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Beyond News Broadcasting: Television for Peace Making in South-Western Nigeria

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Abstract

Discourses on peace building roles of social institutions have become very core to achieving human security and egalitarian society. The role of the media has moved beyond reporting and providing early warning insight into human security threats to getting practically involved in Peace making and Peace building. This paper explores the role of television in Peace making activities and in providing platform for alternative dispute resolution at the grassroots. Five local television programmes, *Olowogbogboro* of Ogun State Television, *Ifoko Ojogbon* of Ondo State Television, *So daa bee?* of Oyo State Television, *Mo gb'ejo mi de* of Lagos State Television and *Majiya gbe* of Osun State Television served as case studies. The Social responsibility theory of the press served as framework while qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews of program producers, program panel members and disputing parties. Observations of live studio recordings of the five selected programs were done while analyses of program diaries were carried out. It is established that television programming is contributing to culturally relevant, flexible, accommodating and cheaper alternative Peace making processes and conflict resolution, complementing the formal justice system that is inaccessible to the poor and overwhelmed by civil and criminal cases. The programs deserve adequate support and encouragement.

Key Words: Peace Building, Peace Making, Television Programmes, News Broadcast, Alternative Dispute Resolution

Introduction

In the mist of over-flogged arguments on the negative roles of the media in fueling conflicts with the attendant humanitarian consequences, there is also an emerging and growing perspective on media's direct or indirect involvement in Peace building processes. These expanding academic discourses have encapsulated different points of view to justify the constructive functions of the media, television inclusive, towards protecting human values of freedom, well-being and peaceful co-existence among people. The journalistic role of mass media in disseminating information on peace and development processes as well as in transmission of audio-visual messages of positive inclinations to influence wide and heterogeneous audiences has gained huge attention. Therefore, ranging from being described as escalators of conflicts to being perceived as neutral elements in communication in conflicts, and categorized as agents of peace

and peace building, the media have evolved to become a major focus in social conflict discourses. In spite of these, enough scholarly attention has not been directed at the role television is playing in peace interventions in developing societies. Television is important because it is still a major medium that influences human attitudes and behaviour more than other media forms, and provide adequate platform through which a continuum of peace intervention strategies could be evolved for preventive and reactive mechanisms in Peace making and in works towards Peace building.

Television had been used to support post-conflict Peace building projects in societies that had experienced violent conflicts. Such application had been mainly to support developmental efforts such as dissemination of agricultural and health information, dissemination

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of new innovations and other social interventions. Studies on its direct application for sustainable peace processes and practical peace interventions has been limited, and hence, the interest of this study. The paper attempts to explore the involvement of television as a significant player in the continuous efforts at sustaining peace in a contemporary society that is still grappling with developmental issues, even though all the potentials are present.

Using the Social Responsibility Theory of the media to explicate the functions of television in serving the audiences within an egalitarian society environment, the paper examines five television programs in state-owned stations that are directly involved in interventions to manage conflicts among the people in the southwestern part of Nigeria in order to foster harmonious co-existence. These programmes are *Olowogbogboro* of Ogun State Television (OGTV), *Ijoko Ojogbon* of Ondo State Radio Vision Corporation (OSRC), *So daa bee?* of Oyo State Television (BCOS), *Mogb'èjo mi de* of Lagos State Television (LTV) and *Majiya gbe* of Osun State Television (OSBC). These television stations' peace intervention activities are major shifts from news reporting, storytelling, interviews and analysis of conflict events, to more direct involvement in peace making among people in the five states. The study is descriptive and purely qualitative. Data were gathered from primary sources - interviews, observations and analysis of programme diaries. The research questions that guided the study include: What are the contents and contexts of the television Peace making programs? How are the programs contributing to Peace building efforts in their captive locations? What are the challenges faced by the programmes and how are they surmounting it?

Conceptual Discourse

Peace, Peace making and Peace building are core concepts in this study. Discourses on the centrality of peace to contemporary societies have attracted different perspectives across disciplines. Scholars such as Marshall (2012:652), Beatrix *et al* (2012: 23), Manning and Barash (1991:349) and Ibeanu (2006: 3-14) have argued against the pedestrian definition of peace as just an absence of war. This definition was brought about because early peace scholarship was strongly influenced by reflections

on the tragedies of the Second World War which brought apprehension and sense of crisis about human survival. Representing peace as absence of organized military activities and violence, or the converse of war is a narrow definition of the concept. It is not only circular in logic but also tells nothing about the meaning of peace. Where entities could no longer feed their appetites for war, there probably exists a situation of war fatigue and not a state of peace because ending violence or a war does not automatically translate into peace. Rather, a state of "calm" could emerge which could translate into peace with persistent efforts. Defining peace as a process is therefore more logical and assumes that rather than being a finished condition, peace is a long-term, dynamic, complex and multifaceted process. That is why Marshall (2012: 651-652) defines the concept as a means rather than an end. Ibeanu (2006:3-7) explicate peace as a work in progress, as long as human race aspire to continuously keep conflicts in check. In such situation, therefore, it is possible to identify steps towards peace as measures towards reducing violence (physical, psychological and structural) and attaining justice as true path to peace.

Peace making is one of the peace intervention continuums, though controversial, that could be explained from violent and non-violent perspectives. The more recent and frequently used definition derives from the argument that since explaining peace should be from a distinct condition independent of warfare, Peace making should equally be defined from non-violent perspective. According to Barash (1991:348-350), Peace making as a non-violent process should preclude deployment of military troops or threat of military strikes to force parties in conflict to negotiating tables. Peace making, in this respect, could therefore serve as an appropriate and holistic measure of peace performance that could be used in gauging the extent to which conflict processes are managed without resorting to force or use of violence.

Peace building is an umbrella concept which plays out critically in the aftermath of Peace making and peacekeeping to achieve long-term conflict transformation. It goes beyond separating the disputing parties or settling their disputes to building opportunities for sustainable peace in the conflict environment. In that situation, Gawerc

(2006:34) describe Peace making as a major tool in Peace building and an important part of peace transition to meet longer term needs of building enduring peace. The aim of Peace building is to address the underlying factors or causes that germinated into conflicts to forestall its re-occurrence. Peace building is recognized as a dynamic process, having something to contribute in every phase of a conflict and always moving and changing in response to peace intervention and stages of conflicts (Gawerc, 2006:34-35). Also, Lynach (2012:4) describe it as being all mechanisms and actions which support, strengthen and solidify different structures from every sphere of human endeavour that tends to consolidate peace, advance a sense of confidence in peace interventions and contribute to human security. The task of building peace, therefore, implies the total efforts put in place by relevant stakeholders – government, non-government actors, the media and other stakeholders to restore peace, stability and order in the society at critical moments and in conflict situations.

Peace building efforts fall into different categories. Pre-conflict peace building involves activities aimed at preventing a slide into conflict in a volatile environment. Such efforts are pre-emptive, pro-active and preventive in nature. Peace building at the conflict stage is aimed at de-escalating conflict, preventing it from proliferating and bringing about stability so that affected parties could be encouraged to consider negotiations and other avenues to explore resolution of the disputes. Post-conflict Peace building involves efforts to rebuild relationships and the physical environment that has suffered from conflict. This involves re-construction activities and instituting measures to re-build confidence and prevent a relapse of the conflict. Activities at each stage of Peace building vary, but they are often targeted at specific objectives.

Human Security and Peace Building

There is a strong nexus between human security and Peace building as all Peace building efforts are geared towards ensuring human security. Human security involves the mobilization of development and governance tools, state and non-state mechanisms to ensure and guarantee individuals' survival, safety, livelihood, wellbeing, dignity and freedom from economic

lack, food security, inadequate health, environmental, demographic and other threats (Prezelj, 2000:3-11). Applying both preventive and reactive mechanisms, the ultimate goal of human security is to protect the people. Scholars have identified Peace building activities, among other key measures, as a means for providing human security (Prezelj, 2000:3-11). The attainment of positive peace, prevention of structural violence, de-escalation of conflicts and prevention of discriminations are achievable where human security is guaranteed. Addressing the threats to human security therefore entails the combined activities of multi-faced Peace building agents. One of these tracks to Peace building is the media, particularly the television. Television as a major channel of mass communication is a virile Peace building agent for information empowerment, democratic representation of the people and it often act as the mouthpiece of the underdogs, among its other Peace building functions.

Media and Peace Building

Not only are the media central to human activities, their vital role of social engineering cannot be overlooked in the context of integrative Peace building. Mass media here refer to channels of communication that are involved in transmitting information in some ways, shape or form to large number of people; even though the question of exactly how much a "large number" could be to qualify as a "mass" is something that is still generally left undefined (Giltin,2001:5-6). The media, whether old or new, are channels for the dissemination of information, sensitization and "conscientization" of the people to equip them with insights into the on-goings in their environment and around the world (Journalistiek, 2009: 144). The media, being the institution and systems that fashion mass communication and consequences of communication in human societies, are essential part of human existence (Gambo, 2008:12). They represent the entire humans and envelope their endeavours and social need to exist. The media, therefore, form the most potent tools by which the masses of the people ventilate their feelings and views on any issues of the day. And by this, the mass media are inseparably identified with the masses.

According to Melone, Terzis and Belili (2002: 5-7), journalism practice represents only a single component of the activities of the mass media. Other communication activities include drama, documentary, social marketing, advertisements and discussions. However, research evidences suggests that journalism practice and other media activities could sometimes play negative role in conflict situations, which could be antithetical to Peace building. This is because, according to Ahmad (2015:154-160), conflicts can degenerate into crises, crises can degenerate into further crises if there are disinformation, misinformation, mal-information and lack of information from the media. The patterns of media reporting in the contemporary society are capable of setting an entire nation on fire. Ahmad further opine that people are more interested in bad news than in good news, which gives the media an opportunity and advantage to exaggerate stories or disseminate provocative images or video clips to sustain viewership and patronage. With the drive for profit and commercialization in public and privately-owned outfits, media organizations are sometimes found as ready partners in amplifying conflicts (Isola, 2010).

The growing recognition of the crucial role the media can play in helping amplifying conflict is also provoking the investigation of the often underestimated potentials of the media in working to prevent and resolving conflict and contributing to building sustainable peace (Walonick, 1993:71). Studies have dealt with the actual and potential contributions of the media into Peace making, conflict resolution and reconciliation (Gardner, 2001; Isola, 2010; Howard and Prentoulis, 2003: 215-230). It is that side of the media that upholds accountability and maintain neutrality that can serve as a platform on which conflict parties can get opportunities to settle their differences. When the media enables society to make well-informed choices, which is a precursor to democratic governance, it is there the media is perceived as an institution that contributes to conflict reduction and foster human security.

In spite of the reality that the media and journalists can serve as instruments of violence, there is still a strong need to look at journalists' contributions to conflict in positive light. The impact of journalism practice on Peace making and the responsibility of journalists in conflict

prevention and Peace building have been passionately debated. Journalists' efficient supply of information to wide audiences and their impacts on news production forms an important asset to Peace building practitioners. In the realm of Peace building, Vladimir and Schirch (2007: 5-25) discusses two emerging schools of thought - the standard professional journalism and peace (conflict) sensitive journalism. The former elaborates the media journalistic roles to include amplifying the voices of different stakeholders in a conflict in a way that fosters analysis of both differences and common ground. Professional journalism emphasizes ethical reporting through free exchange of information to educate citizens, equip their knowledge, improve their participation and consequently encouraging their contribution to conflict prevention and Peace building. However, this position of the media being professionally objective has been debunked in the work of Melone, Terzis and Belili (2002:5), who argue that the media's function as active information providers and analysts of conflict issues is already altering the communication environment of the conflict and could naturally be bending towards potential reconciliation.

Peace journalism scholars like Bell (1998:15-22), Galtung (2002: 6-67) and Gilboa (2009: 87-102) see the media as potential peace promoters where news management could stimulate the beginning of negotiation by building confidence, facilitating bargaining and breaking diplomatic deadlocks to create suitable climate conducive for negotiation. They believe however, that standard journalistic practices are not enough when news production occurs during conflict. The media should go beyond that to become peacemakers. Graduating from that more positional argument, Bell (1998:15-22) renounced the ideal of absolute objectivity of the media during conflict, while Galtung (2002:6-67) went further to coin the idea of peace journalism. This concept, according to Galtung, includes conflict transformation through constructive discourses. In essence, the open inclination to peace discourse is not attainable through ordinary distribution of information but requires a proactive approach to reporting and openly admitting to bias towards peaceful ways of addressing conflicts.

Galtung's argument creates an alternative to war journalism which he describes as the "low

road” where provocative coverage tends to polarize people and escalate conflict to breed hatred and more violence. Rather than focusing on who advances and who capitulates, keeping scores of the cost in human lives and damages hiding under the cover of professionalism and neutrality, journalists can divert media attention to transformative conflict reporting, concentrating on the people who are suffering from violence and exploring the possibility of a win-win solution to the conflict. Peace journalism explores the reasons behind the conflict or violence and provides not only a voice to all parties, but also invokes empathy and understanding. Peace journalism focuses on all sufferings in the prevailing conflict and humanizes all sides in the conflict. From a more specific perspective, Siebert (1998:56) opines that the media can go further to build confidence and mediate between conflicting parties by fostering communication, generating alternative options to violent conflicts, reflecting the ordinary person’s desire and need for peace, communicating the process of negotiations to parties involved and providing a forum for dialogue.

Although the media have long been considered as potential agents of social advancement and national integration through journalism practice and reporting, detailed knowledge of specific role of television and its direct involvement in conflict resolution and Peace building, especially in developing societies, has been deficient. This is reflected in the limited academic assessment of television in channeling its capacity into restoration of peace and sustenance of peace building. There are few works that describe Peace making and peace building role of the media beyond the scope of conventional journalism and broadcasting of events towards prevention of violent conflicts. This is a gap which this work seeks to fill. The work provides empirical evidences that television programming in southwestern Nigeria have functioned well in contributing to Peace making and Peace building at the grassroots in that part of Nigeria.

Media Social Responsibility Theory

The theory of social responsibility, whether interpreted as normative or radical, has represented a drift from the series of media

theories that discuss varying effects dimensions of the media on the audience. Social responsibility theory also forms part of media sociology that studies the several societal influences on media contents and activities. These contents reflect social reality with little or no distortion whereby the media worker’s socialization, professional, personal and political attitudes, ethics and the professional training received lead them to produce a social reality (Shoemaker and Reese, 1996:4). Shoemaker and Reese assert that factors external to the communicator and the organisation – economic, cultural forces and audiences – determine the content of the media. Their explanation of social responsibility approach to defining media content impact locates influences in the communicator’s desire to give audiences what they need. Studying the content and general Peace making interventions of the television alone is not sufficient. There is need to understand the forces that produce the contents and contextual explanations for how and why they operate and collaborate with other human-sensitive peace building agents within the society.

Social responsibility theory has been criticized. According to Stanley and Dennis (2010: 120-121), the theory has been observed to be encapsulated with less practical and more normative postulations whereby its “doctrines have always been relegated to the fringes of journalism education and the newsroom”. Fifty years after the American media commission’s report was unleashed, news personnel remain hostile to its focus on the public good. This indicates that the theory has been over optimistic about media’s willingness to meet responsibility and therefore, underestimates media power of profit making and competition.

Despite these critiques, the theory has been found as not entirely impracticable when studied in relation to the functional roles of the television in Peace making, restoration of order and peace building. One pivotal perspective of this theory as far as this study is concerned is an emphasis on the media’s responsibility to use its powerful position to, not only ensure appropriate delivery of information to audiences towards conflict prevention, but being involved in mediating among conflicting parties, which serve as safe alternative to other channels of conflict management. This power of the media that

imposes on them an obligation to be socially responsible, to see that all sides are fairly represented in conflict resolution and ensure the public has enough information to decide (Hodges, 1986:13-31) is key. It presents television platforms as fair and just interveners where all parties present themselves for resolving conflicts in the society. This position of facilitators, therefore, further depicts the ability of the media to play third party roles as mediators and provider of platforms on which social conflicts are resolved and peace is sustained.

Contents and Contexts of Television involvement in Peace making

The establishment of the five Television (TV) programs selected as case studies was guided by common definite philosophiesⁱ. Such philosophies guide the nature and mode of interventions of the programs into conflicts brought before them by the public. It also determines the kinds of disputes they intervene into and the outcome of the Peace making efforts. The basic philosophy undergirding the programs is to render help to the poor and the underprivileged, who could not access the law courts because of high cost implications, by making available an alternative platform for them to obtain justice, thus contributing to peaceful co-existence among the people. The programs only intervene in disputes that are civic in nature. As much as possible, they avoid criminal aspects of disputes and turn those aspects over to official law enforcement apparatus when such aspects are present in the disputes they intervene into. A breakdown of the most common conflicts the programs are involved in includes: property and land related disputes; marital and family matters; business and commerce related disputes and conflicts over inheritances. As much as possible, the five programs avoid disputes that are rooted in value system or that has potentials to cause permanent divisions in the society, such as religion, politics and core traditional and cultural practices. It is within their philosophy to avoid aggravation of social conflicts and not to be involved in conflicts that has such potentials.ⁱⁱ

In terms of intervention strategies, *Olowogbogboro*, *Ijoko Ojogbon*, *Sodaa be?*, *Mogbejo mi de* and *Majiya gbe* adopts Mediation, Facilitated Dialogues, Arbitration and Reconciliation methods. Most of the time, a

combination of two or more of these methods are adopted but generally, the nature of a dispute determines the method of intervention. In mediating in a dispute, the TV station provides the platform for bringing the conflict parties together to discuss and negotiate the subject matter of the dispute and in the process, dialogues and discussions are facilitated among disputants. Usually, panelists are brought from outside of the TV stations and they are individuals that are considered as neutral arbiters.ⁱⁱⁱ The panel members encourage the disputants by providing information to the disputants, build up their confidence in the process and encourage them to concede and compromise on aspects of the disputes in order to reach peaceful agreements. Usually, a whole day is dedicated to Peace making interventions in the five TV stations but only one hour recording of the program is aired on the TV at the regular program broadcasting time. In essence, several interventions are made behind the scenes but only the most critical, most interesting or most difficult aspects of the interventions are aired to the public weekly at regular times.

Other forms of interventions are adopted based on the dimensions of each dispute. For instance, if adoption of mediation and facilitated dialogues are not advancing the course of Peace making during a particular intervention, the program producer, in consultation with the panel members may encourage caucusing among the disputants or embark on shuttle diplomacy, whereby panel members physically visit the disputants or relevant venues to assess evidences. When such moves are still not advancing the course of the intervention, the panel may decide to adopt arbitration method, whereby a more formal and more mandatory procedure is adopted to facilitate agreement among the disputing parties. In such situation, panel members could leverage on the power of television and the threat of broadcasting the intervention to facilitate agreement. Usually in family or business matters, most disputants would not want to be exposed to the public through television to protect their image, hence, sometimes agreements are forced. This same method is used to bring difficult individuals to negotiation. When such individuals are formally invited but refuses to come to the station, their invitation could be announced on air

and a hint of the dispute involving them could be given to the public on the TV station. Often, such measure put pressure on them to respond or at least send representatives to stand in for them.

Peace making intervention by panelists on the TV programs sometimes takes the form of a formal and mandatory procedure, which Fisher (2011:158-169) describes as power mediation. However, in the conventional parlance of third party conflict intervention, the procedure could also be described as Arbitration, which takes the form of a formal court process but without the power to dispense and enforce judgments and punishments. In such situation, the panelists take charge of the procedures and impose a settlement on the disputants while following up to ensure that agreements are implemented^{iv}. Such method is commonly adopted in marital disputes to force individuals to take care of family responsibilities and sometimes in cases of financial indebtedness to enforce payment by debtors. In some of the interventions, a combination of mediation and arbitration methods, which experts term "Med-Arb" is adopted. In this situation, the panelists adopt persuasion techniques to bring up the disputants to negotiation and thereafter apply pressure to extract agreements and resolution of the dispute. Such assertiveness by the panel is, nevertheless, still dependent on the threat of airing the dispute on TV to expose the uncompromising parties to the public.

Reconciliation of disputing parties is commonly done on the TV programs. This may appear to be the easiest task, but sometimes it could be very difficult for the panel depending on the nature and depth of the dispute. However, the programs provide the platform for disputants who have been separated for long time to consider coming together to address their problems with the aim of jointly exploring a resolution to the problem. Instances of reconciling long separated family members, business partners and community members have been achieved on the programs, which have contributed to peacefulness in communities and households.

Another remarkable feature of the peace interventions on the selected programs is the adoption of features of Yoruba traditional Peace making precepts and principles. Usually, most of the panel members are experienced elders selected from local communities and who are exposed to

such precepts. In the process of interventions, they adopt proverbs, anecdotes and examples drawn from history and mythical circumstances to persuade disputants to co-operate to achieve quick resolution of disputes. Creating such traditional atmosphere goes a long way in encouraging disputants who may not want to be seen as working against cultural interests of peace sustenance, to subject themselves to agreements in pursuance of maintaining peaceful society and in order not to be dubbed an outcast. This also encourage confidence building in the process since most of the disputants are familiar with the traditional processes borrowed from communal and family Peace making circumstances. This is in stark contrast to the formal court system where many disputants are not literate in the court processes and procedures and are not really sure of what the outcome of the procedure could be. Such empowerment encourages the disputants to open up because of the confidence reposed in the process which sometimes make quick resolution of disputes possible.

The Peace making programs have contributed uniquely to the alternative justice system by their consideration of personal and social circumstances of disputants in their interventions. The programs are highly sensitive to peoples' needs and goes out of the way to ensure that in reconciling individuals and groups, the peculiarities of their social situations and contexts are considered. The prevailing poverty and deprivations in the social environment, the consciousness of the socio-economic gap among the people and the various structural deficiencies being experienced as a result of irresponsible governance system are all fathomed into negotiation agreements. This is in contrast to the formal justice system where all these circumstances are irrelevant in justice dispensation. In addition to this, access to the programs is relatively easier and cheaper in comparison to the formal justice system. The need to employ the services of a lawyer is not necessary and there is no formal procedure in filing complaints, which often deter people from accessing the formal court system. The disputants are often in charge of their cases and some of the time they could decide to withdraw their cases from the television tribunal when their family elders intervene and decide to take over the

mediation of disputes in order to save the extended family from public embarrassment that could follow the publicity of the cases. Even then, the program tribunals continue to serve as bridge builders and peace collaborators by monitoring cases that are withdrawn to be settled by family members. Sometimes, the television stations deliberately involve community leaders and elders to assist in monitoring implementation of negotiated agreements. This further compels disputants to implement agreements for sustainable peace in communities.

Challenges

As aforesaid, most of the members of the television program panels were selected based on their experiences and rich knowledge of Yoruba tradition and culture. Some of them are even highly educated and in fact, the Lagos State Television bring lawyers onto their panel^v; however, most of the panel members are not sufficiently educated in techniques of alternative dispute resolution in the contemporary period. Most of the other programs in the other stations deliberately refused to bring lawyers onto their panels because they don't want the procedures to be unduly legalistic, which is right. However, there is a noticeable trend that the panel members are not skilful enough in handling some of the core aspects of mediation and arbitration and sometimes their interventions run against the core principles of the alternative conflict management methods, particularly the neutrality aspects. The LTV program with lawyers on its panel is not faring better either, because it is sometimes unduly bogged down by legal interpretation of issues that could be settled through simple conflict handling mechanisms. These trends reflects, therefore, the need for the panel members to be trained and retrained constantly to meet the dynamics of change in the society, in the trend of disputes brought to the programs and in the techniques of alternative dispute resolution.

Inadequate funding and lack of sponsorship is a big problem to the television programs. All the programs depend largely on budget allocation from owner states of each television station for their activities since they don't collect funds from disputants for patronage. As a public service program, the stations spend heavily on investigations, in recordings and in

communication with disputants. They pay tokens to support the transportation costs of programs panel members and other incidental expenses on the programs. There are minimal commercial supports from the private sector because many advertisers often do not want to be involved in some of the controversies that trail the programs for business reasons. The television stations also as a matter of policy, deliberately avoid patronage from certain business enterprises in order to avoid undue influences and interference because, sometimes, employees of such enterprises bring complaints involving the business entities for intervention on the programs. These are serious dilemmas, which constrain financial security of the Peace making programs and hamper their performances. In fact, at various times, some of the programs were discontinued because of financial constraints. They were revived as a result of public pressure and realization of their invaluable contributions to communities by the TV stations.

Poor infrastructure in the coverage areas of the television stations has limited the audience outreach of the programs. Particularly, poor electricity supply in all the states where the programs are being aired has prevented the audience from benefiting maximally from the programs and has constrained the feedback from the audience to the television stations. This problem has hampered the very essence and strength of the Peace making programs – which is the power of television and its influence on the audiences. A lot of funds are expended on energy to run the program, yet viewers may not see them because they may not have electricity at home. In addition, all the television stations are situated in urban locations, long distances from rural areas where the bulk of the population resides. Poor transportation facilities often reduce patronage from rural viewers and potential disputants who would have loved to patronize the television programs. This has limited the extent to which the public would have benefited from the television programs.

There is also limited capacity of the television programs to enforce some of the agreements facilitated among the disputants. Apart from the threats of publicity which compelled disputants to abide by agreements reached, the television panels could not go further

to enforce the agreements because there is no other mechanisms to do so. The best they could do is to put verbal pressure on recalcitrant individuals and groups to abide by agreements when they are not persuaded by threats of exposure on television.

Conclusion

Television Peace making programs are no doubt making impacts on Peace building and peaceful resolution of disputes in the studied areas. The platform they offer for alternative dispute resolution is contributing to peaceful co-existence among the people at the grassroots and is relieving the court system of large number of civil cases which they do not have capacity to adjudicate on in a largely populated environment with endemic poverty. These TV programmes make invaluable contributions to development in societies in southwestern Nigeria and they deserve appropriate recognition for their contributions. Various governments at national, states and local levels should support the television programmes through financial allocations so that they can continue to play their invaluable roles in supporting Peace building at the grassroots.

Relevant television stations should consider partnering with training institutions who can offer periodic training to members of the television Peace making panels in order to improve their knowledge and skills in dispute mediation processes to meet the dynamic nature of disputes among people who patronize the programmes. This would add immense value to the process and enhance the programs' credibility among the audiences. Since elements of traditional and cultural Peace making values are involved in the programs, appropriate education of the panels could further strengthen their knowledge of these values to support the programs.

Government should support the programs by according appropriate recognition to their contribution to Peace building at the community level by exploring ways to integrate the programmes into the justice system. They could also consider measures to support enforcement procedures of facilitated agreements among disputants that patronize the television programs.

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End Notes

- ⁱ All the producers of the five programs disclosed that the philosophies behind the programs are to render services to the poor, support peacefulness in the society and provide an alternative platform for justice dispensation (Personal interviews with Oyebode Bamiji (Ibadan, 2015), Adesoye Awodeji (Oshogbo, 2015), Yinka Kadiri (Lagos, 2016) and Isola Akinsipo (Abeokuta, 2017).
- ⁱⁱ For instance, the presenter of *So Daa Bee*, Bamiji Oyebode disclosed that when people are assaulted physically, such component in a land or inheritance dispute and other criminal components are referred to the police for appropriate actions (Interview with Bamiji Oyebode, Ibadan, 2015).
- ⁱⁱⁱ Usually, panel members are selected from outside the television stations on credible recommendations. They are often experienced elderly individuals, usually aged above 55 who are community leaders or enlightened individuals. Their track records and integrity are considered in their selection. They must be persons of impeccable integrity, attested to by reliable references.
- ^{iv} Usually, enforcement of such settlement agreements are predicated on the threat of exposure to the public on television, which some of the disputants consider as media intimidation.
- ^v The reason given for this is so that the lawyers could guide the panel from breaching the law and stay within the limits allowed by law in their interventions in the civil disputes brought before them.