

Youth Empowerment Through Citizen Journalism: A Case For Bauchi Diocese, Nigeria

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Abstract: Youth-development is critical to the survival of any society. Since they constitute over 60 percent of most societies, their role is indispensable. This paper went in search for a platform to help the youth of Bauchi Diocese to reach their potentials. Through the qualitative method, the researcher used the Uses and Gratification theory to examine citizen journalism and discovered that it is an indispensable tool in engendering youth empowerment in the Diocese. It recommended organising citizen journalism classes and creating Parish Communications Committees as ways of empowering the youth and giving them a better voice in the Diocese and beyond.

Keywords: Bauchi, citizen, empowerment, internet, journalism, media

INTRODUCTION

Citizen journalism, seeks to engage armatures (citizen journalists) alongside professional journalists in the rudiments of journalism. This enables citizens, interested trainees in journalism to like practising journalists, be equipped with the requisite skills of journalism for self-sustenance, work in the Church and an indispensable role in the society. Within the last two to three decades, journalism (print or electronic) has been the exclusive preserve of professional journalists, leaving little or no room for citizen journalism. Some factors elicited the formulation of this study namely:

- a. The nascent nature of citizen journalism is a big drawback to societal growth and progress in Sub-Saharan Africa plagued with poverty and illiteracy.
- b. The high rate of unemployment redundancy by most youths in Bauchi Diocese.
- c. The indispensable role of citizen journalism (in the face of mainstream journalism) in forming an informed youth audience in Bauchi Diocese.
- d. The affordable and wide nature of new media as a catalyst for societal development via citizen journalism.

All these and many more gave a fertile ground to the study of citizen journalism to find out if it is really a tool for youth empowerment. That is, whether it is worth encouraging and venturing into by the youth of Bauchi Diocese

1.1 Statement of the Problem

The problem here is finding ways of engaging the youth of Bauchi Diocese, North-East, Nigeria, who are suffering from illiteracy and backwardness, in citizen journalism so that they can contribute their quota to church and society. Coming from Northern Nigeria where there is high rate of illiteracy, unemployment with school drop-outs; students who have failed the West African Examination Council (WAEC) as well as many who cannot afford tuition in higher institutions of learning, the researcher is attempting a study on how best to empower the youth in Bauchi Diocese with the skills of entrepreneurial journalism. These skills in computer appreciation, fundamentals of news reporting, recording, multi-media and news reporting and editing, with little or minimal fees will enable them to leverage on the opportunity for education, self-empowerment and service in the Church (as parish reporters or secretaries) and society (as citizen or professional journalists).

1.2 Aim, Scope and Argument of the Study

The aim of this pilot study is to state the importance of citizen journalism among the youth of Bauchi Diocese and highlight ways of engaging them for a better society. It hopes to challenge them to put their best towards citizen/entrepreneurial journalism. The paper equally aims at revamping industriousness among the youth in Bauchi Diocese thus doing away with mediocrity and complacency. This study would limit itself to the Catholic youth of Bauchi Diocese, North-East, Nigeria. It will make reference to other related material that would buttress the impact of citizen journalism on the youth. This pilot study argues for a daring, sustainable, renewed interest and tack on the part of youth in Bauchi Diocese in citizen journalism thus creating a robust and vibrant Church. The argument here is that that if they are enlightened and equipped with journalistic skills, the Church and society would be the better for it. This study is undertaken to look at possible areas where the youth can be engaged to the latter in lifting the banner of citizen journalism the Diocese of Bauchi.

1.3 Significance and Method of the Study

A study of citizen journalism as a tool for youth empowerment in Bauchi Diocese is significant because it is an avenue for creating more awareness for the youth to be self-confident and self-reliant as well as exposed and enlightened on the rudiments of journalism. In a country plagued by illiteracy and poverty, an option for the youth is necessary. This study comes in handy, namely as catalyst for youth education and empowerment. With this in place, youth with a balanced catholic pedigree will grow in the understanding of the Catholic faith and use their expertise to engage the world with catholic values even in their reportage. The researcher is attempting a study on how best to empower the youth in Bauchi Diocese with skills of entrepreneurial journalism. These skills in computer appreciation, fundamentals of news reporting, recording, multi-media and news reporting and editing, with little or minimal fees will enable them to leverage on the opportunity for education, self-empowerment and service in the Church (as parish reporters or secretaries) and society (as citizen or professional journalists). The method will principally be content analysis. The researcher shall employ the qualitative method which will involve in-depth analysis of previous studies on the subject matter with the aim of breaking new grounds in this nascent study.

1.4 Research Questions

For the purpose of this study, guided by the theoretical framework, the researcher has formulated the following research questions in the light of social learning principles of investigative inquiry:

- a. Is there any impact of citizen journalism on the lives of Bauchi Diocesan youths?
- b. Does citizen journalism help in curbing societal menace and unemployment among the youth?
- c. Are youth embrave of citizen journalism as a communicative strategy?
- d. Is citizen journalism the only means of empowering the youth of our Diocese?

CLARIFICATION OF TERMS AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Citizen Journalism

Citizen journalism is an emerging type of journalism which engages ordinary citizens who are not professional journalists in the gathering, processing and dissemination of information through the platforms of traditional, mass or new media. Because society is so diverse and professional journalists cannot be everywhere to capture the sight and sound of what constitutes news, citizen journalism offers the opportunity for the masses to be part of new-gathering and reporting. Citizen journalism enables those who are not professionals to also practice journalism (Dyikuk, 2017, p.167). It is equally a platform for self-empowerment of individuals in reporting their cases from their own perspectives (Uwah, 2013, p.4).

2.2 Youth Empowerment

It is conventional to describe a youth as someone between the ages of 18-45. We will understand it as the most productive years of life when one is energetic, enthusiastic, productive and has the strength of mind and body to work assiduously. It must be acknowledged that though the youth are the life-blood of any society, if they are not guided, empowered, provided jobs, or engaged in some other meaningful endeavours, they can easily go astray which is why this research is important. Although the word empowerment may be used in many ways by different people, for purpose of this study, it is enabling, supporting, assisting and aiding an individual or individuals with the necessary tools as well as skills of a said trade or job for service to God and humanity. It is an enablement in journalistic skill acquisition which equips individual(s) for proper news gathering, reporting, editing and audio-visual presentations.

2.3 Theoretical Framework

The paper approaches this study by accessing it in the light of the “uses and gratifications” theory which states that audiences choose specific media based on their interests. Scholars of “uses and gratifications” theory (Richter 2006; Ferguson, Greer & Reardon 2007) holds that audiences use whichever form of media based on their motivations or needs. They argue that once these media address “match their expectations” (Sundar & Limperos 2013, p 506) these individuals use them maximally. This may relate to the content that characterizes the medium and its attributes in relation to the needs it serves and where exposure to it occurs

(Ferguson, Greer & Reardon 2007, p.104) The choice of “uses and gratifications” as theoretical framework is because young people use the media that appeal them. Perhaps that is why Prensky and Slyke (2001, 1, 2 & 2003) refer to young people as digital natives as distinct from the old whom to regards as digital immigrants. Their love for internet and Social Media since the advent of Smartphones is not in doubt. As such, this theory is chosen based on their motivations for choosing media which appeals to them especially the Social Media. Some media scholars hold the opinion that this selection process is based on social factors, media content, media availability and its selectivity relates to a particular type of medium and what it offers (Ferguson, Greer & Reardon 2007, p.104).

LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

Here, the researcher hopes to review literature on citizen journalism in relation to youth empowerment. It will give the various shades of meaning there are to youth empowerment as posited by scholars and as it relates to the paper which will lead to a suitable data.

3.1 An Understanding of the basics of Citizen Journalism

Citizen journalism is a fairly recent phenomenon. Dominick (2008, p.308) gives us a brief history of how it all started: “Its potential was first demonstrated in 2005 when cell phone images of the London Underground bombings and the Asian tsunami were prominently featured on television and in newspapers.” The emergence of social media especially the internet with its concomitant style of participatory model of communication trailblazed the whole concept of citizen journalism. The Arab spring, our own Occupy Nigeria during the fuel subsidy protest, the Aluu, Mubi, Bama and Baga killings came to limelight as a result of citizen journalism. Asemah (2011, p.43) confirms this thus: “In fact the emergence of the internet –with blogs, podcasts, streaming video and other web-related innovations made citizen journalism possible.” Siapera (2012, pp.130-13) upheld this view thus: “...the new media have introduced an important shift from corruption of the news towards producing the news, or at least writing and commenting on news.” Little wonder scholars have associated the media with the public. Anderson et al (1994, pp.XIX-XX) holds that: “the prime role of journalism..., and the only way by which it can survive as a viable institution in the public arena, is to take the responsibility to stimulate public dialogue...” The above submission points to a dialogical approach rather than a linear process whereby messages are transmitted to uninformed public. Thus, he submits that journalists should approach news as a co-creative activity that depends on community participation (Anderson et al., 1994, p.6). Bovee (1999, p.186) confirmed this when he said: “Good citizens confront the media in two ways: as sources from which they can obtain the knowledge they need to participate in the civic processes and as places that will accept the people’s contributions to public forum.” This is where citizen journalism comes in to fast-track the relation between professional and amateur journalists. To this, Morgan (1998) proposes ways of the exchange. Citizen journalism “...includes the degree to which journalists establish and maintain a sense of community with their audiences, the clarity and guile with which they display themselves and their wares and the extent they enable their audiences to

‘read’ and make sense of the world.” Therefore, citizen journalism as an emerging kind of journalism has come to stay. Within the last two decades, the sights and sounds of events far flung are brought right into people’s phones and homes. Traditional media which has before now been the exclusive reserve of professional journalists is no longer facing new challenges due to the dynamism of current social contacts and new media which is the social oxygen of the world. The basics of citizen journalism denote the requisite roles citizen journalists play in society. Also known as street or participatory journalism, this type of journalism makes for a give and take kind of communication. In an attempt to understand citizen journalism, some scholars have made attempts at showing the difference and relationship of; traditional journalism, public journalism, interactive journalism, participatory journalism, and citizen journalism. Nip (2006, pp.216 & 218) discusses these models defining them thus:

1. **Traditional Journalism** - In traditional journalism, professional journalists act as the gatekeepers, filtering, and reporting on world events. The only public involvement is from news sources that provide information and opinion journalists. Interaction from the public comes from letters to the editor or complaints made after the news is published.
2. **Public Journalism** - Public journalism attempts to engage citizens in both the news making and in the news consumption process. Journalists use town hall meetings, and polls to understand community concerns and provide feedback to the citizenry in an attempt to help create discussions to reach solutions. Professional journalists however, maintain their traditional role as gatekeepers in framing and presentation of issues.
3. **Interactive Journalism** - Interactive journalism is a concept that has been discussed by scholars but has not been clearly defined. It refers to communication and news consumption that is facilitated through the Internet. Content interactivity allows users to select the stories they read and interpersonal interactivity allows the public to become engaged with the reporters. However, this only happens when the reporter responds to e-mails, chats, or communicates in online forums.
4. **Participatory Journalism** - Participatory journalism allows news users to take an active part in the news gathering process and work with professional journalists to distribute the content. Users create the content independently but the outlet provides the platform to publish it.
5. **Citizen Journalism** - Within this mode, independent news content is generated and produced by a non-professional individual or organization that is not paid staff. Examples of citizen journalism include blogs, independent news websites, community radio stations, or newspapers.

This is our focus although the elements of public, interactive and participatory journalism are not divorced from citizen journalism as we shall discover in this work. Jarvis (2006) proposed an alternative definition related to participatory media which he calls networked journalism. This explains how in order to get to the real story, professional and amateurs work together to share facts, questions and perspectives. These amateurs are often said to be a part of

Generation C which refers to content and those who participate in the creation and distribution of information. They produce “an avalanche of consumer generated ‘content’ that is building on the Web” (Trendwatching, 2005). Specific differences abound in all the already mentioned definitions. Rather than dwelling on that, this paper will examine how citizen journalism can empower the youth for service in the world and Church. It will be a fatal mistake to think or conclude that journalism is reduced to professionalism. To conclude thus, is to excommunicate the citizen journalist. To drive home the point, Bovee (1999, p.62) argued that “journalists are not only those who own or are employed by the media of Mass Communication. All those who provide journalistic knowledge – including some freelance writers, public relations practitioners, advertisers, participants in call-in shows, writers of letters to the editor – belong in that category. To ignore this is to misunderstand the true nature of journalism.” This, therefore, presents a sailing boat for citizen journalism and a great platform at that.

3.2 Types of Citizen Journalism

Basically, there are two types of citizen journalism. Asemah (2011, p.52-53) lists them as Semi -Independent and Independent Citizen Journalism. He explains that:

- (a) **Semi Independent Citizen Journalism:** This type of citizen journalism involves contributing in one form or another to existing professional news sites. A few examples are:
 - Readers post comments alongside stories done by professional reporters as in letters to the editor. Usually, readers are required to register first to prevent obscene or questionable messages.
 - Readers add their information to articles done by professional journalists. A good example is the reader’s comments on Sahara reporters.
 - Readers actively work with professional reporters in putting together a story. A reporter may ask readers with expertise on a particular subject to send him or her information on a particular subject or do the reporting. The information is then incorporated into the final story.
 - Reader blogs that are incorporated into professional news websites. That can include blogs in which readers critique how the news organisation is performing.
- (b) **Independent Citizen Journalism:** This is a case where citizen journalists work independent of traditional or professional news outlets. This is particularly rife with new media and bloggers. Here, individuals engage blogs as active bloggers in reporting or commenting about their community or societal ills. Be it comments or passionate letters to the editor, citizen journalism gives reporters and news outlets voices on hot button issues.

CONTEXT OF THE STUDY

This study is necessitated by the need to educate the youth on citizen journalism. This training is focused on the skills of journalism so that they will in the long run be equipped with the necessary expertise of journalism engage the media in no small way and be or gainfully employed. The need for a study of this nature is important to raise awareness which will lead to positive action among Bauchi Diocesan youth.

4.1 Socio-Political Background of Bauchi Diocese

Bauchi Diocese covers Bauchi and Gombe States. Before its creation as a State in 1976, Bauchi was a province in the then North-Eastern State of Nigeria. It has 20 Local Government Areas and a population of 4,653,066 people according to the 2006 census. On October 1, 2006, Gombe was carved out of Bauchi State. The state has 11 LGAs. The 2006 census puts the population of Gombe State at 2,353,000 people. Out this population, about 70,000 are Catholics in the two states. Most of the faithful are farmers and civil servants and traders a few are business men and women. The diocese is populated by Sayawa, Tangale, Waja, Bijim, Miyawa, Ngas/Tapshin, Igbo, Tiv, Idoma, Igala, Hausa, and few speakers of Fulfulde who live and relate with each other in peace. However, the official languages of communication are English and Hausa. There is a general sense of family life. The sense of being brothers' keeper, solidarity cuts across gender, age and tribe. The Diocese is cosmopolitan as there are people from various parts of the country living together in peace especially the youth. This fraternal love, friendship and cordiality is seen in youth associations like: Young Catholic Students (YCS), Nigerian Federation of Catholic Students (NFCS) and Catholic Youth Organisation of Nigeria (CYON) in all the secondary, tertiary institutions and parishes across the Diocese. What is today Bauchi Diocese began as an outstation of under St. Andrew's Parish, Billiri until 1957 when Fr. Carolan was appointed the first priest to oversee the parish headquarters, St. Michael's (having 30 outstation) now St. John's Cathedral. When Bishop John Reddington SMA met with the Archbishop of Edinburg, Gordon Gray, the latter agreed to take over the then Bauchi province in 1963. Without much ado, Bishop Reddington posted 3 Scottish priests to the virgin mission: Frs. John Allister, John Gibbons and Daniel Simpson swung into action converting a great number of souls for Christ in Azare, Gombe, Tafawa Balewa and other areas. As the local church in Jos was growing, in 1980, the administration of the Bauchi territory was handed over to Bishop Gabriel G. Ganaka. As a result, priests from Jos were sent to the mission area (Bauchi). As a consequence, the laity grew in number with many converts to the faith, baptisms, church marriages and parishes. This made Bauchi the area to be raised to the status of a deanery of Jos Diocese with 7 parishes. By 1994, Jos Diocese was raised to an Archdiocese. The laity of Bauchi began to push for their autonomy. Archbishop Ganaka with the help of the Nuncio Archbishop, Carlo Mario Viganò inspected the place and by July 1996, Bauchi was created out as a Vicariate with Bishop John Moore SMA as its first Pastor. Providentially, on 7 November 1996, the official erection of Bauchi Apostolic Vicariate and the ordination of John Moore SMA as its first Apostolic Vicar took place. In February 2004, the Vicariate grew into a full-fledged Diocese. The new Vicariate grew rapidly because of the charismatic leadership of Bishop Moore. For instance, by the year 2000, there were 12 parishes, two functional clinics, a rural hospital and a secondary school. As regards personnel, there were 13 priests (the bishop inclusive) which included *fidie donum* from Jos Archdiocese and Kafanchan Diocese respectively. It will be recalled that the first Deacon of the Vicariate was ordained on February 20, 2001. Under Bishop John Moore, the Vicariate metamorphosed into a diocese with special emphasis on rural evangelisation as new parishes and pastoral areas like St. Thomas Tudun Wada, St.

Dominic's Inkil, St. Mary's Jimpi, Our Lady of the Holy Rosary Sabon Kaura and Divine Mercy Boi were burgeoning. His tireless efforts in education saw the establishment of the remedial programme (which has is now closed). However, the establishment of Our Lady's Nursery/Primary School, Bauchi, St. Joseph's Nursery/Primary School, Yelwa, Immaculate Heart Nursery/Primary School, Azare, Our Lady of the Rosary, Nursery/Primary School, Sabon Kaura, St. Luke's Nursery/Primary School, Miya, Talan Kasa Nursery/Primary School, (An Outstation of St. Francis Railway), St. James' Nursery/Primary School, Gombe; All Saints Nursery/Primary School, Laushe, Billiri, St. John's Nursery/Primary School, Popandi, Our Lady's Nursery/Primary School, Tafawa Balewa, St. Peter's Nursery/Primary School, Marti and St. Margaret's Nursery/Primary School, Gambar remain Bishop Moore's timeless legacies. His scorecard in the advancement of better education for the faithful of Bauchi brought about the establishment of the Immaculate Conception Secondary School, Bauchi, St. James' Secondary School, Gombe and the Presentation Brothers' Secondary School, Tafawa Balewa. These institutions are still soaring high. As part of the education package, Bishop Moore invited the St. Patrick's Fathers to come and establish the Youth Formation Centre with the aim of training the youth in leadership, advocacy and empowerment. On health care delivery, the bishop built clinics in Tafawa Balewa, Marti, Billiri and Sara (an outstation of St. Peter's Parish, Marti) while consolidating the one in Gambar. Unfortunately, the ones in Billiri and Sara have folded up. He was a caring missionary who provided portable drinking water for rural communities within the countryside through digging of wells under the aegis of the Diocesan Justice Development and Peace Commission (JDPC). Bishop Moore went to be with the Lord on who died on January 20, 2010 at the age of 68. Upon his demise, the Holy Father appointed the Catholic Archbishop of Jos, the Most Rev. Ignatius Kaigama as Administrator of the diocese. Due to his tight pastoral responsibilities, the Archbishop sub-delegated Very Rev. Fr. John Keane, SMA to cater for the diocese until a new bishop is appointed by Rome. Upon the demise of Bishop John Moore, the Holy Father Pope Benedict XVI appointed Msgr. Malachy John Goltok on Friday 180th March 2011 as the substantive bishop of Bauchi Diocese. After taking the mantle of leadership as the second Bishop of Bauchi upon his ordination and installation on 19 May 2011, the Diocese gained altitude in terms of establishment of parishes. As such, he channeled his energy on consolidating what his predecessor did by giving a facelift to the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist and setting Rafin Zurfi, Lafiyan Sara, Bogoro and Bar in gear for greater pastoral initiatives in terms of creation of parishes/pastoral areas. As someone who believes in human capacity building, especially the ongoing formation of priests, Bishop Malachy was able to build on the foundation laid by the pastorally-minded Bishop Moore. In less than four years as a Bishop, about 16 priests undertook further studies both at home and abroad in various field such as Education, Moral Theology, Canon Law, Systematic/Dogmatic Theology, Moral Theology, Pastoral Theology, Liturgy, Pastoral Communications/Media Studies, Interreligious Studies/Dialogue and Biblical Theology. Unfortunately, he did not live long enough to realise that

dream. With the sudden demise of Bishop Malachy Goltok, on March 21, 2015 the Consultors chose Very Fr. John Keane, SMA to steer the ship of the diocese as Diocesan Administrator pending when the Holy Father will appoint a bishop for Bauchi. As it were, Fr. Keane kept fate with the late bishop's wishes by sending 5 priests for studies in July of that year. Little wonder, during the Requiem Mass in honour of Bishop Malachy, the Bishop of Maiduguri Diocese, Most Rev. Oliver Doeme testified that, "it was his desire to train his priests as experts in different fields." Within the last two years, Fr. Keane demonstrated doggedness in keeping the diocese together and communicating with the priests, religious and the laity through periodic circulars on important issues which have universal and local implications for the Diocese. Notwithstanding the canonical clause of "No new innovations," with the cooperation of a presbytery of 49 priests, 8 Women Religious, 4 Professed Brothers and 70,000 laity, he steered the ship of the Church in Bauchi Diocese well until the Holy Father appointed Msgr. Hilary Dachelem as the substantive Bishop of Bauchi Diocese. On Wednesday 31, May 2017, the Catholic faithful of Bauchi woke up with the cheering news of the appointment of Monsignor Hilary Nanman Dachelem C.M.F by the Holy Father, Pope Francis as the substantive bishop of Bauchi Diocese. With his Episcopal Ordination and Installation today being 17 August 2017 as the 3rd Catholic Bishop of Bauchi Diocese, the people of God in Bauchi look forward with anxiety to his vision and mission statements as he takes canonical possession of the diocese. The diocese is poised to picking up from where it is now towards soaring to greater heights (Bauchi Diocese, 2017).

4.2 Challenges Confronting Youth in Bauchi

The literacy level among the youth in Bauchi Diocese is low. There are many jobless and directional youth. Some are school drop-outs while a good number have stop at the level of secondary school education especially young girls. There is a gradual radicalization of some youth occasioned by the current militant orientation in the North by insurgents. Some who are idle or who have taken the easy way out of life feel too big to go to the farm. As such, they end up snuffing marijuana, stealing or used as political thugs. This menace is a serious one needing the rules of engaging the youth in meaningful feats hence this research.

4.3 Citizen Journalism as a tool for Youth Empowerment in Bauchi Diocese

Citizen Journalism will help the youth in acquire journalistic skills as well as get basic training that would help them in getting jobs as parish secretaries, reporters, typists, photo journalists and camera men or women. It is important to highlight the aim and vision of this youth empowerment via bringing our diocesan youth together to form a team of citizen journalist:

4.4 Vision and Mission

Vision

- Create job opportunities among Bauchi diocesan youth
- Curb the menace of indolence, mediocrity and complacency among them

- Create a self-confident, self-sustaining and formidable youth for the Church and State

Mission

- Build a self-concept of journalistic entrepreneurial skills
- Be there for others (other-oriented) in the way of job creation in a society bedevilled by the craze of money and power
- Being luminaries for other youths like themselves who have no sense of purpose and direction in life
- Bringing to the fore issues of bribery and corruption responsible for unemployment and underdevelopment in our country by invoking "Catholic Action" as antidote
- Leveraging on the life and entrepreneurial legacies of Nigerians who have not only inspired the youth but provided them with job opportunities

4.5 Criteria for illegibility

- Personal love for journalism
- Personal conviction in the values of life and standing for others
- Sacrifice, optimism and doggedness about life

One who has achieved a great feat in this regard is Professor Wole Soyinka. His life and legacies as far as the arts and youth empowerment are concerned is a "social-gospel." His life is one that speaks volume to the hearts of many a Nigerian youth because we are told he struggled to pass exams in school but paradoxically, he became the first Nigerian to win the famous Peace Noble Prize. Not only that, as part of giving back to society, the Laureate established the Wole Soyinka Centre for Investigative Journalism in Lagos to train and offer the youth basic entrepreneurial drills in journalism. Today, some youths are on the staff while many more are students of this debut school of investigative journalism in Nigeria. This is an inspiration to all young people in Bauchi and Nigeria.

4.7 Limits of Citizen Journalism

Everything that has advantages also has disadvantages; so with citizen journalism. Therefore, the down-sides of citizen journalism include:

1. The quality of any citizen journalism project reflects the contributions of those who choose to participate which can be havens for triviality and unreliable content.
2. Since users are inclined to trusting any material they find online especially news, citizen journalism tend to implicitly project or validate content that might be inaccurate, and offensive.
3. In a bid to boost trustworthiness of reporting, there may be loss of confidence in news presentations.
4. Many citizen journalists have a weaker sense of what constitutes a reliable story thus they engage in free conjecture (Asemah, 2011, p.45).

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Summary

We have seen that citizen journalism is a sine qua non for youth development and empowerment in Nigeria. This facilitates the contribution of young people to the growth of the society. From the statement of the problem to the

background of the study, the research methodology and relevant literature on citizen journalism, we have been able to establish the all-important function of citizen journalism in charting a new course for youth in Nigeria. Suffice it to establish that citizen journalism does not only expose and educate youth but offers them job opportunities to have a say in society. More can still be done in the way of soft loans to enable the youth to buy communication gadgets/equipment and enrol for further studies in journalism. By this, the youth would have been offered a life-time opportunity to showcase their talents and gifts in contributing their quota to society.

5.2 Recommendations

As an outcome of this research, the following recommendations are proffered for a better outcome of citizen journalism as a tool for youth empowerment in this country:

1. More effort be put into citizen journalism as an emerging course in communication studies.
2. Youth empowerment at all levels of society be taken seriously.
3. The youth be further equipped with a broad-based capacity building in the rudiments of Information and Communication Technology (ICT).
4. Reportage of whatever genre not be seen as the exclusive preserve of professional journalists.
5. Professional journalists be sought and encouraged to train young people in the art of public journalism and citizen journalism.
6. That citizen journalism go in the way of purposeful and honest reportage.
7. Creating Parish Communications Committees as well as training youths in Bauchi Diocese to be reporters, bloggers and freelance journalists.
8. That youth in Nigeria who have been trained as citizen journalists be given some remuneration's or soft loans to start up their own journalistic entrepreneurship.
9. The cost of internet services be reduced and cyber-laws be put in place to put hackers in check and discourage invasion of privacy.
10. That empirical findings on citizen journalism be made in the future for generations unborn.

5.3 Conclusion

The place of citizen journalism in the overall development of youths cannot be over-emphasized. This jet age affords the youth the opportunity to acquire skills, interact on social media with friends and family, share thoughts, opinions and information with millions of others across the globe. We saw that this is a way of self-empowerment and an opportunity to be relevant in the scheme of things in the church and larger society. Since we have seen from the "uses and gratification theory" that people use the media based on social factors, media content, media availability and how its selectivity relates to a particular type of medium and what it offers (Ferguson, Greer & Reardon 2007, p.104), it is crucial that young people in Bauchi employ citizen journalism as a tool for empowerment and entrenching change in the Church and larger society. This is no doubt a right step in the right direction at checkmating youth restiveness, idleness and anti-social behaviour. Perhaps these youth will not only contribute their quota to society but equally help in providing peace to a troubled nation especially with the Boko Haram

insurgency bedeviling the north. The security challenge in the north-eastern part of the country may have brought about various setbacks especially easy access to goods and services but feats like these will help to nip it in the bud. The social-political, economic and technological impact are worth noting. Personal growth and corporate empowerment which further lead to national growth will be achieved. The safe conclusion is the positive impact of citizen journalism as a catalyst for youth development in Nigeria. Suffice it to opine here that citizen journalism will help to curb the menace of insurgency in the north-east and the country as a whole. With the dynamics of citizen journalism learnt, this scientific research has safely arrived at the conclusion that when the youth are empowered, a lot is achieved.

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