), and other related

agencies operate social media accounts, especially Twitter and Facebook. Notably, Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari is the most followed African leader with more than 5 million followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter combined. He is followed by Ghana's President Nana Akufo-Addo and Rwanda's President Paul Kagame with more than 4 million followers on all three social networks combined. Kenya's President Uhuru Kenyatta was the most followed African leader with more than 7 million followers on Facebook, Instagram, and Twitter combined until he deactivated his accounts in March 2019, which according to him was due to the constant insults and name-calling that flooded his timeline. Furthermore, at the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, social media platforms helped many MFAs and agencies to maintain ties with some of their country's citizens abroad and to provide them with valuable consular assistance. As a supplement to traditional diplomacy, African countries need to embrace the full potential of digital diplomacy in order to advance their foreign policy goals, extend international reach, and influence foreign audiences in the cyber space.

### **5.5 Challenges of Digital Diplomacy in Africa**

Digital diplomacy, however, faces a number of challenges in Africa, including poor ICT infrastructure (e.g., reliable and affordable internet and power). Top leaders have also shown distrust of the internet, with several African governments (e.g., Uganda, Tanzania, Zimbabwe, Togo, Burundi, Chad, Mali, and Guinea) controversially shutting down or restricting access to the internet and social media platforms. The Nigerian government also placed a ban on Twitter on June 4, 2021, two days after the company deleted a tweet by President Buhari that threatened to punish regional secessionists, which Twitter said violated its rules.

These obstacles hold Africa's digital diplomacy back. In essence, as a supplement to traditional diplomacy, African countries need to embrace the full potential of digital diplomacy in order to advance their foreign policy goals, extend international reach, and influence foreign audiences in the cyber space. Importantly, African countries should leverage their position in the global diplomatic arena with the use of social media. By being active on the social media platforms, MFAs can accelerate the dissemination of accurate information and enable traditional diplomatic services to be delivered faster and more cost effectively. Moreover, they can amplify the voices and interests of their countries in the international community, thereby boosting the countries' image and furthering their goals.

### **5.6 Digital Diplomacy in Practice: An Example of Nigerians in Diaspora**

### **Commission (NIDCOM)**

As earlier stated, digital diplomacy became more pronounced during the coronavirus pandemic, as countries increasingly utilise technology to provide services and communicate with the international community. Meetings, summits and events are virtually convened, reducing travel times and risks. Like other countries in the world, Nigeria has had to adapt to the use of technology in the wake of the pandemic. The country's leaders, ministries and agencies are increasing utilising ICT and social media tools to deliver government services. For instance, President Muhammadu Buhari and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are both extremely active on Twitter. The president has 3.4 million followers on his [@MBuhari](#) account.

Nigeria also deploys technology in the pursuance of its foreign policy objectives by providing diplomatic functions, including representation and promotion of the home nation, establishing both bilateral and multilateral relations, consular services and social engagements via digital tools.

The Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM) was established by the Nigerian Government in 2019 to mediate relations with Nigerians in the diaspora for mutual developmental benefits of diasporans and the Nigerian homeland. Professor Bola Akinterinwa has referred to it as Nigeria's "newest foreign policy instrument". The commission utilises digital technologies and social media platforms for the actualisation of its goals. It has a functional website, a Facebook page, an active Twitter presence and uses several other social media platforms by which it constantly engages with different audiences. The commission uses feedback from these platforms to carry out its activities and provides necessary information to its digital followers.

In response to the coronavirus pandemic, with the disruption of travel and physical meetings, NIDCOM organised, among others, webinar meetings with international agencies like the International Centre for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), the International Organization for Migration (IOM), the World Bank and the AU at various levels. The commission also hosted several online programmes including interactive sessions with Nigerians abroad via Zoom, virtual townhall meetings, and 2020 National Diaspora Day on Zoom.

During this uncertain period, the commission offered advice and information on evacuation flights and evacuation processes. The agency also facilitated the evacuation of stranded Nigerians from various countries and the rescue and safe return of Nigerians trafficked to some destination countries for oppressive and heinous activities like slavery

and sexual abuse. The evacuation processes were broadcast on social media platforms, which help stranded Nigerians to stay informed and their arrivals were also promptly broadcast on the social media, especially on Twitter.

**5.7 Summary**

This unit explained the meaning of digital diplomacy. It evaluated the utilization and challenges of digital diplomacy in Africa. It also cited concrete examples of the application of digital diplomacy in Nigeria.

**Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

*Attempt these exercises to measure what you have learnt so far. This should not take you more than 8 minutes.*

1. *Digital diplomacy is also referred to as .....and.....?*
2. *According to the realist theory of international relations, states seek .....and..... within the international system?*
3. *List three fundamental impacts the internet has had on diplomatic relations: .....;.....;and.....?*
4. *NIDCOM stands for .....?*

**5.8 References/Further Readings/Web Sources**

Adesina, Olubukola S. (2020). The Nigerians in Diaspora Commission (NIDCOM): An example of digital diplomacy in practice, 18 Sep.  
<https://www.africaportal.org/features/nigerians-diaspora-commission-nidcom-example-digital-diplomacy-practice/>

Adesina, Olubukola S. (March 23, 2022). Africa and the future of digital diplomacy.  
<https://www.brookings.edu/blog/africa-in-focus/2022/03/23/africa-and-the-future-of-digital-diplomacy/>

**5.9 Possible answers to the Self-Assessment Exercises (SAEs) Module 1 Unit 4**

1. *Diplomacy and eDiplomacy*
2. *security and power*
3. *a. It multiplies and amplifies the number of voices and interests involved in international policymaking*  
*b. It accelerates and frees the dissemination of information—accurate or not—about any issue or event*  
*c. It enables traditional diplomatic services to be delivered faster and more cost effectively.*
4. *Nigerians in Diaspora Commission*