INTERTEXTUALITY IN SELECTED NIGERIAN BLOGS

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CERTIFICATION

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DEDICATION

To all bloggers and blogging aspirants; the work you do is by no means irrelevant. And to "that mutant called text", eagerly and anxiously we await your newer manifestations.

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ABSTRACT

Texts link up with one another for meaning-making in an intertextual manner. In the aftermath of pristine orality, intertextuality often has implications, one of which is plagiarism. Previous studies have examined the connection between intertextuality and plagiarism in offline literary and academic texts. However, the nature of intertextuality in blogs is largely undocumented. Intertextuality in the context of authorial ownership of texts in three Nigerian blogs was therefore examined in this study, with a view to exploring its potential implication for the viability of blogs as cultural artefacts.

Intertextuality was adopted as framework, while a combination of netnography and survey approach was used as the design. To represent major blog types, *Linda Ikeji's Blog* (a filter blog), *Geek Blog* (a techie/topic blog) and *Jarus Hub* (a topic blog) were purposively selected based on audience traffic and cultural content. Primary data were generated through in-depth interviews with the three bloggers, a key informant interview with a copyright expert, and observation of the posts that appeared on the blogs from October 2016 to March 2017. A questionnaire was administered to 460 randomly selected, active blog readers through an online survey platform. The bloggers' and copyright expert's responses and the blog posts guided the exploration of the connection between intertextuality and plagiarism on the blogs. Standard methods were used to gauge the understanding of plagiarism as against intertextuality. Data were subjected to content analysis and descriptive statistics.

The intertextual patterns identified in the blogs were adaptation, appropriation, parody, simulation, retro and pastiche. The bloggers engaged in intertextuality as a way of ensuring the viability of their blogs, but could not state categorically how they determined their intertextual patterns. Although instances of plagiarism, such as resourceful citer, photocopy, self-stealing and content scraping, were observed on the blogs, the bloggers were nonetheless confident that they neither plagiarised nor infringed on copyright. They based their argument on their submission that they always mentioned the sources of their borrowed texts. The credited sources were either explicitly mentioned in the blog posts or displayed as link anchors and hot texts. As shown in the blog posts, the borrowed texts originated largely from platforms where contents were generated by users and there was no authorial ownership of texts. The compromise of individual ownership of texts bore resemblance to a condition of pristine orality. The blog readers (54.1%) identified intertextuality in the blogs. Of these readers, 61.8% estimated that intertextuality occurred often on the blogs, and 75.1% appreciated bloggers' intertextual efforts because the practice made more information on politics, celebrities, information technology and entrepreneurship available to the reader. The bloggers used the blogs as cultural artefacts to share folklore.

The selected Nigerian blogs are sites of hegemony and resistance with regard to authorial ownership and use of texts, thereby suggesting a quasi-pristine orality. There are, therefore, new paradigms of intertextuality beyond the literary categories in the virtual context.

Keywords: Intertextuality, Plagiarism, Copyright, Blogs and blogging in Nigeria

Word count: 478

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GLOSSARY

CMC—Computer-Mediated Communication

FtF—Face-to-Face (Communication)

SNS—Social Network(ing) Site

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background to the Study

The internet, the birthplace of blogs, has made many things possible by linking individuals all over the world in the most intricate and yet simplest ways possible. The technology behind the internet is the intricate part, especially when one considers the amount of software development, hardware configuration and equipment deployment involved. The end products of the combination of software codes and equipment constitute the simple part, that is the user-friendly interfaces that facilitate communication, connectivity and access to information. The blog, a Web 2.0 technology, is one of such interfaces. Web 2.0 technologies denote users' collective intelligence used to co-create the value of platforms like Google, Amazon, Wikipedia or Craigslist in a "community of connected users" (O'Reilly and Battelle, 2009:1). Web 2.0 is loosely used to refer to websites, blogs and applications that thrive on network effects, enabling users to share materials they have created or that is in their [online] possession. Technologies of the Web 2.0 generation are artefacts that serve particular human needs of communication and socialization and exhibit some form of permanence in their extended use through their nature of enabling user-generated content (Diaz-Kommonen et al., 2004).

A blog is an online journal where owners publish choice contents at intervals that suit them, although frequent or regular publishing is more or less the norm. Published contents are then displayed in reverse chronological order, i.e. the last appears first and the first appears last. Blogs are often used by their owners to update their social circle about their activities and whereabouts. Similarly, bloggers express opinions, seek feedbacks, think through their impressions and also relieve emotional tension through the entries they post

on their blogs (Guadagno, Eno and Okdie, 2010). As such, blogging affords the average man who has access to the internet the opportunity to voice opinions to some imagined or conceptualised audience. The blog is useful for engaging in colloquial, everyday talk where opinions, thoughts and information are shared (Gramer, 2008). This "everdayness" of blogs, as noted by Gramer (2008: 8), stems from the fact that they are often used to record and narrate everyday experience. Individuals experience their environment through different avenues such as feelings and observations, and these experiences vary and abound, running into one another to shape an individual's worldview. In relaying or narrating their varied experiences, people engage their thoughts, opinions and acquired information, linking all together in a coherent, textual form. The resultant text is an amalgam of several other texts as read and experienced by the text producer. Intertextuality is the bond that holds various texts together in narratives such as blog posts. This study investigates intertextuality in three Nigerian blogs.

When an individual decides to start blogging, the first thing that occurs to him/her is what to blog about, or it could be the other way round: someone has something they want to say to some real or imagined audience and they think of a blog. Some bloggers use their blogs as outlets for their creativity, but a vast majority of bloggers are not creative writers, choosing instead to write about themselves and give account of their experience (Schiano, Nardi, Gumbrecht and Swartz, 2004). There are still other bloggers who share their knowledge and expertise on their blogs. Whatever their motivation/preoccupation, because blogging is not a one-off activity, bloggers are constantly looking for materials to publish on their blogs in a postmodern world which "involves using mass and popular culture as a point of reference for our real-life activity" (Sturken and Cartwright, 2001: 321). Blogging is thus a new manifestation of the heritage of narrativization, while blogs are artefacts.

Bloggers who talk about themselves may not always have interesting personal experience to share but they can always talk about others' experience and then comment on such accounts to give the relayed account a personal signature of theirs. Other bloggers who do not talk about themselves look out for "trending" common interest topics having to do with politics, fashion, health, lifestyle and so on. to discuss on their blogs. Some others who wish to share their thoughts on specific subject matters have to update their knowledge

from time to time in order to have new things to share with their readers. Even the ones who post creative writing on their blogs, like other creative writers, take great pains to make their writing interesting and engaging. In all the things that the different types of bloggers do, they explore many sources to enrich their write-ups so as to make for an interesting and worthwhile reading experience for their readers and a rewarding writing experience for them (the bloggers).

Although scholars generally define blogs in terms of the manner of publishing contents (online journal where contents are presented in reverse chronological order), blogs differ from the traditional publishing found in printed materials. Bloggers are typically not concerned with how or where to find a publisher since the blogging platform is almost always freely available to them; neither are they typically worried about how to distribute their publication. Because blogging (publishing) is free, bloggers and their readers do not necessarily incur costs beyond what they pay for internet connectivity. In addition, internet connectivity helps bloggers to access other platforms and online distribution channels like social network sites and e-mails—which are just as free—to promote their blogs' popularity. The price they pay for the free service, however, is being prolific in content creation. Understanding that the next person can own a blog just as easily as they already own one, bloggers strive to remain relevant by constantly creating meaningful content, depending on the preoccupation they choose for their blogs. In other words, since publishing and distribution have more or less been taken care of, what then concerns a blogger mainly is how to sustain the blog by constantly updating it, because blogging is a continuous business and bloggers who post contents daily get better ratings than those who do not (Crestodina, 2019).

Nardi, Schiano, Gumbrecht and Swartz (2004) note that bloggers sometimes pour out their feelings or ideas and sometimes struggle to find something to say. They also express their personalities through what they say and what they leave unsaid, collecting cultural thought and extending themselves in a virtual world (Taricani, 2007). In expressing themselves through their collection of social and cultural thoughts, bloggers constantly reinvent their blogs, supplying them with contents to protect them from dying out. Intertextuality is one way by which bloggers maintain the vigour of their blogs through content creation. It is

foregrounded and hyperconscious, reflecting "changes in terms of audience competence and narrative technique, as well as a fundamental shift in what constitutes both entertainment and cultural literacy in [postmodern culture]" (Collins, 1993: 250). Essentially, what the fundamental shift represents is the fact that a new kind of literacy has emerged, exalting the means of entertainment and socialization that were once considered pedestrian and placing them in the hall of fame of culture with the argument that they are equally reflective of life as it is known—at least in some quarters. No life is more important than the other, after all, and all men are supposedly equal just as all cultures are equal. The text, a codified record of culture, is the basic ingredient of intertextuality

A text is a cohesive unit of idea, a site of meaning-making presented in the form of a write-up (e.g. a book), a picture, an expression etc. and the process of unravelling its meaning is called reading. Whatever the form they exhibit, postmodern texts share leaky boundaries that create an enabling environment for them to rely on one another and for their readers to be caught in the ensuing tidal wave. Armed with bits of information that they have consciously and unconsciously picked up in the information-saturated postmodern society, text readers resort to intertextuality as a way of making sense of a text's attempt to link various information and knowledge together. Intertextuality is, therefore, both writer/author articulated and audience articulated. The writer's (author's) job is to link texts together in an intertextual narrative technique by creating a unifying chart in a text, while the reader, as a competent audience, is to trace out the chart of the text in an attempt to identify a set of meanings among the different ones contesting for his attention. The reader's social interactions outside the text as well as the interplay of linguistic codes (which he shares with the writer) in the text help him to make sense out of the text because the text as a social construction finds meaning in people's interaction with one another (Bloome and Egan-Robertson, 1993). Similarly, intertextuality, "the perpetual circulation and recirculation of signs that form the fabric of postmodern cultural life" (Collins, 1993: 246), "expands the way critics think of the practice of reading, and enhances understanding of postmodern popular culture and its role in the social world" (Ott and Walter, 2000: 442).

The reality is thus that "intertextuality is a fundamental element of modern and (especially) postmodern popular culture" (Share, 2006:3). Blogs are a part of the postmodern popular

culture, a good avenue for portraying what the postmodern condition entails, especially since "postmodernism involves using mass and popular culture as a point of reference for our real-life activity" (Sturken and Cartwright, 2001:321). References to real-life activities abound in blogs, many of which are used to recount personal experience. The readers of blogs do not have to be familiar with blog owners in order to appreciate the experience of the bloggers as recounted on the blogs, neither do they have to be familiar with every text that the bloggers refer to before they can be drawn into the narrative. This is the working of intertextuality where texts are necessarily read in relationship to one another, although the relationship is not one of specific allusions, neither do readers have to be familiar with all the texts that create the ensuing intertext (Fiske, 1987). Since readers do not have to be familiar with texts before bloggers can refer to them, it is easy for bloggers to rely on texts originating from any source. The finished products presented on the blogs draw the readers in and help them to feel familiar with the referenced text(s). However, Ott and Walter (2000) opine that some texts make specific allusions and encourage readers to apply specialized knowledge. Such texts as those that require specialized knowledge of readers can be found on some blogs too, especially topic blogs, which are not blogger-centred. Such blogs are the kinds that deal in technical and political topics. Their readers share the same interest with the bloggers and when readers come across technical jargon or details they are not deterred. Sometimes though, non-topic bloggers invite readers to consult specific texts (such as movies and novels) for a better appreciation of blog posts. They do this many times for purposes of entertainment. Whether bloggers invite their readers to consult other texts or not, it is a rather postmodern practice for texts to blatantly and conspicuously borrow from other texts. Postmodernism thrives on this.

Postmodernism "refines our sensitivity to differences" in texts, which paves the way for identifying similarities in texts, thereby creating an intertextual space (Lyotard, 1984: xxv). When texts are closely brought together in the enclosed space of another text, their similarities and differences stand out in bold relief, because as a culture of images and surfaces, postmodernism gets some essence from the interplay of texts and the presence of historical allusion (Jameson, 1988). What Jameson means to say is that in postmodern creations, the allusion to history is present and there is also interdependence among contemporaneous texts. Therefore, rather than pristine creativity, postmodern culture

thrives on quotations (Storey, 2003), even if the quotations are almost always from texts belonging to a recent time period at least. Considering the foregoing, blogs are not pristine, given that the homepage predates them. It should not be surprising if blogs thrive on a culture of quotations, especially among texts (such as social network sites (SNSs) and digital images, audio and audio-visual files) which share the same spatial space and perpetual present, as postmodernism is both nascent and constant (Lyotard, 1984).

The practice of building up on the development and works of previous times in history is not limited to the postmodern society, after all, science itself is accumulated knowledge (Lyotard, 1984). The postmodern condition only stresses that there are hardly new ways of doing things, especially works of art (Lacan, 1977; Jameson, 1984; and Hebdige, 1998). It is why genres and canons are still reckoned with as ways of categorizing and differentiating while at the same time being used to help in developing new categorizations for texts. It is also why, in 1969, Kristeva called for a realisation of the existence of "the text" beyond what traditional literary genres classified as texts. It can then be said that although the practice of intertextuality may be as old as time, its present manifestations (the new texts which are offshoots of old styles) are the inventions of the postmodern society, the newness championed by postmodernism. This is probably why Jameson (1984) notes that pastiche—a strategy of intertextuality, which is the art of forming a whole with patches from other wholes—is a postmodern occurrence. If this is not an invention, then at least, it has to be an innovation, a metamorphosis, or an unveiling.

The postmodern condition is typically characterised by the transformation of knowledge into many small narratives and the transformation of scientific knowledge in particular into bits of information (Presner, 2010). These transformations, in essence, undermine the exalted position of metanarratives and instead give credence to the small narratives and bits of information. Whereas metanarratives seek to bring about an ordering and organising of heterogenous voices, postmodernism promotes the differences and diversity exhibited by these voices (Storey, 2001). This promotion of diversity is what happens when the author of a work is presumed dead at the birth of his work, signalling the freedom that readers possess to engage in as many intertextual readings of the text as possible in a show of plurality of voices. Ironically, as it is apparent in many blogs, the blogger as the grand

narrator of many borrowed narratives does not die (collapse) and neither are the little narratives ignored; they exist alongside the author. Intertextuality, "the increasing sound of a plurality of voices from the margins", thus binds the small narratives and the bits of information together into a cohesive whole (Storey, 2001: 63). The peculiarity of blogs is such that it allows the author to maintain a presence in his work while at the same time giving the work some level of independent identity which is further promoted by strategies of intertextuality. Blog readers expect bloggers to adopt the informal, personal tone in their blog posts and the bloggers are usually willing to oblige (Schmidt, 2007). In doing this, the bloggers takes it upon themselves to point out to readers that although they are giving a grand narrative in the blog as a whole, they are doing it via the small narratives of blog posts. The blogger author thus, ironically, gives his readers an impression of his death by reminding them that he is alive.

The "postmodern generation" engages in blogging to "construct" what it perceives to be "real" where ideas and symbols abound (Taricani, 2007:6-7). This situation described by Taricani is one of simulation leading to hyperrealism, as explained by Baudrillard (1983). Hyperrealism is achieved when a real life situation is simulated with alterations and improvements in a bid to achieve a desired perfection. For instance, an artist can play with light and shadows to create a version of a landscape that is so perfect as to be more beautiful to behold than the original. The art work thus transforms the original landscape into a hyperreal, preferred landscape. Reality serves as the artist's template but his work is an improvement on reality so that the beholder prefers the reality the artist has captured to the one that informs the work. It is the reality of the work that the beholder then relates to, having witnessed a blurring of the lines between the real and the imagined landscapes. Similarly, as citizens of a postmodern world, blog readers expect bloggers to construct reality on their blogs through their narratives. They hold their own experience up to these narratives and define their reality by what they obtain from the blogs. Bloggers simulate everyday occurrences on their blogs, analysing and critiquing them and pronouncing their final verdict on them. The readers then relate to this as being more real than what they experience by making meaning of their experience through what bloggers have to say about similar experience (Taricani, 2007; Athmar and Durani, 2015).

Blogs come to represent some kind of authority, especially when more people (readers who comment) engage in the topic and make the blog post robust. Individuals create new, preferred identities for themselves in this online world where they can be faceless and be whoever they want to be. It is why, for instance, the advice offered on blogs regarding religion or lifestyle or any other thing can become so sacrosanct that people use it as yardstick for the validity or otherwise of their own opinion. A blog that will hold such sway will have to be quite popular, however, almost like Disneyland. Baudrillard describes how Disneyland is so hyperreal that visitors get carried away thinking themselves to be play-acting as kids when in fact all of America is actually infantile; there are no adults anywhere and Disneyland only drives the point home with its concentrated effort (Baudrillard, 1983:25). Because perception is reality, people come to accept as true what they perceive to be true, and what they perceive to be true is their actual reality. The media, blogs inclusive, do a great job of helping to conceal the fact that the real is no longer real, what with the barrage of messages and images blurring the lines between the real and the imagined.

One striking characteristic of blogs is the fact of their mass consumption. Being readily available to all internet users and promoting marginalised voices after the fashion of postmodernism qualify them as pop. As Andreas Huyssen (1986) observes, "pop in the broadest sense was the context in which a notion of the postmodern first took shape, and from the beginning until today, the most significant trends within postmodernism have challenged modernism's relentless hostility to mass culture" (p. 188). Blogs are a part of the "other", mass (or popular) culture that postmodernism promotes. They are the other because they are not elitist but readily available and easily affordable for almost everybody (Internet access and/or digital literacy being the primary stumbling blocks as the case may be). Readers also usually do not need any special education or acculturation to understand and appreciate their contents. They temper the hostility mentioned by Huyssen in their manner of engaging both the privileged and non-privileged members of the society, thereby causing them to relate across class boundaries.

Since communication and social relation is essential for all classes of people, blogs as cultural artefacts are handy tools for serving this function. Cultural artefacts are created by

humans for specific uses and so also blogs are created to serve purposes of communication on many levels (intrapersonal, interpersonal, group and mass communication). In addition, they foster relationship among individuals, most notably in group settings and thus serve purposes of socialisation. Blogs as cultural artefacts are rallying points for individuals who share similar identity and cultural experiences; and intertextuality, by nature, promotes fragmentation and pluralism, both of which find expression in blogs. Cumulatively, blogs proliferate, thereby promoting intertextuality and further fragmentation of society into communities of varying cultural experiences where worlds are recreated (Taricani, 2007). However, intertextuality sometimes manifests as plagiarism, especially in an online environment like blogs, where cutting (copying) and pasting are the order of the day.

Importantly though, what appears to some as intertextuality may appear to others as outright plagiarism and neither party need necessarily be wrong; the internet sometimes makes a distinction impossible. Where intertextuality preaches interdependence among texts, not necessarily with acknowledgements, plagiarism is often about lack of acknowledgement and moderation in mimicry. With the prevalent copy and paste practice on the internet, it is possible to publish another's idea and make a casual or passing reference to the fact that it is borrowed, or to not even mention the fact at all. This could pass for intertextuality, or plagiarism—depending on one's point of view. On the other hand, some copied materials retain their link and so they are easily traceable, hence appealing to the sensibilities of plagiarism apologists. The internet environment is dynamic in this manner. Although intertextuality and plagiarism may not be pristine productions of the postmodern world, these days, we are witnessing them on a grander and more sophisticated scale.

Intertextuality and plagiarism are concepts that are often linked. Where the one has a somewhat positive connotation, the other definitely has a negative one (Briggs, 2003). Although many scholars (e.g. Buranen and Roy, 1999; Decoo, 2002; Price, 2002; Whitley and Keith-Spiegel, 2002; Briggs, 2003; Share, 2006; Hu and Lei, 2012) have acknowledged the challenge of definitiveness confronted in attempts to define plagiarism, there is a general consensus that it involves not giving credit for intellectual work to whom it is due. Plagiarism is the theft of intellectual property—taking credit for another's

intellectual work by ascribing the authorship of the work to oneself either overtly or covertly. When an individual makes use of a previous work without accurately spelling out that the work is not original to them, they are guilty of plagiarism. The expression "a previous work" means that the work could also belong to the user; the guiding principle is that once a work is not an original and current production of the user, then plagiarism occurs when the user uses same without stating clearly the origin of the work. The distinction between the concepts of plagiarism and intertextuality might be murky when the one is considered in terms of managing the other (Share, 2006). In other words, intertextuality can be considered to be embedded in plagiarism and rather than give an untoward instance of intertextuality (as defined by an institution, a body etc.) a negative label as embodied in plagiarism, it should rather be seen as a situation where intertextuality has to be managed. Plagiarism essentially has to do with the use of one text by another, but in an ill-advised manner. Intertextuality can then be regarded as the use of one text by another, while plagiarism is an untoward instance of intertextuality.

While critiques consider plagiarism in creative contexts, they more often acknowledge intertextuality, understanding that the cultural environment of text production is generally "marked by duplication, interpenetration of texts and the circulation and recirculation of images, sounds and words in multiple forms and formats" (Share, 2006: 1), much as obtained in primary oral cultures. As such, Hutcheon (1986) notes that "perhaps only in a Romantic [and capitalist?] context where individuality and originality define art can the 'borrowing' from other texts be considered plagiarism—or 'stealing'" (p. 234). Primary oral cultures do not celebrate individuality and originality but communality and additiveness, what with their total lack of literacy (Ong, 2002). As for literate, non-oral cultures where writing and print are the norm, individuality is the order of the day in many contexts. A blog is an example of such contexts. What could possibly be more Romantic than blogs which are often individualistic in their outlook and formation? And what could possibly be more capitalist than software and the internet (the lifeline of blogs), which are the two ventures that most enrich people nowadays? Yet, as capitalist as the internet (and, by extension, blogs) is, it facilitates a lot of borrowing and possibly even stealing by its very nature. This brings about the realization that Hutcheon's (1986) suspect Romantic

[and capitalist] context is that of the print medium which promotes individuality and authorial ownership of (creative) works.

Nevertheless, a blog is also a creative context, albeit in an age of writing and print-based secondary and digital orality, where communality plays out in electronic media (Soffer, 2010). A blog often borrows from other sources to create content, hence the need to investigate the limits of intertextuality in relation to plagiarism in blogs. The secondary oral culture of the electronic era is also one where intertextuality has been rejuvenated to consider non-written works as texts. The formalists and normative theorists of intertextuality considered only printed works as text and so it was easy to conceive of defined, specific authors for texts. Typographic (print) literacy, which brought about intellectual property (IP) ownership, cannot but glorify the author since it is possible to make untold number of copies of a work and have them in many places in the absence of the author. Such works thus become vulnerable to anyone and any use if they do not have the protection offered by IP as recognition of the author's intellectual exercise. The works can be "stolen" by anyone and put to any use, but for the presence of IP laws. However, there was no such thing as stealing from a bard or griot's performance among primary oral peoples because the performance could not be taken away as it had no solid, physical form. More importantly, virtually all of the words uttered by the performer were not even original to him in the first place. Ong (2002) explains that rather than being subordinate and analytic, oral renditions were additive and aggregative. The more a poem or chant was rendered, the more it took on new additions, not necessarily in the form of words, but also in terms of formulae and manner of delivery—parts of it were sloughed off when a performer saw no need for them. This was more so because orally based expression was close to the human life world and agonistically toned. This communal nature of pristine oral societies plays out in the ownership of texts which are deemed to belong to everyone.

As we combine orality with literacy in the electronic age and come about secondary orality, intertextuality has taken a new dimension. For one, IP ownership now applies to printed, recorded (audio and visual) and electronic word texts. The audio texts remind us of the basic nature of orality where the spoken word, which was aurally decoded, was paramount and not able to be substituted with anything because it was the only means of

verbal communication. The nature of texts in this age of secondary orality as well as the rapid speed of copying and sharing them globally are causing a rethink in the concept of IP ownership as communal ownership of works once again assumes importance in the internet society where user-generated content (UGC) is becoming increasingly popular and important.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

Intertextuality is a natural occurrence in all texts, both literary and non-literary (Kristeva, 1969; 1986), oral and written, whether they exist online or virtually, and its origin is traceable to the beginning of human history, since every interaction feeds off previous ones (Worton and Still, 1990). However, as a coinage of the modern, literate human society, intertextuality shares close boundaries with plagiarism and intellectual property ownership, particularly copyright (Whitley & Keith-Spiegel, 2002; Briggs, 2003; Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook, 2004; Share, 2006; Onuoha and Ikonne, 2013). Literary scholars, belonging largely to the writing tradition, have explained the intertextual nature of texts via various avenues such as the death of the author and the intertextual strategies identifiable in texts (Eliot, 1951; Barthes, 1977; D'Angelo, 2010; Sanders, 2016). Whereas the pristine oral human society had no notion of authorial ownership of texts and therefore, no literate notion of intertextuality, the literate, modern society thrives on text ownership. The secondary oral society of the telephone, radio and television were based on writing but experienced orally and aurally in a communal manner that writing does not promote (Ong, 2002). The new media and the social media, with their secondary/digital orality (Soffer, 2010) and ease of information sharing, have brought a new angle into the intertextuality and authorship mix in a postmodern manner. However, not much scholarly attention has been paid to how exactly intertextuality, and, by extension, authorial ownership of texts, play out in the virtual environment.

As social media with "leaky boundaries" (Fiske, 1989: 126) through which texts flow and bring about intertextuality in the virtual environment, blogs are often owned by individuals but kept alive by communities (Blood, 2000; Takhteyev and Hall, 2005; Taricani, 2007). While news blogs have enjoyed the prime attention of scholars in Nigeria and in the generality of Africa (Elega and Ozad, 2017), this study is concerned with non-news

Nigerian blogs. It explores the essence of the manifestation of leaky boundaries in the blogs and the process of keeping the blogs functional. It thus treats blogs as texts which can be examined with the tool of intertextuality. In line with this, it considers the regulatory presence of copyright laws and plagiarism standards in the postmodern society, and looks into the implications of authorial ownership of texts and intertextuality in relation to the viability of blogs as cultural artefacts.

1.3   Research Objectives

The general aim of this study is to examine the occurrence and process of intertextuality in blogs as cultural artefacts. To this end, the *following* were the specific objectives of the research:

1. To examine the patterns of intertextuality in the posts of the selected blogs;
2. To investigate how bloggers determine their intertextual preferences;
3. To determine audience's capacity for appreciating intertextuality;
4. To determine the relationship of intertextuality and plagiarism in the blogs; and
5. To investigate the viability of blogs as cultural artefacts.

1.4   Research Questions

In view of the above, the following questions guided the research:

1. What patterns of intertextuality are identifiable in the posts of the selected blogs?
2. How do the bloggers determine their preferred intertextual patterns?
3. What is the extent of blog readers' ability to appreciate intertextuality in blog posts?
4. How is intertextuality related to plagiarism in the blogs?
5. How viable are the blogs as cultural artefacts?

1.5   Justification of Study

A major significance of this study is that it explores other blog types apart from the news and political blogs which have been the most popular with Nigerian and African scholars (Elega and Ozad (2017). Using the theory of intertextuality, it shrinks the gap of the dearth

of research on blogging practices in Nigeria. It sheds light on the nature of other blog types in Nigeria, drawing attention to their importance in our virtual cultural space and relaying how readers relate with them.

The study looks into the implication of intellectual property ownership in a terrain where knowledge is communally owned in many instances. Both the Nigerian society and the internet environment favour orality in varying degrees: the Nigerian society is residually oral while electronic literacy essentially favours secondary orality. Orality heavily relies on folk/communal ownership of intellectual property. However literacy is now in the mix, hence the legal status given to intellectual property ownership. There is a need, therefore, to explore the nuances in all of this interplay and see the extent to which laws guiding ownership of works can apply to orally based environments. The study bears in mind that the online environment is one that is saturated with information, "providing writers access to vast textual resources" (Chandrasoma et al., 2004: 171-2), and notes, therefore, that the tendency for intertextual forays to become instances of copyright infringement is somewhat high. Similarly, the study considers that although every instance of writing suggests a strong possibility of plagiarism (Share, 2006), there are instances where plagiarism might not be appropriate as a label for the use of other people's work. This study thus sheds light on the applicability of the concept of plagiarism to blogging in particular, drawing attention to the power play that manifests in textual interaction in blogs. It helps to understand and appreciate how bloggers engage texts for their use and, in the process, aids an understanding of the viability of blogs as cultural artefacts.

The research systematically studied blog posts in a bid to showcase them as texts, beyond the literary genre classification as advised by Kristeva (1969). Since "texts… are constitutive of that which they describe" (McRobbie, 2005: 105) and they are constantly in (reading) motion, then blog posts can also be seen as sites of meaning, regardless of their position on the ladder of culture, whether high or low, mass produced or not. If anything, blogs are technically not mass produced, although they are mass consumed. On a more general note, therefore, this study is about treating yet another artefact of pop culture not as mere "escapism, sheer entertainment or relaxation", but with the "seriousness of art" (Storey, 2001: 149). This seriousness is borne out of a new point of view, referred to as a

"new sensibility" by Sontag (1966: 296). The new sensibility calls for a closer attention to be paid to the inner workings of pop culture artefacts; and in the spirit of the new sensibility, scholars such as Hyssen (1986), Storey (2001) and Taricani (2007) have identified computer-mediated communication (CMC) platforms, including social network sites (SNS) and blogs, as postmodern communication and popular culture outlets. This study helps to understand, in particular, the intertextual peculiarities of blogs in a bid to justify their postmodern label.

1.6   Scope of Study

Only three blogs were considered in this study. The three blogs have a largely Nigerian content, they are owned and maintained by Nigerians and they have a Nigerian audience. The posts of a six-month period (October 2016-March 2017) on the three blogs were studied, given the fact that one of the blogs under consideration (*Linda Ikeji's Blog*) gets daily uploads while the other two are uploaded at irregular intervals every week. This time-period ensured the availability of ample data for research.

There are many categorizations of blog types, but also with many overlaps. Researchers' categorizations of blogs tend to generally feature filter blogs (blogs dealing in various subject matters), personal journals (used by individuals to record their personal experience) and topic/knowledge blogs (blogs covering specific topics, ranging from the technical to the political). As of year 2017, among the top Nigerian blogs listed by Alexa and SimilarWeb (two major ranking sites on the internet) there were many topic blogs and filter blogs, but with topic blogs being more represented. This study thus purposively selected one filter blog and two knowledge (i.e. topic) blogs for research. They were *Linda Ikeji's Blog* (a filter blog), *Geek Blog* (a knowledge blog dealing in technology) and *Jarus Hub* (a knowledge blog also, but dealing in career and entrepreneurship). The popularity of these blogs in their respective modes (as judged by Alexa and SimilarWeb) ensured that there were enough potential respondents for the questionnaire designed for blog readers.

Blogs owned by media houses are also among the top Nigerian blogs identified by Alexa and SimilarWeb. The blogs by the media houses augment the traditional service delivery of the organisations which own them and do not belong in the classification of the more

popular blog types. They also belong to the category of news blogs and these have enjoyed considerable scholarly attention, unlike the other blog types. These blogs were therefore not considered in this research because they are institutional tools serving the purposes already established for and by their parent organisations.

1.7   Operational Definition of Terms

Blog: A blog is basically a journal written and maintained online with its contents archived and presented in reverse chronological order (Schmidt, 2007). It is frequently updated and open for the public to read (Taricani, 2007).

Blogger: A blogger is a person who owns and maintains a blog; a person who uploads contents on a blog (Taricani, 2007).

Blogging: It is the art of maintaining a blog by regularly posting contents on it.

Blog posts: They are entries which are the write-ups and other materials uploaded by bloggers on their blogs. They usually have some sort of title and date associated with them as well as a body of text which can be random thoughts, intense discussions, or news. In this study, blog posts comprise only entries on the home pages of blogs; however, they do not include adverts.

Cultural Artefact: A cultural artefact is an object or item of historical value made by man for his use. Blogs are cultural artefacts that reflect the people and culture of an era—the postmodern era of electronic and internet literacy.

Text: A text is a self-contained, meaningful system of signs and symbols, consisting of "alphanumeric characters, spoken language, music, still pictures or moving pictures…" (Gunder, 2001:86). Therefore, a blog is a text; this means the texts that make it up are subtexts of it but also texts in their own right.

Intertextuality: It is "the property texts have of being full of snatches of other texts, which may be explicitly demarcated or merged in, and which text may assimilate, contradict, ironically echo, and so forth" (Fairclough, 1992:84). It is "the multiple ways in which texts refer to other texts" (Hodsdon-Champeon, 2010:1).

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Plagiarism: In the academia and the media, it is the act of passing off another person's work as one's own, or failing to adequately reference a source as the origin of an idea.

1.8 Limitations of Study

The theory of intertextuality was only applied to the blog posts that appeared on the home pages of each of the blogs. As such, the study did not address the occurrence of intertextuality in the blogs as a whole despite the fact that the blogs had other pages apart from the home pages and the home pages had other texts (e.g. adverts) apart from the blog posts. Also, only two blog types were considered for this study: one filter blog, and two topic/knowledge blogs. As such, findings from this study may not be generalizable to other blog types.

1.9 Chapter Outline

This thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One serves as the introductory part of the work, providing the study background, statement of research problem, justification of research, research objective and questions as well as operational definition of terms.

Chapter Two covers literature review and theoretical framework. In this chapter, relevant literature such as new media, blogs, blog types and blogging as well as popular culture are reviewed. Computer-mediated communication and social media are relevant to this study and so they are discussed accordingly. Intertextuality as the theoretical framework of the work is also reviewed. It is broken down into text and intertextuality and each is discussed accordingly. The strategies of intertextuality are also highlighted. In the round off of the discussion on intertextuality, its link with plagiarism is pointed out and so plagiarism is also discussed. A table featuring the categories of plagiarism identified by Turnitin ends the chapter.

Chapter Three is about the methodology applied in the research. Online ethnography (i.e. netnography) and survey are the research designs employed for the study. They are discussed in details with particular attention paid to the methods and instruments of data gathering. The methods of data analysis also feature here and the section on problems of data collection ends the chapter.

Chapter Four is titled "Data Presentation and Analysis" and so, it is the chapter where data collected for the research are presented and analysed. With the instrumentality of necessary data, each of the five research questions is addressed under appropriate subheadings. Blog posts, interview responses and questionnaire responses are used liberally to address the research questions and explain findings. Tables are used to represent questionnaire responses and, where necessary blog posts are not presented in the course of discussions, they are attached as appendices with footnotes alerting the reader to this. Interview responses are excerpted as needed.

Chapter Five provides the "Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations" of the thesis. Here, a summary of the research findings is given which covers the intertextual patterns identified in the blog posts, bloggers and blog readers understanding of intertextuality and also the occurrence of folklore on bogs as cultural artefacts. The research concludes that bloggers are redefining plagiarism and copyright infringement to suit their trade. Similarly, there are other intertextual patterns exhibited in the blog posts apart from the literary ones and this has implications for the bogs' viability. The chapter is broken into three corresponding sections for each of these discourses.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter highlights relevant studies on blogging and intertextuality and their background. It further highlights how the two variables are linked and what inform(s) this link. As a way of understanding blogs and their nature as information technology manifestations, the chapter reviews new media, computer-mediated communication and social media. It lays a foundation for the discussion of intertextuality by drawing attention to the relationship of orality, literacy and IP ownership. It then discusses intertextuality and concludes with plagiarism as a major implication of intertextuality in the postmodern literate society.

2.1   Defining New Media

A lot goes into defining new media. First is the need to ascertain which media are new and, in the course of doing this, identify the attributes that bind them together. Thus the question to ask is which are the new media? In fact the array of questions to ask is: 'What is "new" about "new media"?' What is continuity, what is radical change? What is truly new, what is only apparently so? The foregoing questions are pertinent in identifying the boundary between old and new media (if there is any), in determining if and how new media have [actually] brought about some radical change, and how apparent the change is (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant & Kelly, 2009: 10). If we say that each of the media predating what we now call new media only foregrounds the coming of the new media as Lister et al (2009) submit, then there is the need to expatiate on how this is so.

Traditionally, media are seen as the avenues through which communication (particularly mass communication) takes place. We could easily identify newspapers (the print medium), television and radio as media; they are arguably the most popular and notable traditional media. As for new media, they are placed at the end of a chronological list that

begins with oral communication, writing, printing, drawing and painting, and then stretches and weaves its way through the image and communication media of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, photography, film, TV, video and semaphore, telegraphy, telephony and radio (Lister *et al.* 2009: 53). The items on this continuum are not totally mutually exclusive because they each feed off their predecessors. Printing, drawing and painting are all offshoots of writing which utilize writing materials; photography, film, TV and video are connected as they all deal in imaging and images; while telegraphy, telephony and radio are also related. This is also not forgetting that oral communication is the foundation on which they are all laid. The new media, in their capacity, incorporate aspects of each of these media.

Scholars seem to agree that it is difficult to cleanly break the "new media" (also sometimes called digital media) from the traditional or "old media". For one, Lister et al. (2009) point out that "changes in the forms, production, distribution and consumption of media are more complex than the implied division into the 'old' and 'new' suggests" (p. 53). Manovich (2001) explains that what we call new media represent "a convergence of two separate historical trajectories: computing and media technologies" (p. 20). This convergence led to the translation of existing media into numerical data accessible through computers and brought about the birth of the new media in the form of [digitised] graphics, moving images, sounds, shapes, spaces and text, comprising simply another set of computer data. Butler and Grusin (1999) see new media as the better versions of other media in a way that makes older media rise up to the challenges posed by the new media.

Cubitt (2013) names a practical date for the advent of new media—1993, the year when the Mosaic web browser was introduced. He regards 1993 as "the watershed of the new in media studies", since "it opened up network computing for the mass participation of the later 1990s and the new century" (p. 16). Another consideration in defining new media is that the expression could be thought of as a "portmanteau" word which avoids technicalities (Lister, Dovey, Giddings, Grant & Kelly, 2009: 10). It has similarly been explained in terms of computation, with regard to exhibition and distribution (Manovich, 2001). One readily apparent point of divergence in Manovich's and Lister et al.'s (2009) understanding of new media is the aspect of production. While Manovich (2001) states the

purportedly "popular understanding" of new media which has to do only with distribution and exhibition, Lister et al. (2009) see new media as bringing about new "patterns of organization and production… in media culture, industry, economy, access, ownership, control and regulation" (p. 13). However, in the same publication, Manovich (2001) later argues that "there is no need to privilege the computer as a machine for the exhibition and distribution of media over the computer as a tool for media production or as a media storage device" and talks about a new media revolution—one which "signals the shift of all of our culture to computer-mediated forms of production, distribution and communication" (pp. 19, 43). The computer can thus be regarded as an integral part of new media production, organisation, storage and distribution.

2.2   Understanding New Media

Although media are understood to be an integral part of humans' social life, they sometimes defy mere sociological explanations. For new media in particular, an appreciable understanding of them considers technology alongside their social aspect, since humans shape media which in turn shape them (McLuhan, 1964). The mistake should, however, also not be made of trying to unravel new media merely by their technological nature. Despite this, the singular term "new media" is applied unproblematically, because, as Lister *et al.* (2009) suggest, new media constitute an epoch, being part of a global, larger, historical change. They invoke a positive, seeming utopian charge, what with their being "new". Similarly, the concept "new media" is an umbrella word which guards against reducing the so called media to "technical or more specialist and controversial" terms (p. 10).

New media are indeed part of an epochal change in world history. The rapidity, precision and coverage they have introduced into the art of communication have brought about changes in a great many aspects of life as we know it, including politics, business and education. A lot of us are swept up in the momentum of the promises and deliverables of the new media. The world may not be perfect (utopian) yet, but now we can talk to our loved ones and business partners across great distances and see them live while we chat; we are not absolutely voiceless in the political system, provided that we know the [new

media] platform where we can air our views; and being a part of the global information system has never been easier and more fun, what with the array of affordable and available portable devices. There is no doubt that a piecing apart of all that new media entails will lead to technicalities which will not be appreciated by the average observer. The term is thus a collective name for all the technicalities involved in the devices, processes and systems which make up the current communication landscape. To appreciate them, we need not necessarily know all their technical details as we face the combination of entrepreneurial initiatives and complex interactions between traditional media and current technologies which they represent (Lister *et al*, 2009).

Indeed, a lot of technological experiments into communication media are going on, thus bringing about abundant software and platforms for communication. Entrepreneurial initiatives are the offshoot of the technological experiments which birth the likes of Facebook and electronic mail. Some of the experiments and initiatives which have been embraced in the larger society are the ones that cause the complex set of interactions between new technological possibilities and established media forms as pointed out by Lister *et al*. (2009). The complex interactions (and probably tension) are not totally surprising, given that the old and new media are adjusting and adapting to a situation of coexistence without the latter cannibalizing the former. As a result, it is necessary to define the new media and touch on their characteristics.

Usually, scholars give criteria for identifying new media and understanding them. For Livingstone (1999), the first of the criteria for defining new media is the "significant multiplication of personally owned media" (p. 4), where familiar "old" media such as television, telephone and radio are being used in new arrangements with households (and also individuals) possessing them in multiples. Added to this is the availability of mobile media such as mobile phones and the Walkman. A major consideration here has to do with the affordability occasioned by reduction in prices of the technologies. Where the notion of household television viewing used to hold sway, now the social and economic organization of households makes it possible for there to be multiple units of the same gadget in a household. Gone are the days of hierarchy in the use of gadgets; women, men, kids and adults can now use them since the society has become more liberal. The second criterion is

the diversification in form and content, "resulting in local and global, general and specialized television channel, in diverse kinds of computer and video game and so forth" (p. 4). With newer (individualized) forms becoming available, older ones are phased out. Diversification also facilitates a departure from media use in the context of sociocultural determination, to be replaced with diverse conceptions of "lifestyle".

Since the dynamics of new media are founded upon the "premise and the promise of constant change and permanent evolution" (Papacharissi and Easton, 2013: 171), it follows that they are not to be treated as the last word in the evolution of media. They build on the availability and existence of their predecessors, and it can be expected that some media in the future will also build on them. The fault to be seen in this line of thought, however, is that new media are by nature so dynamic that whatever gradual and sudden changes that we see in media now stem from them, hence their promise of constant change and permanent evolution. Perhaps, such constant revolution is most appreciable in media convergence as noted by Livingstone (1999). New media are thus not new just by virtue of being different from their predecessors; they are also new in the sense that they make convergence of various media types possible. The convergence made possible by new media seems to be one of their most striking features as noted in Livingstone's third criterion for explaining new media that they bring about "the more technologically radical shift towards convergent forms of information services, as media, information and telecommunication services become interconnected" (p. 4). This interconnectedness is facilitated by the emergence of the more recent media—cable television and the personal computer especially—as well as by both the multiplication and diversification of media. The fourth and final criterion has to do with "the shift from one-way, mass communication towards more interactive communication between medium and user" (p. 5). The main tools of this shift, according to the scholar, are the internet, interactive games/television and near video-on-demand. Internet communication provides great potential for redefining the relationship between public and private, for constructing individualised lifestyles, and for reframing knowledge hierarchies through various forms of participation. In summary, Lister et al. (2009: 19) note the fundamental consequences of digitisation which characterizes new media as follows:

- media texts are 'dematerialised' in the sense that they are separated from their physical form as photographic print, book, roll of film, etc.
- data can be compressed into very small spaces;
- they can be accessed at very high speeds and in non-linear ways;
- they can be manipulated far more easily than analogue forms.

The absence of tactility in digitised media which is occasioned by their minute forms and which results in their non-linear, easily accessible forms as outlined by Lister *et al.* (2009) is expressed in more detail by Manovich (2001) in the form of five principles (of new media). The principles include numerical representation, modularity, automation, variability and transcoding.

2.2.1   Numerical representation

This has to do with the precision and mathematical calculation which digitization makes possible in new media. Digitization is the process of converting data into numerical representation. Old media objects can be converted to new media forms through the process of digitization. An instance of this is scanning a picture taken with an analogue camera and then editing it with software on a computer. In essence, for data that is not digitally produced to be stored digitally, it is converted from its original analogue state to the digital state that can be comprehended by the computer. Ajayi (2015) explains that digitization has to do with the electronic generation, storage, and processing of data in terms of digits 1 and 0, which are the binary numbers used for representing information. Lister *et al* (2009), however, remind us that

> it is often mistakenly assumed that 'digital' means the conversion of physical data into binary information. In fact, digital merely signifies the assignation of numerical values to phenomena. The numerical values could be in the decimal (0–9) system; each component in the system would then have to recognise ten values or states (0–9). If, however, these numerical values are converted to binary numbers (0 and 1) then each component only has to recognize two states, on or off, current or no current, zero or one. Hence all input values are converted to binary numbers because it makes the

design and use of the pulse recognition components that are
the computer so much easier and cheaper (p. 18).

Be it digits 0 and 1 or digits 0-9, it is clear that the digital has to do with digits, which is the programming language understood by the computer, the device that drives the digital.

2.2.2   Modularity

Modularity is the second principle of new media. It is the notion that "media elements, be they images, sounds, shapes or behaviours, are represented as collections of discrete samples (pixels, polygons, voxels, characters, scripts) which are assembled into larger-scale objects but… continue to maintain their separate identities" (Manovich, 2001: 30). For example, Microsoft office applications inserted into one another, while working together, still maintain their independence and individual identity. An Excel material imported into PowerPoint will remain Excel but work well with PowerPoint. In the same manner, a digital image is made up of many pixels which combine to form the whole picture. Hence, we can talk of an image pixelating, i.e. breaking up into its component parts (pixels) thus losing its unifying presence and becoming less clear. "In short, a new media object consists from independent parts which, in their turn, consist from smaller independent parts and so on, up to the level of smallest 'atoms' such as pixels, 3D points, or characters" (p. 31).

2.2.3   Automation

This third principle is the ability of a computer user to modify or create from scratch a media object using templates or simple algorithms. Here, software helps users to create what they would, for example a well laid out write-up in Microsoft Word, and a picture whose contrast is improved with Photoshop. These are low level automation. High level automation "requires a computer to understand, to a certain degree, the meanings embedded in the objects being generated, i.e. their semantics". This is part of the larger notion of artificial intelligence (AI), where computer games are most notable. Computer games have AI engines which simulate human intelligence (through codes, game characters can be asked to act like humans by running, jumping, shooting etc.). Only commands which are coded in the software of the game can, however, be given; "thus,

human intentionality can be removed from the creative process, at least in part" (Manovich, 2001: 32).

2.2.4   Variability

The fourth principle, variability is another consequence of numerical coding of media and modular structure of media object. It is the notion that "a new media object is not something fixed once and for all but [is something that] can exist in different, potentially infinite versions" (Manovich, 2001: 36). Since they are stored differently and independently, new media objects can be reproduced in many different combinations. For instance, a picture from Photoshop can be combined with a book in CorelDraw or with a song in Adobe Premiere Pro or it can be combined with both using appropriate software. The combination can be varied as it suits the human user.

2.2.5   Transcoding

Transcoding is the fifth principle and it "aims to describe… the most substantial consequence of the computerization of media" (Manovich, 2001: 45). Transcoding is the understanding that new media comprise two layers: cultural and computer. Examples of the cultural layer are encyclopaedia and the short story; story and plot; composition and point-of-view; mimesis and catharsis; and comedy and tragedy. Examples of categories on the computer layer are process and packet; sorting and matching; function and variable; and a computer language and a data culture. The interplay of the two layers is capable of bringing about a mutation or change in the genre that humans are used to. Since data input by humans into the computer (the device for creating, distributing, storing and archiving new media) is subject to the layer of the computer, it follows that data be made to adapt to the computer and probably evolve into something new. The computer layer thus affects the [human] cultural layer, reorganising its contents and making new genres emerge. As such, we have audio books and scanned pictures. Conversely, the computer layer is also affected by the cultural layer when new software and hardware are invented to cater to new needs. Software abound in various fields to meet the needs of practitioners. Accountants, lawyers, linear and non-linear editors and a host of other people have software tailored to suit their professions. Hardware are also invented regularly as the needs for them arise. Scanners,

webcam[era], lenses, printers etc. are also a few of the hardware that are coupled with computers to make them more useful. Hence, the computer is used as a media machine and this affects both its hardware and software, especially with regard to the human-computer interface so that computers now represent how human culture models the world (Manovich, 2001).

New media are not without the agency of humans since humans create them and determine their use. The internet did not happen by itself; neither did it come by its different uses by itself. However, having come into being, the new media are in turn shaping us—albeit in a symbiotic relationship of structure and agency where we also continue to shape them. The users, as agents, select them and use them to suit their needs in a collective thereby building up a structure. With repeated use, certain media become identifiable with certain structures and such media become agencies in their own rights. Thus, social network sites (SNSs) become identifiable with chats and friend groups, while blogs become identifiable with reverse chronological postings and mobile devices become identifiable with easy access games and other software. In this manner they also determine their use and usefulness and so share the status of agency with their users. This view of media and how they are used is expatiated in Marshal McLuhan's (1964) theory of technological determinism. Seeing media as extensions of man, McLuhan suggests that the "new" media of his time (i.e. television and radio, which he actually referred to as electric media) were creating a schizophrenic man with dual consciousness.

McLuhan takes his argument a step further, saying that newer media embody older media. By this, he means that newer media are only a remediation of older media. For instance, television is a remediation of cinema, which is a remediation of photography. Speech is remediated in written words, which are remediated on the typed pages (print), which are again remediated in the telegraph: "The content of writing is speech, just as the written word is the content of print, and print is the content of the telegraph" (McLuhan, 1964). By extension, as for the [computer] screen, all these others are remediated in it, which is why Butler and Grusin (1999) identify remediation as the main characteristic of new media, saying that "older electronic and print media are seeking to reaffirm their status within our culture as digital media challenge that status" (p. 5).

Whereas some scholars are wary of the term, arguing that every medium is new, at least at its first appearance (at any given point in time there will always be new media or perhaps, more accurately, newer media), others are of the opinion that new media signify " 'the cutting edge', the 'avant-garde', the place for forward-thinking people to be (whether they be producers, consumers, or, indeed, media academics)" (Lister *et al.* 1999: 11). The latter scholars are convinced that new media have had quite a profound effect on global communication and the general way of life, in terms of politics, economy and ultimately culture.

2.3   Computer-mediated Communication

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) is communication that takes place across computer devices. It is facilitated by the medium of the computer, taking place "when human beings interact with one another by transmitting messages via networked computers" (Herring, 1999:1). The distinction is usually made between synchronous and asynchronous CMC. In synchronous CMC, interlocutors communicate and respond to one another back to back as is found in face-to-face (FtF) communication. Examples of this are the instant message or chat and audio/video conferencing where virtual conversation goes on without necessarily breaking the flow of the communication. The interlocutors respond to one another immediately in a synchronous manner. As for asynchronous CMC, the exchange of ideas does not take place at regular, natural intervals as is found in FtF conversation. Here, the timing is not uniform as the receiver of a message may not access the message immediately it is sent to them. In electronic mail for example, the context of conversation does not emphasize immediacy of response and, by extension, synchronicity. Not responding to an e-mail immediately is not unusual, unlike delaying response to a chat message. In the same manner, the short message service (SMS) does not usually get immediate responses, just like blog posts.

Over time, scholars have been most concerned with the social implications and effects of CMC, particularly the perception of "others" and the construction of the "self" in CMC environments compared to FtF communication. In other words, how identity is constructed in cyberspace, a space where the characteristics of FtF communication do not necessarily

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feature. A recurrent theme has been "the extent to which CMC should be regarded as a medium that is capable of supporting social relations" (Postmes, Spears and Lea 2002:2). As a result, it has often been defined as not having enough social presence or being rich enough (Short, Willams and Christie, 1976; Daft and Lengel, 1984). Its shortcomings regarding promotion of social relationships have been identified by Daft and Lengel (1984) as low degrees of intimacy and immediacy, due to the fact that the physical presence of interactants has been subordinated for computer use. Also, the scholars posited that CMC is lacking in the ability to transmit multiple cues, facilitate immediate feedback and use personal language. Unlike FtF communication which thrives on the physical and material presence of the communicators thereby being rich in the transmission of multiple cues (gestures, facial expression, proxemics etc.) and facilitating immediate feedback, CMC relies, to a large extent, on language use. The initial CMC media such as telephone and e-mail relied solely on language, but with the advent of video conferencing and the introduction of emoticons into text-based CMC, language has ceased to be the only means of transferring ideas in CMC. Since the goals of communication have been identified as resolving ambiguity and reducing uncertainty (Galbraith, 1977), the degree of uncertainty and ambiguity that a communication medium seeks to reduce should be considered in determining the "richness" or "leanness" of the medium. For example, e-mails in business environments usually contain straightforward, non-emotion-laden information and so are able to probably even eliminate uncertainty having passed the needed information across. Therefore, CMC cannot be said to be a lean medium all the time.

McKenna and Bargh (2000) have noted some attributes of CMC, in comparison to FtF communication. These include relative anonymity, reduced importance of physical appearance, attenuation of physical distance, and greater control over the time and pace of interactions. These attributes are discussed below.

2.3.1 Anonymity

Unlike FtF communication where interactants are always physically present in the communication context, anonymity occurs in CMC environments, although relatively and in varying degrees. In e-mail settings, individuals' identities are partially revealed,

sometimes through the address and through the automated signature. As for SNSs the degree of disclosure is higher, while bloggers are also notably more identifiable (compared to their readers) when they are not using pseudonyms. Postmes *et al.* (2002) have noted that the ability to be relatively anonymous in a social interaction reduces accountability and leads to the depersonalization and deindividuation of users, where depersonalization is a state in which a normal sense of personal identity and reality is lost. As for deindividuation, it is heightened when interacting on the internet due to anonymity and group salience. Depersonalisation and deindividuation downplay the identities of individuals in order to project that of the group which individuals then seek to identify with and conform to. In losing his identity, an individual finds that of a group by which he then defines himself. However, this state of anonymity has consequences for the communication that takes place in this context, as people may interact and participate differently due to the anonymity afforded by the medium (Okdie and Guadagno, 2008).

2.3.2   *Physical Appearance and Distance Online*

Increase in anonymity means reduction in importance of physical appearance. By the same token, lack of physical appearance results in anonymity. Interactants in CMC need not bother about the kind of impression they create by their physicality and this may in turn have positive effects such as reduced or lack of discrimination. This lack of physical appearance may also encourage active participation in CMC, particularly in a group context where individuals do not have clear ideas about the identities of other members of the group. Since the identity is preserved, whatever contribution a person makes to the conversation is likely to be done without the fetters of what others would think about him or his opinion. Similarly, others can only wonder about fellow interactants' identity, albeit idly, since they probably have no clue about whom they might be.

As regards distance, it is important to note that there is a difference between physical distance and social distance. Where physical distance is "the measurable amount of space between… individuals", social distance has to do with "the perception of remoteness or closeness between… individuals" (Okdie and Guadagno, 2008: 479). Individuals may be physically close but socially apart, and vice versa. The relationship that exists among

individuals online may be based on either of the two (physical or social), but usually social closeness encourage CMC. It has been proven through research that the relationship that people have offline is what they bring online, regardless of the degree of physical closeness (Baym, 1998; Hine, 2000). Even if interactants are far apart physically, the environment of CMC draws them closer together, thereby reducing and almost eliminating the effect of the physical distance.

2.3.3   *Greater Control over Time and Pace of Interactions*

Without the constraints of time which give rise to the need for immediate response as experienced in FtF communication, CMC allows interactants to mull over their thoughts and take their time before reacting in interactions. McKenna and Bargh (2000) refer to the asynchronous nature of many CMC contexts and note that recipients may not be ready for messages when they receive them. Visual and other non-verbal cues which can be used to propel interaction are also absent in CMC. Researchers even distinguish between CMC and other communication contexts which are not FtF, but which contain more cues. For instance, in telephone conversations, there are voice modulations which also carry meaning. However, emoticons on computer devices now marginally pass across emotional messages and some non-verbal cues.

2.4   Social Media

Going by the definition of social, one could argue that all media are indeed social since they facilitate interaction and communication. However, the media that are termed social in the literature are those ones used by people to interact in a computer environment. According to Trottier and Fuchs (2015), computing systems and web applications can all be said to be social since they serve social functions in the society when humans cognise through them. The scholars do not delineate among media in general to focus on what are termed social media in particular. While they note computing systems in relation to mediation, they lump the systems together with "all forms of media", but this is not very useful for the scope of this work because there have to be some distinguishing features of some media which earn them the tag of social media. They, however, go further to expatiate that networks of tools that facilitate connections among humans can be more

strictly regarded as social network platforms. Such platforms, according to them, include Web 2.0 technologies such as discussion boards, chats, e-mail and mailing lists. Once a platform (a networked tool) facilitates interaction among two or more people as in a network, then it is a social medium, particularly since network analysis explains a network as a system of interconnected nodes (Wasserman and Faust, 1997; Barabasi, 2003). More precisely, social media are explained in terms of Web 2.0 technologies, which denote users' collective intelligence used to co-create the value of platforms like Google, Amazon, Wikipedia or Craigslist in a "community of connected users," (O'Reilly and Battelle 2009). Therefore, social media are not interactive merely in the sense of message sending and feedback; they are distinguished by the fact that the lines are blurred between producers and receivers of messages. In other words, roles are interchanged with no one being the permanent sender or the permanent receiver of information; everyone co-creates the usefulness and value of the platform of interaction. As such, Jacka and Scott (2011) contend that it "can be said that social media is the set of Web-based broadcast technologies that enable the democratisation of content, giving people the ability to emerge from consumers of content to publishers" (p. 5). Such people take on the added role of publishers of content alongside being consumers of content. Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) also give their definition of social media, which is similar to Jacka and Scott's (2011) and Trottier and Fuchs' (2015) positions, noting that social media are Web 2.0 technologies that facilitate the exchange of user generated content.

The ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0, as pointed out by O'Reilly and Battelle (2009), have to do with a stronger come-back of Web technology in the early 2000's after the dot-com crisis which led to the crash of many internet companies. Web 2.0 is thus "a statement about the second coming of the Web after the dotcom bust". It is "designed to restore confidence in an industry that had lost its way after the dotcom bust" (2009:1). It is a computer programming technology targeted at increasing interactivity among users, "a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion" (Kaplan and Haenlein, 2010:61).

As noted by Newson, Houghton and Patten (2008), "the term 'social media' is credited to Chris Shipley, co-founder of Guidewire Group, a San Francisco-based company that researches and reports on technology trends. The term is used to describe online tools and utilities that allow: communication of information online; and participation and collaboration" (pp. 49-50). By virtue of this, blogs, professional and social network[ing] sites, wikis, podcasting and video casting, virtual worlds, social bookmarking etc. technologies all fall within the social media category. A more narrow definition of social media, however, equates the term with social network sites (SNS) only (Veum and Undrum, 2018). Drury (2008) defines social media as "online resources that people use to share content: video, photos, images, text, ideas, insight, humour, opinion, gossip, news" (p. 1). For Mayfield (2008), social media can best be understood as a group of new kinds of online media which shares the characteristics of participation, openness, conversation, community and connectedness. Making up this group are social networks (websites that allow people to build personal webpages and share and connect with friends e.g. Facebook and MySpace), blogs (online journals where entries appear in reverse chronological order), wikis (websites such as Wikipedia that allow people to add and/or edit content on them), podcasts (websites where audio and video files are available by subscription through services like Apple iTunes), forums (areas for online discussions on specific topics of interest), content communities (online communities which organize and share particular kinds of content e.g. YouTube and Flickr), and micro blogging sites (social networking combined with bite-sized blogging where small amounts of contents are distributed online e.g. Twitter). Mayfield (2008) is of the opinion that social media are very popular because they are "actually just about being human beings", being social creatures. In other words, they help our species be what it has always been—only more so (pp. 5-7). However, "different social media applications, though sharing some underlying commonalities, offer different core utilities, satisfy different primary needs, and have different levels of popularity" (Chan-Olmsted, Cho and Lee, 2013:3). The underlying commonalities can be discussed in terms of Mayfield's (2008) identified characteristics discussed below.

2.4.1 Participation

This has to do with interaction, contribution and feedback from everyone who is interested. Individuals are able to engage one another on a social media platform and by so doing create content that is "more democratised than ever before" (Drury, 2008:274). Burgoon, Bonito, Bengtsson, Ramirez, Dunbar and Miczo (1999) define participation as "the extent to which senders and receivers are actively engaged in the interaction as opposed to giving monologues, passively observing, or lurking" (p. 36), while Chan-Olmsted *et al.* (2013) note that it is an integral part of interaction. Realising that participation need not be measured in terms of active engagement in interaction alone, Koh and Kim (2004) propose that it be measured with the organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) model, whereby frequency of visits to, and length of stay in, social media will also be reckoned with. Many people on various SNSs and blogs lurk around to read postings and comments without leaving any rejoinder of theirs. Although their presence and participation is not readily visible, they perform an important role of taking time to visit and browse through the sites.

2.4.2 Openness

This is the characteristic of social media that points out the ease with which individuals can take part in the interaction. Feedback is often encouraged and barriers, if they exist, are usually minimal. In this regard, Meadows-Klue (2007) note that most social media contain limited flow barriers, both in applications and technological transferability, so information can easily travel between sources and among users. The characteristic of openness is enhanced by social media's networking philosophy and the availability of easy-to-use mechanisms for creating and sharing contents (Chan-Olmsted *et al.*, 2013).

2.4.3 Conversation

This refers to the fact that no definite boundaries separate the audience from the sender in social media, unlike the traditional media which are about broadcasting, transmitting or distributing content to an audience (Mayfield, 2008). The internet and Web 2.0 encourage non-lineal, two-way conversation types which are found on social media (Rowley, 2004; Chan-Olmsted *et al.*, 2013). Conversationality, a central theme in social media, varies

according to social media types. SNSs generally have a higher degree of conversationality than blogs, microblogging and content communities. Scholars such as Liu and Shrum (2002) and Liu (2003) have proposed that feedback should be used in measuring the degree of conversationality in social media, since it is a component of interactivity, active control and synchronicity.

2.4.4 Community

According to Mayfield (2008), this refers to the forming of community and enhancing of effective communication within such community. In this sense, people identify others with whom they wish to be associated and with whom they share a common interest. This brings about friendlists, followers, fans and other such tags which social media use to define community. Community is a major factor in social media, particularly SNSs, which have been said to be used to further cement offline relationships (Boyd and Ellison, 2008).

2.4.5 Connectedness

This is the last characteristic of social media identified by Mayfield (2008). It has to do with networking and linking up. People connect one another for information sharing and development of relationships on social media. By providing Web links to other sites, resources and people, social media allow media users to move from one point to others in cyberspace, and offer connectedness to their users (Mayfield, 2008; Chan-Olmsted *et al.*, 2013). In addition to the ability of social media such as SNSs to connect individuals with acquaintances as well as strangers, the public display and articulation of one's connections which often result in new connections between more individuals is what makes social media unique (Boyd & Ellison, 2008).

Many of the characteristics of social media given by Mayfield (2008) above certainly did not start with the examples of social media they give. For instance, there have been situations of community interactivity on the internet before the advent of the social media. Rheingold's (2000) The WELL (Whole Earth 'Lectronic Link) of 1985 was a bulletin board system which facilitated community as well as interactivity. It would probably be classified as social media if it were still in existence today, but Rheingold himself called it a virtual community. Similarly, collaborative editing and adding of materials, such as is

found in the case of wikis may be new in the sense of the World Wide Web (WWW), but it is not new in computing. In fact, WikiWikiWeb was introduced by Ward Cunningham in 1984 (Trottier and Fuchs, 2015).

New media and social media work well together. New media find constant and evolutionary expressions in social media which thrive on the platform of internet connectivity as made possible by the computer. New media are computationally enhanced kinds of media and the social media are a very good way of manifesting the inherent, very expressive nature of new media. On social media platforms, the agency of humans in the production of new media materials is readily noticeable, since new media materials uploaded on social media are the ideas that social media users (humans) wish to express. Apart from the typed words, other expressions on social media are new media productions, for, as Dykeman (2008) observes, social media are "the means for any person to: publish digital, creative content; provide and obtain real-time feedback via online discussions, commentary and evaluations; and incorporate changes or corrections to the original content"(p. 1). Also, social media can be understood as online platforms for the interaction, collaboration, and creating/sharing of various types of digital contents (Eisenberg, 2008; Universal McCann, 2008). It is thus nigh impossible to imagine social media without new media, and this is not just because they are both computer-based, but also because of their individual interactive natures. While the interactivity in new media generally takes place between humans and the computer (Manovich, 2001), that of social media is between humans. Humans, however, are the common interactants in the two situations, and new media products are often employed in social media interactions.

For all the advantages that social media seem to have, ranging from democratisation of content production and media space to giving voice to the erstwhile voiceless, they are not without their ills, because as Duivestein and Bloem (2013) point out, "the social media groundswell also unleashed a frantic chaos in the name of democratisation" (p. 1). A major concern is the violation of privacy leading to the vulnerability of unsuspecting individuals on the internet. Some scholars such as Guadagno et al. (2010) are even of the opinion that privacy no longer exists in the current era of social media where "people have really gotten comfortable not only sharing more information and different kinds, but more openly and

with more people. That social norm is just something that has evolved over time" (Mark Zuckerberg, CEO of Facebook, as cited by Duivestein and Bloem, 2013:18). In order to "type oneself into being", one is expected to give out certain information on the various social media platforms (Sundén, 2003:3). Such information are then used to create one's identity which separates one from others. The information include bio data, contact details and a description of oneself, all of which can be very useful for prowlers and hackers. Using the popular SNS, Facebook, as an example, Duivestein and Bloem (2013) note that the world of social media "calls to mind the panopticon", which "makes it possible to control, discipline, guard, study, compare and upgrade groups of people. The building consists of a tower with a ring of cells surrounding it. Each of these cells has two windows, one facing outward and the other facing the tower. One watchman in the tower is sufficient to guard, know and control all the residents…. Facebook controls our digital data…." (p. 19). Social media users are made to think that they are in control of the data they have given out, when indeed it has become the property of the platform where almost anybody can access it and make use of it. Granted, there may be restrictions as to who views whose data, but there are no restrictions for the platform itself, which becomes the panopticon.

Similarly, social media have been known to be used to spread rumour and unnecessary panic due to the sensational manner in which people use them. Posetti and Matthews (2018) observe that although disinformation, misinformation, hoaxes and propaganda are not new, the arrival of the internet in the 20th century and the subsequent arrival of the social media in the 21st century have dramatically multiplied the risks associated with errors and fraudulent messages. Such fraudulent messages are regarded as fake news which is the fabrication of what is essentially a lie but which is then presented as true. The Nigerian Vice President, Prof. Yemi Osinbajo, once stressed that "the capacity of fake news to cause alarm, fear and even violence has been demonstrated again and again"[1].Prof. Wole Soyinka, also noting the amount of damage that fake news is capable of causing, remarked that "fake news may cause World War 3."[2]

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[1] "Fake News Has Capacity to Cause Great Harm—Osinbajo" *The Nation* 9 January, 2019
[2] "Fake News May Start Third World War—Soyinka" *The Punch* 9 January, 2019, p.

2.5   Orality, Literacy and IP Ownership

Humans have not always been literate but they have always been oral, in the sense that words exist primarily in the auditory form, the form in which humans have always communicated. Ong (2002) suggests that once writing has made it possible to arrest words and freeze them in space, then their meaning can also be anchored, leading to the ability to free "the mind for more original, more abstract thought" (p. 35). The more original, more abstract thought will once again be committed to writing and so the pattern continues. In primary oral cultures where words existed only in the spoken form, knowledge was communally owned because no one person could hold on to it in its ephemeral form without letting others in on it. In fact, in order for the knowledge not to be lost it had to be shared so that the task of preservation was laid on the shoulders of the community as a whole. Everything had to be recalled from memory and so formulas (mnemonics) were devised for bringing up various information as and when needed; it was not about physically pulling a book from off the shelf but about mentally sifting through the array of information committed to memory to locate the one needed at the moment. It was thus near impossible to determine the owner (or origin) of any knowledge, idea or information, especially because in a bid to remember it, formulas and new words had been added by different people in different contexts over time. This period, when man had to rely totally on the spoken word because he had no knowledge of writing or any means of arresting words, was the time of primary orality.

The level of words in primary orality was strictly that of sound, which metaphorically came into existence only when it was going out of existence. For a word to be heard and processed it had to be spoken aloud and its component parts faded away upon delivery to linger in the memory and consciousness of the listener for processing. Words did not remain frozen in time where they could be heard over and over except they were spoken again. Words in primary orality thrived on sound, but with literacy came the visual world of words where they are now represented on surfaces for visual processing. Now the ear is assisted by visual cues in deciphering words, but the audio quality of words remains primary because even when they are read, the reader sounds them either silently within himself or audibly to his own physical hearing and the hearing of others.

The move from orality to literacy has been in three stages. The first stage was writing (chirographic) culture, then print (typographic) culture and then electronic culture. All four (oral, chirographic, typographic and electronic) cultures do not preclude or succeed one another in the sense of eroding their predecessor; rather they successively incorporate one another in a sequence that tells of the development and evolution of the human society. Chirography is the technology that launched literacy for humans. Ong (2002) explains that it is a technology because even though it has become such an innate part of human consciousness, it is not natural to humans. Nobody is born with the ready-made capacity for writing; it is learnt as needed. Unlike speech which physiologically and psychologically balanced humans naturally exhibit, writing has to be consciously learned. As a technology, it was invented at some point in human history (3500 BC) with tools to propagate it and make it possible. Such tools include ink, parchment (animal skin), paper etc. It is "a coded system of visible marks… whereby a writer could determine the exact words that the reader would generate from the text" (Ong, 2002:83). The initial literate culture of manuscriptology was one in which orality was still very much evident. Here, it was possible to add to what had already been written. Margins were useful for addendums and copyists also made the human errors of omitting words. Just as in the primary oral situation, additions and subtractions are not unheard of in writing, neither are errors unusual. It is not the case with typography, which has a more permanent sense of closure.

When one is confronted with a printed material, it exhibits a self-containment and self-sufficiency, discouraging additions and subtractions. Although it is also a representation of ideas extracted from a person (or people) like a written material is, its characters are however so even and tidy that it seems more removed from the human life world. In chirographic materials, the best one gets is similarities among the same characters, a detectable pattern (for instance, one can tell that a writer writes his letter *a* in such a cursive hand but all the *a*s in his write-up will definitely not be written in the exact same manner). In print, the characters are not just mere replicas but the margins of the material are also so even that they do not invite any alteration. To explain this, Ong (2002) cites the example of newspapers with their justified margins, regardless of the number of words on each page. Also, print makes vast replication of the same material possible and this is done at an inhuman rate with the aid of more advanced technologies than pen and parchment.

Right on the heels of print comes electronic production of text where there is split second replication and distribution among vast numbers of people scattered all over (Benjamin, 1968). According to Ong (2002), "the electronic transformation of verbal expression has both deepened the commitment of the word to space initiated by writing and intensified by print and has brought consciousness to a new age of secondary orality" (p. 132). The age of secondary orality is populated by typographic folk who, having internalized writing and print, consider that oral exchange should normally be informal, unlike oral folks who, having had no contact whatsoever with any technology of communication, believed that oral exchange should and can normally be formal or informal. In the world of electronic literacy where the computer unifies the functions of the radio, television and telephone, the [secondary] orality that takes place is one that is based on writing and print, the freezing of words, which is used for the manufacture and operation of the equipment we use. The spatial quality of frozen words as represented by writing and print makes humans impose a sense of formality on them and consider their auditory counterpart informal.

When both spatial and auditory words occur simultaneously as in electronic forms, then secondary oral communities come into existence. Although humans also have a sense of community here, the community is not the small group of primary orality but that of a global village where virtually everyone in the world is a prospective participant. It is the kind of communality that is self-conscious, having emerged out of humans' sense of self as made possible by the interiority imposed by chirography and typography. In primary orality, the sense of the communal was a matter of course, since humans knew nothing else and had no way of dwelling on their individual selves. The communal in the electronic age is an obligation fostered by the awareness that although we can each commune with ourselves individually, we have to commune with one another because we are essentially social beings. This is why knowledge, though now more and more individually owned, is sought to be expressed communally and for the benefit of the community. We may not be back in the primary oral society but our secondary oral society is transforming the form and use of knowledge from what obtained in the chirographic and typographic cultures. Our society now struggles to strike a balance between the concepts of traditional knowledge/communal (folk) ownership and intellectual property.

The concept of intellectual property (IP) is a modern creation (Murray, 2008), while the internet (and, by extension, Web 2.0) is more of a postmodern creation. Nevertheless, as is the case with many carryovers from the era of modernism, IP has found a place in postmodern discourse. IP embodies the recognition accorded the rigour and efforts channelled into creating ideas for tackling problems in the society. According to the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), it comprises inventions, literary and artistic works, and symbols, names and images used in commerce. WIPO divides IP into two: industrial property, which includes patents for inventions, trademarks, industrial designs and geographical locations; and copyright which covers literary works (like novels, poems and plays), films, music and artistic works (like drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures). One underlying assumption of the concept of IP is that knowledge can be ascribed to individuals, a notion that has come about with the advent of literacy. Although literacy brought it about, IP had entanglements with orality at its outset. Gervais (2005) points out that prior to the 18th century and the Enlightenment period when IP rights became a "means of rewarding individual effort", works "belonged (in every sense) to the Roman Catholic Church for most of the Middle Ages" and there were only a few exceptions of individual ownership of works (pp. 143-4). The situation was one of communal ownership of intellectual property but not traditional knowledge which is communally generated and also communally owned.

IP is the literate way of protecting intellectual works and their authors. The reasons intellectual works are protected are varied, as noted by WIPO. For one, our society and environment need constant improvement which can be championed by the creativity and problem solving skills of human themselves. These people whose ideas and works help to chart a better course for society then need to be appreciated as a way of acknowledging their efforts and challenging others to follow in their footsteps. By gaining IP rights for their works, they stand to get monetary and moral reward for their labour. Furthermore, there are economic benefits for the society in terms of growth, industries and employment opportunities when intellectual works are accorded rights and granted recognition. The accruable societal benefits stem from the consciousness that literacy has bestowed upon the human mind: the consciousness that extracting ideas from individuals and isolating them by inscribing them paves the way for the community to build on them and improve on

them. In this consciousness, ideas can still be identified with individuals as their originators even when they become beneficial to the society as a whole. This was not the situation in primary oral communities where words could not exist in isolation of speakers and so could not be self-contained. By the same token, ideas could not reside outside of the human mind and so they became the property of the community, stored in the communal memory, once they were expressed.

Originally, the intellectual property system was to help strike a balance between the interests of innovators and the public interest, providing an environment in which creativity and invention could flourish, for the benefit of all. This balance is being challenged now as creative people lose track of their works on the internet when people have access to them. Although works can still enjoy some measure of copyright protection on the internet, Web 2.0 has made hacking a commonplace thing and so documents and files can be easily stolen online. So also is "copy and paste" very easy to do. Similarly, works can be created and owned by groups of people belonging to a [online] community. Sometimes the platforms on which such communities exist lay claim to these contents and at other times they make the content available for public use without reservation. For instance, wikis—like Wikipedia—are created for the purpose of generating contents which are generally not peer reviewed in the academic manner (the contents can be created and edited by anyone who is interested in doing so and the contents always get published). Whoever takes part in these activities of creating and editing content, however, definitely has to be literate—typographically and electronically.

Orality and literacy are on a continuum in the human consciousness (Soffer, 2010, 2012). No society is totally without vestiges of orality, although some societies are totally without literacy. Ong (2002) stresses that "outside of relatively high-technology cultures, most users of languages have always got along pretty well without any visual transformations whatsoever of vocal sound" (p. 14) and text. Although Ong limits his operative use of "text" to mean written materials (in keeping with the tradition of normative theorists of intertextuality) and so does not consider primary oral cultures as having texts, the contemporary meaning of text, as noted earlier, now includes both oral and written compositions as well as visual signs—anything out of which meaning can be made

(Gunder, 2001; McKee, 2003). Texts such as have no individual owners and, therefore, no appropriated IP label abound all around us. They include proverbs, incantations, sculptures, cloth patterns, herbal mixture formulas, riddles, folk songs and tales etc., as noted by WIPO. They are a part of the large body of materials any creative person (bloggers inclusive) can consult for their trade so long as they are familiar enough with them. For instance, the concept of *abiku* in the Yoruba cosmogony has been explored variously by creative writers. From J.P. Clark to Wole Soyinka, and to Ben Okri and several others, *abiku* has formed a central and an ancillary theme in many creative works. Each of the writers appropriate the concept from the Yoruba world view so that no creative artist can accuse the other of plagiarising his idea or infringing on his copyright. Similarly, as Erickson (1979) noted of Yambo Ouologuem, a Malian writer, when the latter was accused of plagiarizing portions of Graham Greene's *It's a Battlefield* in his work, *Bound to Violence*, Ouologuem comes from a society of griots who have no understanding whatsoever of the IP system and so are not limited by it. In effect, it means that "the custom of anonymity presupposes that all oral expression is the common property of all people" and that "the fact remains that [the novel's materials and composition] were combined by Ouologuem into a narrative structure that did not exist prior to its combination and one that succeeded powerfully" (pp. 228-9). It is, therefore, not surprising that Ouologuem borrows generously from Graham Greene's work to create his own. This in itself is creativity because "originality consists not in the introduction of new materials but in fitting… materials effectively into each individual, unique situation and/or audience" (Ong, 2002: 59). Such effective fitting of materials is what we witness in the virtual environment where materials are readily available and easily put to use, albeit with the hovering shadow of plagiarism and copyright infringement.

Concerned people who saw the need to improve on copyright laws, particularly for the internet environment and its communal nature, came up with Creative Commons licensing in year 2001 (Stacey and Pearson, 2017). Creative Commons is a global, non-profit organisation started in the USA for the purposes of promoting legal content sharing on the internet. It provides additional license (apart from copyright license) to content creators who wish to reserve only some and not all of the rights to their works as provided by copyright laws. It realises the effectiveness of collective management of resources,

particularly creative prowess (Stacey and Pearson, 2017). And so in a metaphorical kind of communal ownership of intellectual property, it "works to increase the amount of creativity (cultural, educational, and scientific content) in 'the commons' — the body of work that is available to the public for free and legal sharing, use, repurposing, and remixing"[3]. A lot of times, copyright laws demand that content users ask authors' permission in advance before they use such works. What Creative Commons does in contrast is to give content creators (individuals and organisations alike) specific licenses that spell out how their works can be used without users having to obtain permission from them beforehand. This it does with the awareness that some content creators do not mind (and really do wish) that their works are used derivatively, with people sharing them and building upon them. In this arrangement, collective ownership rather than individual ownership rules (Truscello, 2003). On the Creative Commons website, once a person answers some pertinent questions, they can get any of six different licenses based on the condition they wish to apply to their work. The conditions are:

Attribution: This means giving credit the way the work owner wants it.

ShareAlike: Here, content users can copy, distribute, display, perform, and modify works. However, they can only distribute modified work on the same terms. If they want to distribute modified works under other terms, they must get the author's permission first.

NoDerivs: This is an abbreviated form of "no derivatives," meaning that the work owner allows others to copy, distribute, display, and perform only original copies of his/her work. If they want to modify the work, they must get his/her permission first.

NonCommercial: This is when a work owner allows others to copy, distribute, display, perform, and (unless s/he has chosen NoDerivs) modify and use her/his work for any purpose other than commercially. For commercial use they have to get the owner's permission first.

The six licences, some made up of a combination of some of the conditions, are listed below:

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[3] http://creativecommons.org [Accessed 25 November, 2017]

- Attribution
- Attribution — NonCommercial — NoDerivs
- Attribution — NonCommercial — ShareAlike
- Attribution — NoDerivs
- Attribution — NonCommercial
- Attribution — ShareAlike[4]

With this development, any work licensed under the Creative Commons can be used in many ways that copyright laws do not condone but which the work owner(s) is comfortable with. Considering that works (i.e. texts) are created by people and many instances of text creation are guided by rules recognising authorial rights and institutional standards, the possibility of untoward usage of texts becomes huge. Plagiarism is often the label used to identify such cases of untoward usage of texts, apart from legal explications.

2.6   Plagiarism

Plagiarism implies the use of another's (mostly written) work without adequate acknowledgment. There have been arguments about whether or not to refer to plagiarism as a situation of theft, or merely one of morality and ethics (Share, 2006). The scholarly world is the most concerned when it comes to plagiarism, although other professionals, particularly in the mainstream media, also take note of it. The nature of the job of scholars as knowledge drivers and creators makes them particularly interested in plagiarism. Their job also entails building on previous knowledge and taking cognisance of what has been said and is being said in a chosen field.

However, plagiarism is not limited to scholarly writings and productions, since intellectual and creative production is not the prerogative of scholars alone. It is the case that non-scholars also produce useful works, depending on the interest of the person consulting the work. In addition, plagiarism is always a strong possibility whenever writing, and by extension, text creation, takes place. Since a text is a fixed format of idea(s), it is possible to reference it and/or "steal" from it. It is by this token that plagiarism can occur on blogs and other online platforms. The nature of the internet is such that the act of "copy and paste" (or cut and paste) is so easy that it is almost impossible for the unwary not to engage

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[4] http://creativecommons.org [Accessed 25 November, 2017]

in it. It entails highlighting selected text, copying it and then pasting it at a choice destination, all by giving the computer the necessary commands. The whole process takes under one minute. A number of scholars (e.g. Maurer, Kappe and Zaka, 2006; Batane, 2010; Onuoha and Ikonne, 2013; Idiegbeyen-ose, Nkiko and Osinulu, 2016) have noted the ease that the internet has brought into the practice of plagiarism with the copy and paste syndrome. For bloggers, copying and pasting will almost always come naturally since the online environment is where they do their business. Be that as it may, the underlying reasons for plagiarism as well as the consequences are the pertinent factors to note, because plagiarism is actually a moral/ethical problem (Neuroskeptic, 2016) that borders on the criminal when IP rights are involved.

Nonetheless, it may be difficult to invoke [academic] standards of plagiarism in the online environment. In the world of the academia and media, publications and productions are milestones and achievements that count towards a person's advancement. Often in the online world, especially in communities where there are user-generated contents, ownership of publications does not necessarily have so much importance. People publish (or post) materials just for the fun of it, often without expecting any compensation or acknowledgement from anyone. Thus, as admitted by Share (2006), "there is a challenge in trying to evolve a relevant discussion of [academic] plagiarism within this dynamic environment" (pg. 12). Such dynamism is very apparent on blogs because while they are media quite alright, they are a peculiar type of media in the sense that they manifest both traditional and new media tendencies. Although they can be regarded as social media in the broadest sense, bloggers are also solely responsible for the contents that appear on their blogs outside of the comments section. Inasmuch as they facilitate social interaction, blogs also serve as semi-formal information sources for readers; hence the possibility of applying plagiarism standards to them. Share's (2006) words would thus be better appreciated when one considers that texts on the internet generally, while not always subject matters of copyright, are always potentially subject matters of plagiarism when intertextuality goes awry. It is, therefore, necessary to attempt such a discussion since it is the white elephant in the room of authorial ownership and, by extension, orality and literacy.

Some scholars distinguish between transgressive and non-transgressive intertextuality to suggest that "the crucial issues of writing, identity, power, knowledge, disciplinary dynamics, and discourse underlie intertextuality". These issues also underlie plagiarism (i.e. transgressive intertextuality), which has to do with the violation of "institutional conventions" (Chandrasoma, Thompson and Pennycook, 2004: 171-2). Non-transgressive intertextuality, according to them, often signifies developmental writing strategies which include and reflect patch writing (Howard, 1999), common knowledge, popular discourses and mediated texts. In cases of non-transgressive intertextuality, no institutional conventions are violated. The trio of scholars argue that the concept of plagiarism, although useful for identifying cases of lack of referencing, confuses more than clarifies and does not really help with grasping the nuances of textual interplay. However, due to the fact that textual referencing in the academia is a lot about academic integrity, "plagiarism" is retained in the substantial literature on plagiarism to cover the negatives in the practice of intertextuality. As such, there are tools/standards for checking works for plagiarism. These tools are at best approximations because there are always occasions when plagiarism cannot be expressly determined. Turnitin.com, a globally acclaimed website with an attendant software devoted to promoting awareness, detection and prevention of plagiarism, notes that all of the following are considered to be plagiarism:

- turning in someone else's work as your own
- copying words or ideas from someone else without giving credit
- failing to put a quotation in quotation marks
- giving incorrect information about the source of a quotation
- changing words but copying the sentence structure of a source without giving credit
- copying so many words or ideas from a source that it makes up the majority of your work, whether you give credit or not

Referencing is one important way of avoiding plagiarism. Proper referencing almost always puts a writer out of the danger of plagiarism, although referencing does not come into play at all in some instances. These include occasions when an individual passes off an old idea of his as a new idea, creating a work which is an aggregate of paraphrases from different sources so that there is little or no original idea in the end product, passing off the totality of another person's work as one's own etc. Turnitin labels and explains various instances of plagiarism in the following ways, under two categories as shown in Table 2.1.

Table 2.1 Categories of Plagiarism

Sources not cited	Sources cited (but still plagiarised!)
The ghost writer: The writer turns in another's work, word-for-word, as his or her own.	The forgotten footnote: The writer mentions an author's name for a source, but neglects to include specific information on the location of the material referenced. This often masks other forms of plagiarism by obscuring source locations.
The photocopy: The writer copies significant portions of text straight from a single source, without alteration.	The misinformer: The writer provides inaccurate information regarding the sources, making it impossible to find them.
The potluck paper: The writer tries to disguise plagiarism by copying from several different sources, tweaking the sentences to make them fit together while retaining most of the original phrasing.	The too-perfect paraphrase: The writer properly cites a source, but neglects to put in quotation marks text that has been copied word-for-word, or close to it. Although attributing the basic ideas to the source, the writer is falsely claiming original presentation and interpretation of the information.
The poor disguise: Although the writer has retained the essential content of the source, he or she has altered the paper's appearance slightly by changing key words and phrases.	The resourceful citer: The writer properly cites all sources, paraphrasing and using quotations appropriately. The catch? The paper contains almost no original work! It is sometimes difficult to spot this form of plagiarism because it looks like any other well-researched document.
The labor of laziness: The writer takes the time to paraphrase most of the paper from other sources and make it all fit together, instead of spending the same effort on original work.	The perfect crime: Well, we all know it doesn't exist. In this case, the writer properly quotes and cites sources in some places, but goes on to paraphrase other arguments from those sources without citation. This way, the writer tries to pass off the paraphrased material as his or her own analysis of the cited material.
The self-stealer: The writer "borrows" generously from his or her previous work, violating policies concerning the expectation of originality adopted by most academic institutions.	

Adapted from Turnitin.com

Turnitin's categories are quite clear and explanatory enough and in this work they serve as the tools for adequately understanding the nature of plagiarism.

2.7   Blogs and Blogging

"Logging" is a word describing the activity of keeping records in an orderly, written form. Hence, we have log books. "Blog" is a word derived from the combination of web and log. Blogging is the verb version of the word, referring to the activity of keeping records (posts) in an online journal. A blog is thus the repository of such posts; it is an online journal. When the contents (posts) on a blog are mostly video files, then such a blog is referred to as vlog (video blog). In spite of the fact that the term "blog" is a combination of website and log, it is possible to differentiate between blogs and the conventional websites (Takhteyev and Hall, 2005). Sometimes blogs are hosted on the websites of host parents who create the blogging platform. An example is Wordpress, which is hosted on the Wordpress website. One other way in which blogs feed off websites is the use of links to websites which are sometimes the original sources of information. It is not uncommon to see links to the websites of media houses on blogs (particularly filter blogs). Bloggers in this manner openly admit to not always having original information or opinions (Gill, 2004). Organisations also run websites and blogs at the same time. They put the links to their blogs on their websites to enhance their visibility. One reason for the concurrent ownership of websites and blogs is the fact that blogs are more easily updated and so better suited to carry fresh information (Karpf, 2008). They also encourage interactivity since most blogs allow for comments on each post. The possibility of interaction encourages visits to the blogs and helps organisations to stay in touch with their publics (employees, clients and other stakeholders).

The year 1997 was when blogs started appearing on the internet. After the first web browser, Mosaic, underwent some transformation, individuals started to use it in the form of weblogs, with Jon Barger being the first to use the term to refer to his online journal, *Robot Wisdom* (Gurak, Antoniejevik, Johnson, Ratliff and Reyman, 2004). Subsequently, the term was shortened to blogs, which is now more popular. Thereafter, dedicated, user-friendly blog publishing services/software such as LiveJournal, Blogger.com and Pitas started appearing in 1999 (Koh, Lim, Soon, Detenber and Cenite, 2005). Blogging as an

online activity was initially adopted largely by Americans, but it has become a global phenomenon, with Japanese being used by one per cent more bloggers than English (Sifry, 2007). As such, most researches on blogging have focused on American bloggers but more researches are now focusing on other nationals.

Interestingly, however, some scholars have noted that blogs are not an entirely new or unique genre. Drawing attention to the journal-type home page which has been in existence since the 90s, Herring, Scheidt, Bonus and Wright (2005) describe the blog as a hybrid of the "multimedia HTML documents and text-based computer-mediated communication, blurring the traditional distinction between these two…" (p. 143). Takhteyev and Hall (2005) also compare the blog to the personal home page and conclude that blogs make it easier for readers to see "what's new" since the new items are displayed on the main page in reverse chronological order. This format encourages readers to come back and helps bloggers to acquire an audience. Similarly, other scholars have pointed to the metamorphosis of blogs, which has brought about different blog types. Blood (2000) notes that originally weblogs were link-driven, with each one featuring a mixture of commentaries, links, essays and thoughts as formed by people who could create websites. Although many blogs still followed this format, the link-driven sites, according to Blood (2000), later gave way to the "short-form" journal, which is essentially a record of the blogger's musings. Such blogs make people more "thoughtful and articulate" about the world around them (Herring *et al.* 2005: 143). Some other scholars opine that the origin of blogs should be traced only to the time when the term was first used (i.e. 1997 when Jon Barger coined the term "weblog", and then 1999 when Peter Merholz abbreviated it). This is the view of Cooper (2007) who suggests that if a site was not so called, then it was not a blog, not until it began to be referred to as a blog.

Although there is still a debate about the origin (date and manner) of blogs, the definitions of blogs that have been offered have been somewhat uniform. Blogs have been defined as "frequently updated websites where content (text, pictures, sound files, etc.) is posted on a regular basis and displayed in reverse chronological order" (Schmidt, 2007:1409; cf Herring, Kouper, Scheidt and Wright, 2004; Schiano, Nardi, Gumbrecht and Swartz, 2004). In fact, definitions containing reverse chronological ordering of posts have become

canonical, being the choice of many scholars. Posts (content) are date stamped and readers get to see the latest before the earliest since they are arranged in such a way that the latest post is the foremost. The contents of posts vary in length and topic and blog audiences also vary. As noted by Gill (2004) in the definition quoted earlier, a lot of blog authors are amateur writers who are passionate about airing their thoughts, a few bloggers are professionals who blog about their fields of endeavour, some journalists maintain blogs for their personal use or their media organisations, while corporate organisations also have blogs where they promote themselves. Whatever their reasons for blogging, bloggers and blogs have gained rapid recognition globally due to the sheer number of blogs and the influence they increasingly have.

The importance of weblogs has been brought to the fore by occurrences of global magnitude such as the Asian tsunami disaster, the Iraq war, and September 11 attack (Koh *et. al.*, 2005). The occurrences were reported on personal blogs—people got their updates from the blogs and even mainstream media houses visited the blogs to feel the pulse of the public on the issues at hand. It is thus readily apparent why many scholars also identify blogs with alternative journalism and ventilation, however hesitantly. Gill (2004:4) considers most bloggers to be amateurs with a passion, while others are experts in various subject matters and yet others are professional writers working for media companies and so invoking the debate on blogging and participatory journalism.

Millions of blogs make up the global blogosphere with new ones joining the network regularly and some others becoming inactive, thus making it difficult to keep up with the size of the blogosphere. Considering the ease with which one can create a blog ("blogs can be created with little technological savvy as many blogging websites are user-friendly and allow the blog creator to simply choose a template and begin creating posts" (Guadagno, Eno and Ogdie (2010:1), it is not difficult to appreciate the proliferation of blogs globally. As of June 2007, specialized search engines and meta-directories like blogpulse.com and Technorati.com had tracked between 50 and 85 million blogs (Schmidt, 2007). Similarly, in 2007, Sifry noted that this figure was increasing by 120,000 more blogs per day, making for well over 100 million blogs worldwide by year 2010 (Guadagno et al., 2010). These

blogs are of various types, including corporate and individual blogs, as well as those administered by groups of people working as teams.

Regardless of their type, Gill (2004) has identified the common characteristics of blogs as follows:

- Reverse chronological journaling (format)
- Regular, date-stamped entries (timeliness)
- Links to related news articles, documents, blog entries within each entry (attribution)
- Archived entries (old content remains accessible)
- Links to related blogs (blogrolling)
- RSS or XML feed (ease of syndication)
- Passion (voice)

Similarly, research on blogs and blogging has focused on topics such as ethics in blogging (e.g. Koh, Lim, Soon, Detenber and Cenite, 2005), typology of blogs (e.g. Cardon, Delaunay-Teterel, Fluckiger and Prieur, 2007), the nationalities of bloggers and their blogging practices (e.g. Schmidt, 2007), the role of readers in the activity of blogging (e.g. Baumer, Sueyoshi and Tomlinson, 2008), the personalities of bloggers (e.g. Gill, Newson and Oberlander, 2009), the motivation of bloggers (e.g. Guadagno, Eno and Okdie, 2010) and blogs as alternative voices (e.g. Gabriel, 2015) among others. Herring *et al.* (2005) note that in the early days of research on blogging, blogs were said to be largely "interlinked, interactive and oriented towards external events", but have, over time, been discovered to also be important "individualistic, intimate forms of self-expression" (p. 142). These two broad tendencies of blogs and also the art of blogging have informed the various categorisations that blogs have been subjected to. Blogging, which has to do with posting entries on blogs, takes various forms, depending on the target of bloggers and their readers. The collaborative efforts of bloggers and blog readers determine the types of blogs and how they might be classified. In addition, the nature, uses and functions of blogs make them similar to social media in general, hence the tendency to see them in the light of interactivity and relationship management. All these nuances inform blog categorizations.

2.7.1   Blog Types

From various studies, it can be said that blog types have been identified based on the two major criteria of motivation and content. Writing in the year 2000, Blood identified 3 different blog types. The **filter blog**, the prototypical blog, thrives on external links. Here, bloggers (blog editors, according to her) "pre-surf" the web to identify articles to be recommended for reading to their audience. The articles comprise newspaper stories and other materials they deem worthy of note. Their blogs thus contain a lot of links to external sites and there is little space for even the bloggers to draft their posts and thoughts on the materials contained in the links. "Indeed, the format of the typical weblog, providing only a very short space in which to write an entry, encourages pithiness on the part of the writer" (Blood, 2000:5). At present, however, most blog software give users a lot of liberty and so comments can be rather lengthy. The **personal journal** is made up of the musings and opinions of the blogger, while the **notebook** has longer, more focused essays. In a later publication, Blood (2002a) identifies the **(k)nowledge** blog, which she says is run by individuals or communities for the purpose of knowledge sharing and dissemination. Krishnamurthy (2002) classifies blogs along the two dimensions of personal versus topical and individual versus community. This he represents in a schematic diagram as shown overleaf.
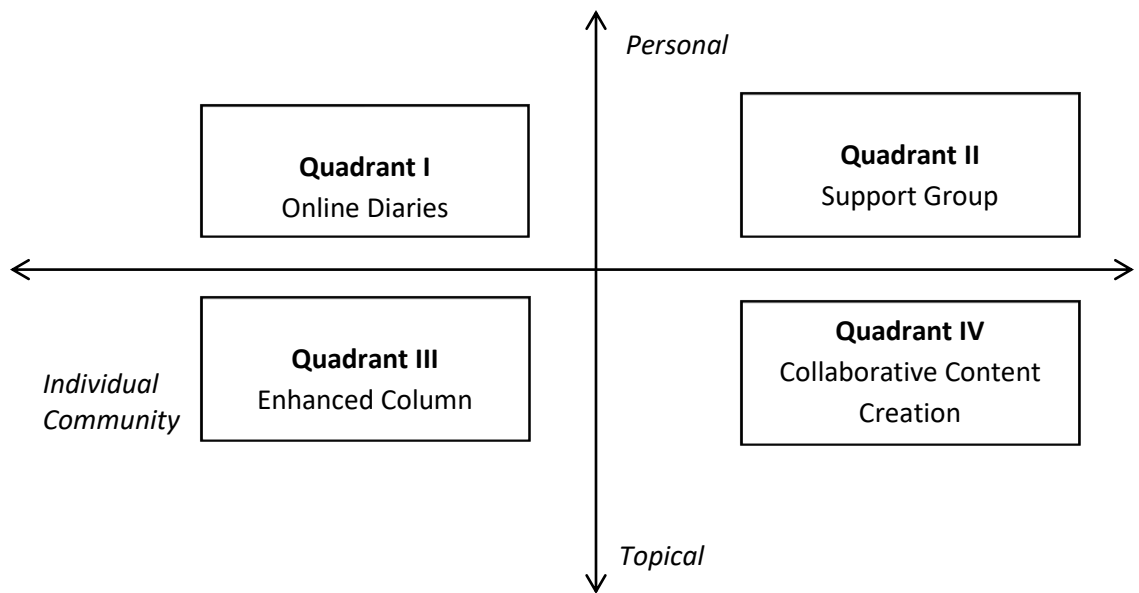
Figure 2.1: Types of Blogs
Source: Krishnamurthy (2002)

Karpf (2008), in his findings, classifies blogs into four: classic blogs, community blogs, institutional blogs and bridge blogs.

Classic blogs are self-published blogs where authors record their musings and update their network of online friends about their lives. They are like diaries which contain personal opinions and observations made known to an online public. Classic blogs are not necessarily individualised or personalised as they may be administered by teams or groups of like-minded people. However, the subject of blog musings vary, hence there can be sub-categories of them like elite political blogs which are sometimes maintained by teams of people or individuals who are well educated (usually up to postgraduate level). Karpf (2008) identifies that far from the pajama-clad image of bloggers that the media project, many of such elite bloggers are usually better educated than their journalist counterparts, and a number of them are even published authors with informed opinions on the subject-matters they write about. He notes that "the skills that make for a successful blog are developed in advanced educational programmes, and the time needed to maintain a successful blog is more likely to be available in a white-collar job that includes daily access to a broadband internet connection" (p. 372). Even if such bloggers do not have white-collar jobs, they are still likely to have the income and lifestyle that facilitate constant access to broadband internet connection.

Community blogs are aimed at promoting communities of interest online. To the blogging software, users add infrastructure to aid user-generated content and participation. Whereas classic blogs enhance individual and individualised voices, community blogs project communal voice. Community blogs encourage collective action through discussions and networking. Traffic flow within the blog is among self-declared members of the online community who are working towards a common goal. Here, user-generated content keeps the blogs going and some other individual bloggers (also members of the blog community) send their posts to these community blogs as well in order to reach a wider audience. Members gain prominence when they become popular because of their opinions as recorded in their comments. They become opinion leaders whom others listen to and look out for. Community blogs enable and encourage collective action and their heads are more

like interest group leaders than journalists or columnists, so that the blogs function for group discourse and political activity (Karpf, 2008).

Institutional blogs "enhance the value of traditional elite institutions". Usually, institutional blogs are those blogs that are added to the repertoire of media offerings and tools that traditional institutions already possess. They are used to augment the other media outlets that enhance the value of the institutions. Such blogs challenge the traditional notion of blogging in that whereas blogs are thought of as tools in the hands of counter-elites, they are the evidence that the elites can use blogs just as well. As such, Karpf (2008) notes that "blogging remains a prominent tool for counter-elites… but there is nothing inherently counter-institutional about the activity of blogging" (pp. 373-4). It is generally believed that the elite and the privileged are usually the ones in power and blogging, a media tool with lots of democratisation potentials, should not be associated with the ruling class. However, no blogging software or platform discriminates against potential users on the grounds of power, hence the possibility of the powerful being able to use them as much as the powerless. Although blogging has been associated with the erstwhile voiceless in the society (or at least it has been viewed as a saving grace for people who had no voice or whose voice were lost in the mainstream media), it is turning out to be a classless media tool, useful for both the privileged and the underprivileged. Institutional blogs are thus blogs belonging (mostly) to the privileged who run (mostly) elite organizations like newspaper houses which "import their audience from offline". An institutional blog serves the existing mission of its parent organization and so is judged by its effectiveness in enhancing the organization's mission (Karpf, 2008).

Bridge blogs, as their name suggests, are a bridge between institutional blogs and community blogs, combining the attributes of "traditional institutions of power (by explicitly adopting the structure of interest groups and media organizations) with software platforms that enable mass participation and content creation" (Karpf, 2008:375). Bridge blogs are affiliated to organisations, but they also indulge in community engagement. Although an emerging phenomenon at the time of Karpf's (2008) paper, many newspaper houses and other corporate organisations now run bridge blogs where visitors are encouraged to leave comments. And that is apart from owning the traditional website,

although some own only blogs which also serve as their websites. Some media houses in Nigeria own bridge blogs.

For Qing and Oyedeji (2011), blogs can be broadly categorised into two: personal blogs and institutional blogs. Similar to Karpf's (2008) classic blogs, **personal blogs** are those owned and administered by individuals for personal purposes and interest and not usually for commercial purposes. They are totally independent of any organisation. **Institutional blogs**, on the other hand, are owned by organisations and operated by member(s) of that organisation to further the interests of the organisation. The voices and opinions of the operator(s) are usually not heard. This categorisation does not take into account other nuances involved in some blog types. For instance, some personally owned blogs are operated by more than one person and many individual blogs are operated for commercial purposes. They usually do not start out that way (Guadagno *et. al.*, 2010), but a lot of times they end up that way and this eventuality ought to be considered. Unlike Karpf (2008), Qing and Oyedeji (2011) do not differentiate among the other types of non-personal blogs.

The categorizations of blogs by the various scholars have many points of overlaps. One very common of these overlaps is the personal journal category. Said to be the most popular of blog types (Schiano, Nardi, Gumbrecht and Swartz, 2004), the personal journal is the kind of blog owned by ordinary people who mostly have small audiences in mind when they post their entries. The personal journal would be part of the online diaries in Krishnarmurthy's (2002) first quadrant and the classic blogs identified by Karpf (2008). The major characteristic of personal journals is the subjective nature of their contents—the postings contain the opinions of the blog owners who unapologetically express themselves on whatever catches their fancy, be it politics, a profession or a hobby. By virtue of this, some community blogs (another of Karpf, 2008 classifications) will also fall into this category, so long as they contain personal opinions and thoughts. Blood's filter blogs and notebook could also be classified as personal journal by the standard of personal thoughts and opinions. So also can the k-blog be categorized as personal journal, so long as it is owned and maintained by an individual. It could thus be a lot more convenient to broadly classify blogs as personal and non-personal.

Similarly, Puschmann (2009) argues that "survey data, ethnographic research and linguistic evidence suggests a basic two-way split between weblog entries written to record experiences, for critical reflection and to release emotions (*ego blogging*) and those written to persuade, argue, discuss and comment on external events (*topic blogging*)" (p. 1). The following table provides a summary of Puschmann's classification.

Table 2.2 Summary of the Contrastive Aspects of the Two Pragmatic Modes of Blogging

	Ego Blogging	Topic Blogging
Text/Content	Focus on the internal world, i.e. the blogger's experiences, daily life, thoughts, emotions	Focus on the external world, e.g.: Politics, entertainment, business, religion, work; and on the blogger's evaluation and commentary on these issues
Conceptualized Audience	Close, familiar and specific (self, family, friends)	Distant, unfamiliar and generic (liberals, republicans, lawyers, movie buffs, students)
Audience Scope	Narrow	Wide
Functions	-Record and reflect one's life -Stabilize self -Control and record own thought process -Maintain and reinforce existing relationships -Establish structure, causality, order and safety	-Inform others -Indicate a stance to others -Influence others -Gain recognition -Acquire expert status
Anonymity	May be anonymous or pseudonymous	Generally attributable
Perspective	Internal	External
Metaphor	Diary	Megaphone
Approach	Recording	Broadcasting
Mode	Narration/Stream of consciousness	Exposition/argumentation
Linguistic Encoding/Decoding	Easy to encode, hard to decode	Hard to encode, easy to decode
Hyperlinks, quotes, comments and tagging	Few or no hyperlinks, quotes, comments and use of tagging	Some or frequent hyperlinks, quotes, comments and use of tagging

Source: Puschmann (2009)

Puschmann's (2009) ego blogging category is similar to Karpf's (2008) classic blog and Qing and Oyedeji's (2011) personal blog, while his topic blogging category is similar to community and institutional blogs (Karpf, 2008) and also the filter and knowledge blogs (Blood, 2002a). In Nigeria, the community and filter blogs and the filter and knowledge blogs are quite popular.

2.8   Blogging in Nigeria

Blogging is quite popular among internet users in Nigeria. From *Nairaland* to *Linda Ikeji's Blog*, Nigerians have come a long way in their use of blogs and their blogging activities. In deference to the digital revolution being witnessed in Africa (Wasike, 2017), bloggers in Nigeria have focused on many interests, including politics, knowledge sharing, entrepreneurship, technology and news. Scholars in Nigeria have joined in this revolution by researching into various blogging activities. In particular, librarians' blogging habits have been of concern to researchers. These researchers are majorly librarians looking to see how blogging has enhanced and can further enhance their profession. For instance, Fashola, Oso and Alonge (2015) and Emiri (2017) have noted Nigerian librarians' awareness and use of blogs in various states in the country. In Oyo State in 2015, Fashola et al. found out that the activity of blogging was in its nascent form among librarians in the state. The scholars urged librarians to engage more in the act as a way of attracting more users to the library.

Anusiem (2017) as well as Nelson, Loto and Omojola (2018) have also discussed the place of blogging in politics and election in Nigeria. Anusiem (2017) submitted that blogs played the role of accurate and timely information dissemination, particularly during the 2015 elections. Nelson et al. studied *Nairaland* and looked into the issues of political conflict covered on the blog in relation to the civic engagement of users of the platform. While commending the efforts of *Nairaland* users in promoting social change, they advocate that other important matters beyond political players be given attention. In the same vein, in their study on blogging research in Africa, Elega and Ozad (2017) note that most of the scholarly works on blogging in Nigeria has been preoccupied with political blogs and news blogs. In their estimation, the need to tell an alternate story of Africa different from the picture of a conflict zone painted by the western media drives bloggers to focus on

activism. It also drives researchers to focus on blogs that tell stories of the African political experience from an African perspective. In the same spirit, Somolu (2007) earlier remarked that African women who blog find a voice for themselves on the platform, not so that the West can learn of their experience of injustice, but as an avenue for them to connect with one another in order to provide support and identify strategies for improving their lot.

Blogs as new media are quite postmodern in nature, given their non-conformity to many traditional media norms. They defy boundaries of time and place and sometimes even invade personal space when they present themselves in an unsolicited manner. Intertextuality too, although having always been present in human creativity in one form or the other, has new manifestations in the postmodern era, the era of the new media. This requires that it be considered in terms of the new environment in which it now finds itself. This environment of the postmodern is also the birthplace of popular culture, a culture in which blogging can be best located, given its global acceptability, the population of blogs, and the ease as well as speed with which a blog can be created. It is in this spirit that blogging is discussed in terms of popular culture.

2.9   Blogs as Cultural Artefacts: Blogging, Folklore and Popular Culture

Traditionally, cultural artefacts are objects or items of historical value made by man for his use. They are the result of human activity and action, although naturally occurring objects such as bones can also be fashioned by humans for their needs (Diaz-Kommonen et al., 2004). Archaeologists and anthropologists identify man-made objects such as tools and crafts as artefacts that can be used to gain insight into the culture and people that create them as well as the period they were created. Bronner (2007) notes that "the significance humans attach to their objects can be traced to the artifact's ability to be touched and seen, and its three-dimensional, alterable quality." (p. 318). However, the internet and all that it enables, though lacking a three-dimensional, tactile quality, are alterable all the same and have such a profound impact on lived experience that humans attach great significance to them. They have altered our understanding of space, time, relationship and communication and so occupy a central position in our lives. For this reason, the blog as an offshoot of the internet demonstrates human agency in the space and time it occupies as well as the history and discourse it generates and this qualifies it as an artefact (Diaz-Kommonen et al., 2004).

Artefacts can thus be said to comprise both material and non-material aspects of culture, including folklore, architecture, belief systems, software and digital applications.

As communication tools created by humans for their use in the 20th century, blogs are cultural artefacts that reflect the people and culture of an era—the postmodern era of electronic and internet literacy. Although lacking a tactile, physical form with accompanying markings after the manner of art and crafts, blogs as artefacts nonetheless have historic and cultural value, reflecting social changes and anchored meanings even as they evolve in their use (Sandino, 2004; Marcos, 2017). Their concretized forms stem from their "objectifications of society and human social relations", because whenever a person (whether a blogger or a blog reader) engages them, "she or he cognises based on objectified knowledge that is the outcome of social relations" (Trottier and Fuchs, 2015:5). Blog posts are the markings on blogs that tell of the evolution of the human society, the period in which the society exist(s/ed) and also its [prevalent] culture. Unlike traditional artefact, however, blogs, by nature, cannot be disentangled from their place of origin (i.e. the internet) and so they can always be adequately understood in their context of use (Sweetman and Hadfield, 2018).

To know a people's culture is to be familiar with their folklore, the everyday practices and communication that they engage in, often in a face-to-face encounter, and passed down from generation to generation (Krawczyk-Wasilewa, 2016). Folklore entail the manner of socialization in a group and they are generally contained in oral communication and so have no tangible, physical form. Nonetheless, their importance is felt in their unifying function, being useful tools for identifying a people group. They are anonymous and collective, emphasizing tradition in their multi-variant dimensions (Hajduk-Nijakowska, 2015). They are the creative products of a community that capture the people's worldview, opinion and convictions and they manifest in the forms of tales, legends, songs, myths, jokes and so on. The members of the community are the folks while their expressions that mark them as a distinct group are the lores.

Although professional folklore collectors used to insist on the oral nature of the objects of their interest, preferring to record them as utterances from the mouths of informants and

not words from written sources (Dundes, 2007), there is now a general consensus on the validity of printed folklore, particularly those found on the internet among virtual communities (Blank, 2007; 2018). Traditionally, folks have regular physical contact with one another, whereas folks of the digital age meet often, either synchronously or asynchronously, but they do not often meet physically. Their virtual meeting points and places are facilitated by the internet, through the instruments of computers and handheld devices, and the ease and frequency of their virtual meetings also affect the nature as well as volume of the lore they produce. Social network sites (SNSs), fan web pages, forums and blogs are fertile virtual meeting places for various groups of people, i.e. folk groups who are "any group of people whatsoever who share at least one common factor" (Dundes, 1980: 6). In this sense, digital folks of varying communities generate peculiar lore (e.g. urban legends, memes, tales and chain letters) at peculiar speeds.

Blank (2007) notes that the qualities that make the internet ideal for the transmission of folk narratives are efficiency and anonymity. In a more recent publication (2018), he stresses that "to be sure, a substantial portion of modern technologically-mediated folklore is comprised of material that follows folkloric form and function, carrying unmistakable evidence of repetition and variation" (p. 1). Perhaps one major reason for the validity of digital folklore is to be found in an understanding of memes, which Shifman (2013) defines as "cultural information that passes along from person to person, yet gradually scales into a shared social phenomenon" (p. 364-5). He goes further to explain that "although they spread on a micro basis, memes' impact is on the macro" (p. 365), as they shape the mind-set, forms of behaviour, and actions of social groups (Knobel and Lankshear, 2007)—the underlying factor is the sharing, transmission and impact. Social groups now reside both offline and online and, consequently, so do folklore. From their exclusively oral domain, therefore, folklore have expanded to manifest in the digital domain of the new media and the internet. The digital nature of the new media further facilitates the multi-variant nature of folkore. The ease of creation and alteration of texts afforded by technology promotes the proliferation and variation of texts essential to folklore generation, dissemination and transmission. From the posts on a blog therefore, one can get a sense of who the readers of the blog are, what they share in common as a folk group and what culture binds them together.

Culture, "the growth and tending of human faculties" (Williams, 1977: 11-12), is "that which sustains and nourishes those who live and move within it" (Brummett, 2014:21). As such, practices, habits, preferences and opinions found among the larger mass of a society can be said to be popular culture. However, this would be a rather convenient definition which does not even begin to lay bare the politics and power play that are implied in the phrase "popular culture". Storey (2003) thus emphasises that both quantitative and qualitative indices are necessary for explaining and understanding popular culture. Therefore in addition to its "popularity", popular culture is often defined in opposition to high culture. It is the culture that erects no barrier to its appreciation, appropriation and propagation. A culture that gives voice to that part of society made up of people (the masses) who do not have a spot in places of power, popular culture is concerned with accommodating ideas, practices and texts "that fail to meet the required standards to qualify as high culture" (Storey, 2003:6). Indeed, some scholars would rather refer to it as mass culture, owing to the fact that "its distinctive mark is that it is solely and directly an article for mass consumption, like chewing gum. A work of High Culture is occasionally popular, after all…" (MacDonald, 1953:12). Storey (2003) also mentions that although Shakespeare is now considered to be the epitome of high culture, his works were very much a part of the popular theatre in the nineteenth century, same as Charles Dickens' works. In essence, "what started as popular cinema is now the preserve of academics and film clubs" (p. 6).

The distinction between popular and high cultures is not always constant; it depends on the side of history on which one stands and the perspective from which one views the two. High culture and its standards are usually determined by the privileged few and powerful in the society who come about their influence through economic and political advantage. Because they are in the position of power, they determine what is becoming and unbecoming for the society and make themselves the custodians of the supposedly appropriate tastes. The distinction of high culture and popular culture is a way of marginalizing and separating the teeming masses from the elite. MacDonald (1953: 12) further notes that since the early 1800s mass culture has grown as a result of political democracy and popular education where "the newly awakened masses" caused the demand for cultural products to increase. Technology came to the rescue with the specially adapted

media of mass distribution and manufacture: television and movies. Although MacDonald's explanation is somewhat pejorative, it is easy to see what he describes because once the taste of the majority of the population matches that of the elites, mass production and distribution have to come into play to meet demands. Consequently, such taste then has to be tumbled down from the pedestal of high culture. This is unlike the situation with folklore where cohesive smaller groups create their cultural artefacts for their use without recourse to its "highness" or "lowness".

The modern technology which facilitated the new media of movies and television also brought about the internet and subsequently, blogs. Modern technology is reputed for making many things available to many people and this is the case with blogging software. As cultural artefacts, blogging software and the resultant blogs are created in such a way that they are readily available to anyone who seeks them (on the internet). Blogging software, just like popular culture artefacts, is easily come by, whether or not one is on the lookout for it. However, both the elite and the masses subscribe to blogging and so the definition of popular culture based on the segment of the population that subscribes to it (the masses) might not readily apply to blogging in this regard. Whereas the high culture/mass culture debate separates the masses from the suave, privileged ones who do not subscribe to popular culture, for blogging, well-educated, privileged people are part of the blogosphere. Therefore, this distinction becomes blurred. In this wise, Guadagno *et al.* (2010:2) report that "bloggers are younger, better educated, more urban, and less likely to be member of an ethnic minority group", at least in the USA, where blogging is most popular. Women, a generally marginalised group globally, also constitute a larger part of the personal journal blogger population. Studies in North America indicate that more than half of all bloggers are women who persevere longer and write more (Herring et al., 2004). This is understandable since women are marginalised in many societies of the world and seek to have their voices heard.

Popular culture artefacts are usually mass-produced in order to be available to many and so generate maximum profit. Blogging software, however, are not actually mass produced, but they can be used by many people at the same time, so long as they are properly installed on the right gadgets. Blogging software therefore, though not mass-produced, are

mass-consumed. Many of them are also free; although there are some which have to be paid for, they go for little amounts of money. This is not to say, in essence, that some blogs do not make money, but most blogs are not created with a profit-making motive (Pedersen and Macafee, 2007). The popular practice and ready availability of blogging and blogs do not necessarily translate into a domination of the consumers as suggested by the theory of mass culture. Bloggers are the consumers of blogging software while their audience are the consumers of blog posts. It is possible for producers of blogging software to sell their ideology to their potential consumers (bloggers) through the design of their software just as it is possible for bloggers to influence blog readers through blog posts. However, this is not so easily done unlike the case of mainstream popular culture, in the sense that the activities that go into blogging in particular (as against blog reading) are largely independently done and users have other alternatives. For one, blogging is not so pervasive like fashion and music that it cannot be done without. Unlike fashion items and music which are ubiquitous, blogs and blogging software have to be sought out; it is usually the person who looks for them who finds them. Besides, one can share opinions via other platforms on the internet such as social media sites. Blog readers, on the other hand, may be more easily dominated, but because blogs are numerous, their audience are also just as varied. It might thus be difficult to make a sweeping statement that blogs as popular culture artefacts are instruments of domination. Nevertheless, some A-list blogs such as those belonging to established and giant media houses as well as notable individuals might be able to exert some considerable level of influence on their large audience.

Going by this, the users of blogs are two-fold. Bloggers are the users of blogging software while blog readers are the audience of blogs. Some schools of thought refer to the audience as passive users of culture product (Strinati, 2004), but then bloggers are not necessarily passive consumers of blog software, because as Schmidt (2007) notes, bloggers can alter and personalize the layout of a blog, bringing additional information (e.g. pictures and bookmarks from other platforms), depending on how much technical skill they have at their disposal. Similarly, blog readers have the opportunity to disagree with blogs posts or just generally comment on the post. In the comment section of blogs, a lot of lively discussions about blog posts go on and blog readers get to interact with one another and bring varying insights into the message of a blog post. Although not all blogs have a

comment section (as determined by the bloggers), most do. It is in the nature of popular culture to encourage plurality of voices, even though popular culture has often been thought to feed off high culture by remoulding products of high culture and making them accessible to the common people. The argument is that as against folk art or folk culture which is produced originally by an autonomous folk group for their use, popular culture is handed down by profit-hungry industrialists and capitalists to the mass of the people who do not know any better (Cruz and Guins, 2005). Nonetheless, Howard (2008) notes the persistent process of hybridity that goes on in the electronic world where network communication tends to blend the institutional and vernacular, thereby frustrating distinctions among folk culture, popular culture and mass culture. The hybridity noticeable in blogs are further markings on them as cultural artefacts of communication which are also embodiments of the nature of communication in the postmodern internet era. This hybridity is marked by a performative language use which characterises the processes of identity formation and power negotiations in popular culture (Moody, 2013; Sultana and Dovchin, 2016).

Language is explained by Bakhtin (1981) as a social event with historical markings about the people who use it and the time it is used. In all of this, context is also reflected to show that language is not a mere abstract system. We can thus begin to talk of register, regional varieties and so on to explain the coloration of language as determined by the people who use it as well as the context of its use. In popular culture, Moody (2013) identifies "two channels through which language ideologies within the various discourses related to popular culture are most easily observed: within the *performative* channel, which examines the influence of language ideologies upon language choice in the production of pop culture artifacts, and the *affiliative* channel, which examines the reception and reactions toward language in pop culture artifacts" (p. 1). In blogs the language ideology is expressed in language use and understood to be "any sets of beliefs about language articulated by the users as a rationalization or justification of perceived language structure and use" (Silverstein, 1979: 193). Sultana (2015) thus submits that language undergoes a blending and mixing of cultural resources in order to create desired contextual meanings. As a result, textual boundaries are crossed and "language also becomes transtextual, as meanings can no longer be deciphered without traversing the restricted meaning of the

texts" (Sultana and Dovchin, 2016: 1). Blogs as artefacts are texts and they definitely cross boundaries in their language use and their form. We now take a look at texts and what it means for a text to cross boundaries.

2.10   Theoretical Framework: Intertextuality

2.10.1 The Notion of the Text

A text is a discursive possibility; a constellation of ideas used to convey a message (or messages), whether intended or not. It is a cohesive system of meaning contained and captured in a recognisable format, for example an audio-visual recording, a photograph, a book, an audio recording and so on. Indeed, "whenever we produce an interpretation of something's meaning—a book, television programme, book, magazine, T-shirt or kilt, piece of furniture or ornament—we treat it as a text. A text is something that we make meaning from" (McKee, 2003:4). It can be considered as a self-contained, meaningful system of signs and symbols, consisting of "alphanumeric characters, spoken language, music, still pictures or moving pictures, to mention only a few examples" (Gunder, 2001:86). Hence, Landow (2006) notes that the notion of the text has been expanded beyond the solely verbal, in tandem with Fish's (1980) suggestion that the text is to some degree undecideable and thus very much changeable, and Olorunyomi's (2006) conclusion that the text is a mutant which is often constituted for the expression and preservation of language (Olorunyomi, 2019). Beyond language however, texts also preserve history and culture, codifying aspects of the period and nature of their formation (Fairclough, 1995) in a bid "to attract attention and outlast the moment" (Barber, 2007:2).

Given that a text is a discursive possibility, its textuality—the very nature that makes it a text—lies in the many interpretations that it can be subjected to. Textuality is that quality possessed by a text that ensures that meaning can be made from it. It is the cohesion and coherence that combines all aspects and parts of the text into a referential whole. It presupposes the readings and deductions that can be made of and from a text (Silverman, 1986). Said (1980) points out that the textuality of a text is a practice, i.e. deciphering meaning from a text is a process and not a given. The process is not fixed; the nuances are varied and so the end of the process or the resultant effect is multivariate. The text is

decentered as its textuality or possibility of meaning making takes preeminence. For oral texts, this process is best realised in their performance which ensures their completeness and supplies the needed context. Written texts are space bound, maintaining closure on the pages of the documents where they appear, but this does not prevent readers from tracing their textuality beyond the pages. Digital texts often link up with one another for textuality. By their nature as easily shared and manipulated forms, digital texts of the new media embed one another explicitly and this directly brings about the peculiar textuality referred to as hypertextuality (Landow, 2006). Hypertextuality is the electronic link shared by digital texts in "multiple paths, chains, or trails in an open-ended, perpetually unfinished textuality described by the terms *link, node, network, web,* and *path*" (Landow, 2006: 2; original emphasis). The links are explicit and non-linear, enabling multiple entry and exit points in a text and opening it up to a vast array of interrelated texts which a reader may navigate to and thereafter choose not to return to the original text. In this situation then, there is the hypertext, the peculiar text of the new media which is the active, overt and conspicuous stitching together of digital texts for a new manifestation.

Generally, a text is a communicative occurrence/event which meets the seven traditional and linguistic standards of cohesion, coherence, intentionality, acceptability, informativity, situationality, and intertextuality, as identified by du Beaugrand and Dressler (1981). *Cohesion* is the systematic link among words, phrases and other units of grammar. Mainly concerned with words as the basis, it enables readers to understand the various units of grammar by linking them to one another in a lexical manner. *Coherence*, like cohesion, has to do with the links among the units of grammar in a given text. However, the link is not based on grammatical rules but conceptual rules having to do with frames of reference. For a text to be meaningful to its "reader", the reader must have a relevant frame of reference to consult. In sum,

> …cohesion is a property of the text and… coherence is a facet [i.e. side] of the reader's evaluation of a text. In other words, cohesion is objective, capable in principle of automatic recognition, while coherence is subjective and judgments concerning it may vary from reader to reader (Hoey, 1991:12).

Intentionality is the text producer's deliberate attempt to achieve some effect (e.g. persuasion, encouragement, awe, request etc.) To do this, he employs rhetorical devices such as questions, exaggerations, exclamation etc. He considers cohesion and coherence in going about his intention. *Acceptability* has to do with the ability of the "reader" to make out cohesion and coherence in the text and thereby identify the text producer's intention. It has a lot to do with the reader's background which informs his reaction to the text. *Informativity* is the ability of the text to pass information across to the reader. The reader has to be able to gain information from the text. *Situationality* is the context of the text. It has to be relevant spatially and temporally to the information contained in it. *Intertextuality* is the relationship a text has with other texts.

Of all the seven standards, cohesion, coherence and intentionality are largely text-producer oriented; acceptability, informativity and situationality are "reader" oriented; while intertextuality is relevant to the text, its producer and its reader simultaneously and so it more readily captures both oral and written texts.

2.10.2 The Notion of Intertextuality

Texts do not exist independent of one another; they link up for meaning-making and enrichment. Intertextuality lays emphasis on the interdependence of texts and the fact that texts are embedded in one another, at least partially. In its most basic sense, intertextuality is the understanding that each text is an amalgam of various texts which come together to form a unique organic whole. It is the relationship that exists between a given text and other texts, the understanding that no text exists in isolation, but every text derives its organic meaning from other texts to which it alludes. It is in the nexus created by the interconnectivity of various texts that a new text emerges, because "no text escapes intertext" (Porter, 1986: 34). Various texts can be combined in various forms to suit the expressive need of the author of the new text and the possibilities are near infinite.

Julia Kristeva introduced "intertextuality" into the register of literary studies and opined that the concept explains "the text as a dynamic site in which relational processes and practices are the focus of analysis instead of static structures and product" (Kristeva, 1984:12). Kristeva was challenging the dominant ideology of the genre at the time,

expressing her disagreement with its interdictory nature which prohibits the inclusion of non-literary texts in the business of criticism. Genre as a concept concerns itself with static structure and product, but Kristeva was advocating for a consideration of relational processes and practices in studying the text. This is also Barber's (2007) stance when she declares that "text" is a more encompassing and neutral term than "literature", which is value-laden and historically-specific in the sense of writing and genre as noted by Kristeva. In Kristeva's view, meaning making in a text—whether literary or not—has to do with the possibilities of interpretation identified by the reader and the critic who look beyond the printed pages to decipher the message of the text. The relational processes and practices are the links that the text has with external entities and the links these entities have with one another in forming the text. To fully understand and appreciate the text then, these external texts have to be identified and understood independent of, as well as in relation to, the current text. The interpretation, relevance and understanding of the text under consideration lie in this simultaneity. Accordingly, Kristeva (1986) argues that "each word (text) is an intersection of other words (texts) where at least one other word (text) can be read" (p. 40). Kristeva was attempting a review of Mikhail Bakhtin's notions of polyphony or heteroglossia—"the coexistence and interplay of several types of discourse reflecting the social or class dialects and the different generations and age groups of society" (Haberer, 2007: 57)—and dialogism (the concept of dialogue).

Although Kristeva introduced the word "intertextuality" (and emphasised it more in the linguistic sense), she by no means introduced the concept. Some scholars argue that the phenomenon, in some form at least, has been in existence for as long as there has been a record of human society (Worton and Still, 1990). It is thus not surprising that the works of early classical writers like Plato, Aristotle and Horace, as well as twentieth century theorists like Genette, Barthes, Derrida and Riffaterre, among others, refer to the phenomenon. Similarly, although more closely associated with the postmodern movement, traces of intertextuality are noticeable in the works and essays of modernist writers. A most notable figure among such modernist writers is T.S. Elliot (1982), who was of the opinion that "no poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone" (p. 37). He (Elliot) "was perhaps the first to state the fact that the most individual parts of an author's work may be those in which his/her ancestors are more vigorously present" (Alfaro, 1996:270).

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Haberer (2007) similarly refers to Eliot's works and reflections as the "forerunners of those produced by the intertextualists of our postmodernity" (p. 56). Another of such modernist figures is David Jones (1972), who once noted that a poet (and by extension a creative artiste) cannot be removed from the ethos, deposits, mythus, matiers and the entire *res* which produced him.

A most interesting aspect of intertextuality is the notion of the death of the author. The concept was introduced by Roland Barthes in an essay, *The Death of the Author* in 1967. In the essay he talks about how the elimination of the author creates a fertile ground for opening up the text to rich interpretations. This position serves intertextuality well since meaning making has been dislocated from the domain of the omniscient author and placed firmly in the text. Barthes distinguishes between the author and the scriptor: the author is the one who merges ideas from several sources (texts), while the scriptor is the one whose writing traces a field without origin. At least his writing has no other form than language and so once the author is removed, the text becomes limitless and unbounded. In essence, the scriptor is the one whose name appears on the work as the owner, or the one to whom can be ascribed the ownership of the text. However, the ownership of the text as document is not ownership of the meaning of the text; to ascribe the ownership of the meaning is to impose an author and a meaning on the text. Imposing an author on a text is limiting it to one meaning only, the final signified. However, acknowledging and tracing the sources that give the text its organic structure and thus enrich it, gives the text a sort of liberty, liberty to mean whatever the reader wishes it to mean without compulsory recourse to the hypostases of the author. The author ceases to be omniscient and ceases to exist for the reader. The death of the author signals the birth of the reader, the one who unravels the work of the author. Barthes is of the opinion that critics would rather the author lived on so that they would be able to do a cut and dried job of interpreting the text via the experience of the author, but tracing the outbound paths in a text could also be just as, or probably even more, rewarding. Such tracings lead to a disentangling of the multiple components of the text, a tracing of its intertextual character.

For intertextuality, the multiplicity of writing is the presence of many different texts and it is in the very activity of disentangling the mass of texts that meaning emerges and is

deciphered. Rather than a glossing over of writing, intertextuality advocates piercing a text and piecing it apart in order to locate its component parts. No meaning is exempted or evaporated in intertextuality as all possible meanings are acknowledged. Distinguishing between work (author-centred) and text (reader-centred), Barthes (1977) submits that,

> thus is revealed the total existence of writing: a text is made of multiple writings, drawn from many cultures and entering into mutual relations of dialogue, parody, contestation, but there is one place where this multiplicity is focused and that place is the reader, not, as was hitherto said, the author. The reader is the space on which all the quotations that make up a writing are inscribed without any of them being lost; a text's unity lies not in its origin but in its destination (p. 148).

T.S. Eliot (1982) does not talk of the death of the author in such strong terms as Barthes, but he advocates "the process of depersonalization" as well as "a continual surrender of the self", stressing that "the progress of an artist is a continual self-sacrifice, a continual extinction of personality" (p. 39). Eliot calls on the author to stand apart from the text, which is his creation, and allow the text to have a life of its own. The artist is to surrender himself and make his personality go into extinction in order for his text to come into its own. Intertextuality comes into play here as a compass for navigating the maze of the text, since the author is no longer around as an anchor, and, as Eliot (1982) himself notes, the poet's mind is for accumulating images, feelings and phrases, that are later united to form a new whole. The poet stands for the author, while feelings, phrases and images stand for text, all of which unite in an intertextual manner to form a new compound, because intertextuality is about interdependence among texts in a manner that can be either deliberate or not.

Intertextuality has been said to be "a prominent feature of discourse on the internet" (Hodsdon-Champeon, 2010:2). This is due to the fact that as popular as the internet is, its users are also exposed to other media and information sources. Authors on the internet transpose ideas and information from these other sources to the internet and thus form "explicit intertextual connections" (Brown, 2009:223). For bloggers, Eliot's position is most applicable when discussing the role of the author in intertextual forays. Bloggers usually maintain some kind of relationship with their audience where the audience expects

them to go personal in their posts. In fact, as noted earlier, self-disclosure is common-place in blogs, particularly the personal journal types, and even those which are not personal journals often adopt tones of intimacy and friendliness as expected by the audience. However, in spite of this, the audience is also expected to apply their interpretation to the blog posts and express their views. This is a situation of the blogger continually surrendering himself to the critique of his audience. Audience comments, opinions and suggestions also become worthy topics for blog posts which bloggers explore in a rich intertextual manner. It is, therefore, not uncommon to see posts credited to named or anonymous readers. It can thus be argued that simultaneously, blogs and blog posts have a life of their own apart from their authors, as well as a life fused with that of their authors.

2.10.3 Strategies/Patterns of Intertextuality

In discussing the rhetoric of intertextuality, D'Angelo (2010) identifies six forms that intertextuality can take, which he dubs "strategies of intertextuality". The six strategies include adaptation, appropriation. retro, pastiche, parody and simulation.

2.10.3.1 Adaptation

This is when the idea or message in a text is delivered in another form in another text. The *American Heritage Dictionary* defines it as "a composition that has been recast into a new form." Hoesterey (2001) sees it as "the modification of artistic material transposed from one genre to another" (p. 10), while Sanders (2016) is of the opinion that it "signals a relationship with an informing source-text or original" (p. 26). The operative word in the definition given by *The American Heritage Dictionary* is "recast", while that in Hosterey's definition is "transposed". Both words talk about a transformation of the original into something else which still has the markings of the original. The transformation is done to make the source-text fit into a new mould.

Going by the above, adaptation can be done across various text types, including film, television, radio, the various electronic media, theme parks, historical enactments and virtual reality experiments (Hutcheon, 2006). Usually, the audience is also able to identify the source-text and is sometimes even familiar with it, often because the source text is explicitly mentioned in the new text (i.e. the adaptation). We thus see books turned into

movies, movies turned into games (and vice and versa), and novels turned into plays. However, the most frequent adaptations seem to be the making movies out of books. Examples include Chinua Achebe's *Things Fall* Apart, which has been made into a motion picture, and Kola Ogunmola's operatic drama, *Omuti,* which is an adaptation of Amos Tutuola's novella, *The Palmwine Drinkard*. *Omuti* has again been readapted (recently) by Tunde Kelani into a motion picture, *Lanke Omu*. Some media are better at achieving some communication goal(s) than the others, depending on the preference of the author. Hence, an author might decide that it is better to "show" an idea than tell it; or a medium is better for "interacting" than "telling" and this preference will determine the kind of adaptation that takes place. By this token, the scriptocentric (i.e. written/typed words) nature of a blog can cause them to feature the lyrics of a song (instead of the audio version). A blogger may decide that viewing the words of a song as printed text will achieve some communicative goal and make the reader connect better with the song, or just that his audience needs to know the exact lyrics of the song. Such a blogger has adapted a song into a poem.

2.10.3.2   *Appropriation*

This is "the act of taking possession of something or making use of something exclusively for oneself, often without permission" (*The American Heritage Dictionary*). Sturken and Cartwright (2001) define it as "the act of borrowing, stealing, or taking over others' meanings to one's own ends,… one of the primary forms of oppositional production and reading" (p. 350). Appropriation is what happens when a person takes another's idea for his own purpose without recourse to the origin of the idea. It is the kind of practice found in popular culture, for instance, when the military title, "major" or "general" is used by street gangs to address their top members. Such a practice depicts an oppositional reading and countering of established practices of high culture. The military is the organization licensed by the elite (represented by government) to employ violence and coercion in the course of their duty. For the street gangs, they are the counter-culture of the military appropriating the practices of the military right down to their portfolios.

D'Angelo (2010) points out that many critics are of the opinion that "the biggest difference between adaptation and appropriation is that the adaptor acknowledges a prior text whereas the appropriator does not, often taking a prior text without permission" (p. 36). Where

adaptation is usually announced agreeably right from the start, appropriation shows its obvious imitation of another text, but without the regard that often accompanies adaptation. The fact that both adaptation and appropriation are about imitation causes them to often be critiqued together as a pair (Eaves, 2009; Nwosu and Uchegbu, 2015; Sanders, 2016).

2.10.3.3 Retro

Retro or recycling has to do with nostalgia. It is "an idealized longing for the past" (D'Angelo, 2010:35). However, Paul Grainge (2002) notes that "retro borrows from the past without sentimentality, quotes from the past without longing, parodies the past without loss…. a commercial category and… a cultural practice" (pp.55-6). Retro is revered allusion to the past; a way of casting the mind back to the past in order to glorify it and show it off as being, ironically, an improvement on the present. In idealizing the past, it is recalled and presented "in a self-conscious, parodic, and critical way, revealing its construction as narrative rather than a self-evident 'History' or unmediated 'truth'" (Hutcheon, 2006:154). Here, intertextuality does not play out as an unvarnished account of history or truth, but as a critical look at what is regarded as history and truth.

Kunle Afolayan's *October 1* awakens nostalgic memories in the minds of many while at the same time idealizing the temporal setting of the movie as a period of unbridled hope as shown in the preparations for Independence Day. However, he destroys the façade of innocence with the anticlimax and climax of the movie by showing that even in that period when there was so much hope and expectations, a murderer and rapist was on the loose. In the end, he shows that not only women, but the nation (Nigeria) as a whole was raped. He leaves the audience with no illusion as regards the innocence of that past. Victor Olaiya's song, *Baby Mi Da,* was released in the 70s. When it was remixed by the OGD All Stars crew and later by TuFace, the vulgar lyrics were changed. Although the two remixes give one a sense of nostalgia, at the same time they remind the listener that the song is not all saintly.

2.10.3.4 Parody

Parody occurs when a text imitates another text in order to ridicule it. The goal in parody is to strip the source text of its dignity and parade it as a laughable project, sometimes by exaggerating the ideas it contains. As Baldick (2001) puts it, parody is "a mocking imitation of the style of a literary work or works" (p. 185). Dover (1996) is of the opinion that it "entails imitation, but an imitation which is intended to be recognized as such and to amuse." It could also be seen as a "criticism of the original" (p. 1114).

2.10.3.5 Pastiche

This is a style produced by borrowing fragments, ingredients, or motifs from various sources. It is a French word derived from the Italian word, *pasticcio*, which means "a hodgepodge of meat, vegetables, eggs, and a variety of other possible additions" (Hoestery, 2001:1). It is now used metaphorically to describe architecture, art, literature, music etc. "made up of fragments pieced together" (Dentith, 2000:194). The terms *bricolage, montage* and *collage* are related to pastiche. Bricolage was introduced into the vocabulary by the anthropologist, Claude Levi-Strauss to describe how members of primitive societies used whatever materials were available in their environment to complete their tasks. A collage is "a pictorial technique in which photographs, news cuttings, and other suitable objects are pasted on to a flat surface often in combination with painted passages" (Chilvers, 1996:114). As for montage, it is usually used to describe the stringing together of various motion-picture scenes in order to achieve an emotional effect. Movie adverts of short sequences (also called trailers) containing scenes which are selected and combined to heighten the emotions of the viewers are montages. The openings and closings of movies where graphics are combined creatively to stimulate viewer expectations and excitement are referred to as opening and closing montages respectively.

2.10.3.6 Simulation

Simulation is, for Baudrillard (1983), "the generation by models of a real without origin or reality…. It is no longer a question of imitation, nor of reduplication, nor even of parody…. It is rather a question of substituting signs of the real for the real itself" (p. 25). Simulation employs images, both moving and still. In the postmodern world, there are

copies with no original with the copies "pretending" to imitate something real. The main point here is that there is no original text in the first place, hence the copies are not actually imitating anything but making the observer believe that they are doing so. Reality shows are a good example of this. There is nothing real about them since in the real sense of things they are being acted and not taking place in real, unplanned situations. Every individual in a reality show knows that he is being filmed and taped and so he is not behaving as he would ordinarily. What this means is that the source-text, which is a version of reality steeped in a desired perfection, exists only in the imagination of both the author and his audience. They rely on it to give the emergent text its form and shape even though it (the source-text) is non-existent. The postmodern society is characterised by this creation of, and reliance on, a (world) text that is not there. Video games, recreation parks, movies etc. are created to simulate a supposedly utopian and very enjoyable world which is all in the imagination. We are thus left with an *hyperreal* world through which we are aspiring to the ideal created by us (Macey, 2000).

Regarding intertextuality as a whole, Hodsdon-Champeon (2010), in her report on a study of racially antagonistic online discourse, similarly discusses types of intertextuality based on five categories: direct reference to texts, direct quotes of texts, implied references to texts, hypothetical texts, and cultural texts such as common phrases or proverbs. According to her, these categories are not mutually exclusive and so, it is common to find overlaps in intertexual analysis of texts. She also notes that online discussants employ intertextuality to refute others' claims or strengthen their own stands. In refuting another's claim, there is the tendency to quote the disagreeable submission directly or make strong reference to it, while a submission that supports the discussant's stand is only covertly referred to. The table below represents the five categories identified by the scholar.

Table 2.3 Intertextuality Types

1. Direct reference to texts
a) Paraphrases of texts of others
b) reference to text of others without paraphrase of the text
c) paraphrases of texts generated by the speaker/writer
d) reference to texts generated by the speaker/writer
e) evaluative statements (evaluation of another's or one's own text)

2. Direct quotes of texts
a) sections copied from other texts
b) direct quote of word or phrase—typically set off with quotation marks
c) signature file quotes

3. Implied references to texts (speaker/writer does not refer to an outside source, but it is obvious from the content that it is information he/she has obtained from another source, e.g. because the speaker would not be in a position to have access to the information directly)

4. Hypothetical texts (texts which have never been written or said, but which the speaker refers to as though they had)

5. Cultural texts such as common phrases or proverbs

Source: Hodsdon-Champeon (2010)

For each one of these categories, D'Angelo's (2010) strategies are applicable. It is possible to find elements of pastiche, simulation, parody and so on, in direct references to texts, direct quotes of texts, implied references to texts, hypothetical texts and cultural texts. Blogs are rich in permutations of these strategies and categories (Blood, 2002a; Takhteyev and Hall, 2005).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1   Research Design

This study was conducted using online ethnography which is called netnography (Kozinets, 2015), and survey.   For *netnography,* the researcher observed bloggers' blogging practices by visiting the selected blogs regularly to read the blog posts and study the content-creation habits of the bloggers. The bloggers responded to interview questions via email and there was an interview with a copyright expert. *Survey* as a research design is usually used for large number of respondents to gather quantitative data, although it can also be useful for gathering qualitative data as well. Survey was applied to blog readers whose opinions were sought on bloggers' intertextual practices. It was used to gather quantitative data from the blog readers.

This research is basically a descriptive, qualitative one looking to identify the nature of intertextuality that takes place in three selected Nigerian blogs. This it did through the self-reported practices of bloggers, self-reported experience of blog readers, close textual reading carried out by the researcher, and a copyright expert's interpretation of plagiarism (as an offshoot of intertextuality) and the Nigerian copyright law. Data were collected through close textual reading of blog posts by the researcher, in-depth interview with the bloggers, key informant interview with the copyright expert and a questionnaire filled by blog readers.

3.2   Study Population

The study population comprises all the blogs in the Nigerian blogosphere. As is the case globally however, the Nigerian blogosphere is indeterminate because it is amorphous. New blogs spring up every day just as some others are no longer updated. Nonetheless, it is

estimated that there are over 600 million active blogs in the world as of January 2021 (Byers, 2021). Nigeria accounts for over 20, 000 of these (fixusjobs.com).

3.3   Sample Size and Sampling Technique

Three out of the top blogs in the Nigerian blogosphere (according to Alexa and SimilarWeb rankings) were selected for this study. Of all the blog categorizations reviewed in the literature, Puschmann's (2009) categorization is the most encompassing, incorporating other categorizations and grouping blogging practices into two modes: ego blogging and topic blogging. The top blogs in the Nigerian blogosphere can be said to belong to the topic blogging pragmatic mode; not many of them can be classified as belonging to the personal blogging or ego blogging pragmatic mode. The topic blogging category can be further broken down and explained in terms of two blog types (filter blogs and knowledge blogs) identified by Blood (2000). The personal blog, which scholars (e.g. Karpf, 2008; Burnett, Pedersen and Smith, 2011) have identified to be the most popular in many national blogospheres, belongs to Puschmann's (2009) ego blogging category. However, personal blogs are not among the top ones in Nigeria. The only blog identified as a personal blog among the top Nigerian blogs at the time of the pilot study was *Sisi Yemmie's Blog* but it had mutated into a topic blog at the time of data gathering.

In the Alexa and SimilarWeb rankings, knowledge blogs feature more than filter blogs among the top blogs in Nigeria. As such, one filter blog (*Linda Ikeji's Blog*; *LIB*), and two knowledge/topic blogs (*Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* were purposively selected for this study, bearing in mind Chang and Yeh's (2008) observation that it is likely for researchers to encounter problems of representativeness when studying blogs. This is probably due to the fact that they are proliferous (thus making the size of the average blogosphere not adequately determinable) and also because there are varied classifications of blogs. The three blog types have been selected because they represent the major overlaps in the many categorizations of blog types and the ones most notable in the Nigerian blogosphere. The three blogs studied for this research are listed below.

3.3.1 Linda Ikeji's Blog (LIB)

LIB is a filter blog that was started in 2006. The blog prides itself on "news, events, entertainment, lifestyle, fashion, beauty, inspiration, and yes… gossip!"[5] The owner, Linda Ikeji, is described in many circles as a self-made entrepreneur because her blog is a destination hub for many advertisers and blog readers. It comes first on many blog rankings in Nigeria because of the huge traffic it attracts. The blog is maintained by the owner and her group of staff writers.

3.3.2 Geek Blog

This blog is owned by Wale Adekile, a self-styled "netpreneur[6]" who also goes by the name Don Caprio. The blog, which started operations in 2013, claims that "our articles are written by real life geeks and seasoned authors[7]" and explains that it "is a multi-author technology blog that focuses on tech news, reviews, tech tips & advices, DIY guides & how-to's that make life easier.[8]" (DIY means do it yourself.) In keeping with its claim, the blog basically publishes articles on the reviews on phones, software and gadgets. It also features articles that shed light on the use of gadgets and software. Alongside Wale Adekile, there are four (4) other people who make up the "team"[9] as stated on the blog. Among these four people are three staff writers and one editor; Wale Adekile styles himself the editor-in-chief.

3.3.3 Jarus Hub

Jarus Hub is owned by Suraj Oyewale, a chartered accountant. The name of the blog is his first name (Suraj) spelled backwards: Jarus. *Jarus Hub* was also established in 2013 as a blog with a "focus on career and management"[10]. The articles featured on this blog are about career and school success as well as crossing the bridge from school to the labour market. It is not surprising that the blog says of itself that

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[5] As contained on the blog (*Linda Ikeji's Blog*)
[6] As contained on the blog (*Geek Blog*)
[7] As contained on the blog (*Geek Blog*)
[8] As contained on the blog (*Geek Blog*)
[9] As contained on the blog (*Geek Blog*)
[10] As contained on the blog (*Jarus Hub*)

we provide valuable information starting from how to excel in school, to how to effectively transition to the labour market, to how to settle in the workplace and rise through the career ladder, and finally tips to starting own business or running a company as a top level executive. We cover the whole chain of career – from foundation (school) to retirement."[11]

Although owned by Suraj Oyewale, the blog is kept going by "an array of young Nigerian professionals (and other writers from across the world, most notably UK and India)[12]" and "a team of equally savvy Nigerians"[13]. The blog also claims to be "one of the few blogs that dwell more on content originality in this clime."

3.4   Sources of Data

There were both primary and secondary sources of data for the research. Both are presented below.

3.4.1   Primary Sources of Data

These included harvested blog posts, interview responses and questionnaire responses. Each of these sources was useful for answering a particular research question.

3.4.2   Secondary Sources of Data

Internet sources, books, journal articles, and other publications made up the secondary data sources. They were used to augment and explain the data collected from the primary sources.

3.5   Methods of Data Collection

The data gathered for the research were both qualitative and quantitative. The preoccupation of the study—intertextuality—is one that favours observation, exploration and close textual reading of the texts under study as well as readers' reported interaction with the texts. The nature of blogs as cultural artefacts whose continued existence depends on the active involvement of their authors made it pertinent to also consider bloggers in

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[11] As contained on the blog (*Jarus Hub*)
[12] As contained on the blog (*Jarus Hub*)
[13] As contained on the blog (*Jarus Hub*)

this study. Data were therefore collected in three major ways—one each for the text, the author and the reader. These were content analysis in the form of close textual reading, in-depth interview and survey respectively. Key informant interview was also conducted with a copyright expert and used to augment findings on the interconnectedness of intertextuality and plagiarism as reflected in the blog posts (i.e. the text). Each of these methods is discussed below.

3.5.1 Observation

Blog posts were closely observed and read to identify the strategies and patterns of intertextuality employed in creating them and how these may or may not relate to plagiarism. Subsequently, the observed patterns were interpreted to either reflect intertextual strategies observed in literature or identify new ones and then relate all these to the concept of plagiarism. Only the home pages of the selected blogs were considered in the analysis. Blog posts (and their accompanying subtexts) constituted the only texts that were analysed while other texts that appeared on the home pages of the blogs (e.g. adverts, blogrolls, visitor counter etc.) were not considered. There was no navigation to other pages because readers may not come in contact with them as often as they do the home pages. Bloggers also do not update the other pages as often as they do the home pages (Burnett et al., 2011). Close textual reading was used to answer research questions 1, 4 and 5.

The research aimed to study the posts entered on the three blogs from October 2016 to March 2017. However, the prolific nature of *Linda Ikeji's Blog* caused this projection to be adjusted. On the average, the blog has about 50 posts a day and this made for a data set that was too large to manage. Conversely, in the six-month period, both *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* had posts not outnumbering *LIB*'s total posts for a week. In order to accommodate this disparity and prevent a skewed research outcome, the research focused on only *LIB* posts of the first week of each of the six months and all the posts of the other two blogs in the six-month period. This not only helped to greatly reduce the unwieldy data from *LIB*, it also helped to greatly reduce the erstwhile huge difference in the number of *LIB* posts and *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* posts to be studied.

Although close textual reading is a very useful tool in media studies, which makes it possible to do descriptive, inferential, prescriptive and psychometric studies (Neuendorf, 2002), it is, however, better done alongside audience studies to make for an integrative approach. This research thus did some audience studies through the instrument of the questionnaire.

3.5.2   In-depth Interview

The in-depth interview brought in the author (blogger) angle. This was primarily about the self-reported activities of the bloggers, i.e. Linda Ikeji, Wale Adekile and Suraj Oyewale. Since it is not possible for the researcher to know all the possible texts that bloggers might draw upon in creating contents for their blogs, the study had to rely, to a large extent, on bloggers' accounts of their intertextual forays. Interview with each of the bloggers was used to answer research question 2. The interviews took place via e-mail as all three bloggers were not available for a face-to-face encounter.

3.5.3   Key Informant Interview

An additional manner in which data was collected and which also applies to the ethnographic aspect of the research was key informant interview. Wimmer and Dominick (2006) note that in ethnographic studies, key informants are people "who have expert knowledge of the group's routines, activities and communication patterns" (p. 142). One key informant interview was thus conducted with a copyright expert who is familiar with how the concept of plagiarism plays out in the online environment. Barrister Joan Ohwaguono had seven years post call experience at the time of the interview, and she helped interpret what the law says on copyright and plagiarism. This was particularly necessary because the online environment is a peculiar one and instances of intertextuality here may play out differently compared to the offline environment, which the Nigerian Copyright Act of 1990 more readily and clearly addresses. The expert was familiar with the possibilities of plagiarism both online and offline and her insight aided the researcher's interpretation of data. The key informant interview helped to further appreciate the boundaries of intertextuality vis-à-vis plagiarism.

3.5.4 Survey

The questionnaire applied to the survey aspect of the research and the researcher targeted one hundred respondents per blog. The questionnaire was used to elicit responses from blog readers regarding their ability to identify the intertextual nature of blog contents/posts. The questionnaire was used to answer research question 3. It was designed and made available on the online platform, SurveyMonkey, between 21 August, 2018 and 22 October, 2018. On SurveyMonkey, respondents were required to supply their e-mail addresses as a way of greatly reducing the likelihood of a respondent filling the questionnaire more than once.

Of the three bloggers, only Wale Adekile of *Geek Blog* agreed to share the link to the questionnaire with his readers. Nonetheless, the link was escalated on various social media sites and this turned up a total of 507 responses, out of which 47 were null because the respondents did not indicate the blog for which they filled the questionnaire. These respondents, not having selected any blog after answering questions about their demographics, were thus not able to continue filling the questionnaire as this was the logic programmed on it. Of the valid 460 responses, 244 were for *LIB*, 118 were for *Geek Blog*, while 98 were for *Jarus Hub*.

3.6   Instrumentation

The instruments employed in collecting data were close textual reading and interview guides for the ethnographic design and questionnaire for the survey design. They are discussed below.

3.6.1   Close Textual Reading

Close textual reading was used to observe the blog posts. The researcher studied the gathered blog posts and paid close attention to them in order to identify the intertextual patterns observable in them

3.6.2   In-depth Interview (IDI) Guide

The in-depth interview guide was used to elicit responses from bloggers concerning their blogging practices. It was made up of 13 questions ranging from bloggers' academic

background to their awareness of plagiarism and intertextuality and also their blogging activities.

3.6.3   Key Informant Interview (KII) Guide

This instrument, alongside the instrument of observation (for close textual reading), was used to answer research question 4. One copyright expert responded to the interview questions. There were 8 items in the KII guide and they probed for the expert's interpretation of plagiarism as well as the Nigerian Copyright Act (1990), all in relation to blogging.

3.6.4   Questionnaire

The questionnaire, which was used to answer research question 3, had 13 items divided into three sections: demographics, respondents' awareness of intertextual context and respondents' reaction to intertextual context.

3.7   Methods of Data Analysis

Data were analysed both qualitatively and quantitatively. Only the analysis of the questionnaire was quantitative as there were no open-ended questions in it; all other analyses were qualitative. The research was about describing the substance and form characteristics of blog posts, making inferences from bloggers' responses and also making inferences from the copyright expert's response. To achieve the foregoing, the intertextual patterns observed in blog posts based on close textual reading were compared with the responses of the bloggers and the copyright expert. This was in turn compared to the findings from the blogs to confirm or dispute bloggers' claims on their preferred strategies of intertextuality, what informed their choice of sources, how often they explored various sources to create blog posts etc. This helped to determine instances of intertextuality and instances of plagiarism and also bloggers' understanding of the two concepts. Data gathered via the questionnaire were analysed using simple percentages as provided in the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0. The figures derived were used to make inferences concerning blog readers' ability to identify intertextual contexts in blog posts, their ability to identify the bloggers' sources, as well as their willingness to explore these sources.

Since the interview is a kind of self-report, particular attention was paid to responses to questions that directly addressed plagiarism. The submissions of the copyright expert on plagiarism were compared to bloggers' responses to determine bloggers' awareness or otherwise of the concept of plagiarism.

3.8   Problems of Data Collection

The problems encountered in collecting data for the study are outlined below.

1. *Linda Ikeji's Blog* (*LIB*) is very prolific, averaging about 50 posts on a daily basis. To make for a manageable data size from the blog, the researcher focused on only its posts of the first week of each of the six months studied.

2. On *LIB*, it was often difficult locating the blog page where a particular entry/date was. The blog does not have an organised archive where daily entries can be directly accessed and so in the search tab one has to enter an estimated page number after a forward slash. On visiting the page one then has a sense of direction regarding the page where the needed entry/date might be, either before the current page or after it. Throughout the period of gathering data from this blog, the researcher had to go through this process over and over again because of the proliferous nature of the blog and its resultant, constantly growing number of pages.

3. Still on *LIB*, the blogger, Linda Ikeji, did not respond to the frequent mails sent to her official e-mail address and the efforts made to meet her in person proved abortive. In the course of trying to meet with her, the researcher met one of her senior staff writers (Adedayo Sowemimo) who then volunteered to participate in the research.

4. The *Jarus Hub* web page was often inaccessible for some time (about one month) early in 2018. The researcher however kept attempting to access it. Sometimes the address only appeared in the search bar but the webpage refused to load. When the blog was eventually accessible, it turned out that it had been redesigned which was probably the reason for its erstwhile erratic accessibility. On its part, *Geek Blog* is now called *Don Caprio's Blog*, the name it started with in 2013 but which had changed to *Geek Blog* at the time of data gathering

in 2018. At the moment, however, the blog now goes by the name *Don Caprio's Blog*.

5. The researcher initially planned to make the online questionnaire available for only one month, aiming for one hundred respondents per blog. However, at the end of the first month (21 August-21 September, 2018), only *Linda Ikeji's Blog* had up to one hundred respondents and so the online survey could not be concluded. More efforts had to be made to get people to respond. The added feature of social media escalation provided on SurveyMonkey was then employed and by the end of the second month the blog with the least number of respondents (98) was *Jarus Hub*. The researcher then ended the survey.

6. Despite the frequency and popularity of the personal journal blog type, this study did not consider any personal journal. The researcher left out the only personal journal (*Sisi Yemmie's Blog*) she identified during the pilot study because the blog had morphed into a topic blog at the time of data collection. Similarly, *Ogbonge Blog*, the techie blog initially considered for this work, was not eventually studied because the blog morphed into a techie/entrepreneurship blog. The three blogs considered in this study are therefore *Linda Ikeji's Blog*, *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub*.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Intertextual patterns entail not just a writer's underlying preferences guiding the combination of texts to form the current intertext, but also a reader's assumption guiding the process by which s/he makes meaning of the intertext. They are the guides by which a writer's intended meaning may be deciphered and by which a reader's deduced meaning may be identified. Intertextual patterns help one to understand the stylistic as well as interpretive nature of intertextuality (Ott and Walter, 2000).

4.1   Intertextual Patterns in Blog Posts

Intertextuality is, indeed, an everyday practice for blogs because by their nature as online media, blogs link up with other online media while at the same time incorporating offline materials to make for an eclectic display of contents (Gramer, 2001). The way and manner in which they combine these different materials, as well as the themes that result from the various combinations, are what make up intertextual patterns. The blog posts for each of the blogs are a mix of bloggers' write-ups, copied posts, readers' contributions, hard news materials and contents from online and offline sources.

As a filter blog, *Linda Ikeji's Blog* is more eclectic in its materials than *Jarus Hub* and *Geek Blog*. This is to be expected because filter blogs naturally harvest materials on various topics from various sources for the reading pleasure of their readers and possibly the gathering pleasure of their owners (Blood, 2000). Be that as it may, so long as borrowed texts are mediated via the canonical system of their destination intertext (the newly composed text), then they have to conform in some way or the other with their new abode. Bearing this in mind, adaptation and appropriation, parody, simulation, retro and pastiche were the intertextual patterns identified in the blog posts. Each of them is discussed below.

4.1.1 *Adaptation and Appropriation*

In literature, adaptation and appropriation have been noted to walk hand in hand because creators of secondary texts usually adapt in order to appropriate (Eaves, 2009; Nwosu and Uchegbu, 2015; Sanders, 2016). Adaptation incorporates instances of appropriation. While adaptation is the transposition of ideas from one genre to another, appropriation is the use of an idea for an end different from that which is intended for it as contained in the source text; hence, Ricoeur's (1991) definition of appropriation as "the …transposition of the text, …the modality appropriate to the reader *potentialis,* that is, to anyone who can read" (p. 87). In other words, a reader is only able to identify appropriation so long as s/he can read it. It is not surprising then that appropriation is often politically motivated, intending to displace the meaning in the source text and replace it with a newly created one. Accordingly, Sanders (2016) claims that "there is frequently heartfelt political commitment standing behind acts of literary appropriation" (p. 7). Where appropriation serves the purpose of intended meaning different from the original meaning (of a text), adaptation serves the purpose of relaying meaning in another domain different from the original domain (of the source text). The transposition of meaning, either for a new purpose or for the original purpose, is the common denominator in adaptation and appropriation. Adaptations are very noticeable in the blogs studied, but appropriations are not so many; hence the reason the two are being discussed as a pair in this study. Understandably, this is because, as the bloggers themselves reported, they were not being deliberately critical of the texts they consulted. Appropriation, for all its similarities to adaptation due to their similar transposition of meaning, is more critical, "more complicated, intricate and sometimes embedded", unlike adaptation which is usually more straightforward (Sanders, 2016:36).

While adaptation is genre sensitive, appropriation is not. Genre is not crucial for the realisation of appropriation as ideas can be expressed in different ways across any number of platforms. For adaptation to be said to have taken place however, there have to be at least two genres existing side by side and competing for the attention of the text reader. The presence of adaptation presupposes the presence of genre. For this reason, genres are identified in textual adaptations, which is why novels/comics can be identified in movies;

plays as source texts can be identified in movies, opera etc.; and plays can be adapted into fiction. Arguably, a most common kind of adaptation is that of literary text to movie and examples in Nigeria include Tunde Kelani's *Lanke Omu*, which is based on Amos Tutuola's *The Palmwine Drinkard*; and Biyi Bandele's *Half of a Yellow Sun*, adapted from a novel of the same title by Chimamanda Adichie. Adaptation in such cases is from the written form of the novel to the semi-oral, electronic form of the movie where decoding is now done both visually and aurally. In contrast, the adaptations in the blog posts are mostly a transposition from audio-visuals to still shots and also to word texts. This is a movement from semi-oral to written and it is to allow for the asically scriptocentric nature of the blog as a space that, in deference to its origins, privileges writing more than any other compositional form. With this movement, the text can now only be visually decoded, having lost its aural nature in the adaptation process. Word texts are more common with blog pages than audio and video texts, as a result of the fact that the blog started out as a word text only medium. The journal-type home page favoured the "text-based" content format which has been in existence since the 1990s and is regarded as the fore-runner of the blog (Herring, Scheidt, Wright and Bonus, 2005). Going by the etymology of the word "blog" too, word texts are a large part of what makes up a log. Many definitions of "log" render it as written words recording event/events. The book where the records are kept thus becomes the log book; and an amalgamation of "book" and "log" gives us blog. Apart from this, visitors to a blog are regarded as blog readers in the most basic sense of reading words. Although literary criticism now requires that the audience of any medium be regarded as "readers" in keeping with their efforts at meaning making (Ott and Walter, 2000; Sanders, 2016), blogs are still basically read because they usually contain a lot of words. In fact, there are rarely blog posts without words.

In its earliest technological forms where parchment and scroll were the sites of scritptocentrism, it was commonplace to add pictures to words to make for an enriched reading experience. In the age of books and printing as well, pictures and words still go hand in hand. In the electronic age of the internet and e-readers, however, audio-visuals can now also be accessed in printed texts. All that is required of such texts is that they exist only in the electronic form as their audio-visual accompaniment can exist in that form alone; if the word text exists in any other form, it leaves its audio-visual counterpart

behind. Nonetheless, it is now also easy to crop still images from audio-visual texts (i.e. video recordings) with such images mutating with the scripted text as necessary. The mutation entails arresting frames from the video recording and freezing them into still shots. It is a reminder of the freezing of [oral] words on the pages of books and holding them captive in such spaces which condition them into a compulsorily rigid form, at least for the moment. This is what happens in the blog posts where shots culled from videos are used in place of such videos to make for a more seamless reading of the totality of the text. Although, in the case of blogs, videos can just as easily be viewed, the bloggers go the extra mile of adapting shots from videos as these fit better into the environment of the blogs as part of the printed words. Many times in adaptations, particularly those involving copyrighted materials, the original text is only mentioned for the "reader's" information, probably as part of copyright requirements, but for the blog the original text (i.e. video) is often shown alongside its offshoot. Videos or links to them are featured alongside shots from the videos.

Posts containing such culled shots on *Linda Ikeji's Blog* (*LIB*) advise the reader that videos are available and links to the videos are usually provided. However, the shots give readers some impression about the videos as interpreted by the blogger. A post on 1 October, 2016 shows photos of a woman about to be attacked by a python which she is cuddling. The full story on the blog talks about the woman playing with the snake and the shots the blogger chooses to put up show the snake poised to attack the woman and the woman attempting to kiss the snake (the action which brings on the attack). Although the two shots in the post are grainy ("noisy") and so not of high quality, they pass across the message of (1) a snake baring its fangs and aiming for a woman's bosom, and (2) a woman attempting to kiss a snake. These shots show the blogger's bias of emphasizing the model's mishap with the snake. In adapting the video to still shots, the blogger appropriates it to demonstrate her disapproval of petting a snake and so downplays the model's liking for the snake which leads to her action, while playing up the likelihood of the occurrence of mishap when one attempts to pet a snake.

Adaptations are noted for laying emphasis on particular aspects of the source text(s) and also for giving some detailed background information like we see in the *LIB* post of 06

December, 2016. The story is about a wedding proposal which the blogger dubs "romantic". In this post, rather than just display shots to emphasize points, the blogger displays 3 shots and intersperses them with write-ups to make for a rather interesting narrative. The story opens with a shot of a circling helicopter after which the first two paragraphs of the write-up appear. Next comes a shot of a man on one knee in front of some vehicles on the tarmac, followed by the next two paragraphs, and then the last shot is of the markings (YES and NO) on the tarmac followed by the last paragraph of the write-up. The shots are the points the blogger wishes to emphasize in line with her impression that the occurrence is romantic. Not surprisingly, in the final paragraph of the story, she invites the reader to "watch the video to hear the excitement in Kizell's voice as she lands the helicopter". The "excitement in Kizell's voice" is a further testament to the blogger's conviction that it was a romantic moment.

A similar statement of seeing and believing is one of the two sentences that round off a post on the same blog. The write-up in the post is made up of three sentences:

> The Emenyioras actually have a car (that's a Rolls Royce, right?) rotating in their living room. See the video after the cut to believe it. Heard he really does park the car there and drives it out sometimes.[14]

This post has only one shot taken from the video which is available on Instagram. The picture is one of a couple (supposedly Dilly and Fifi Emenyiora) standing in front of a car (supposedly the Rolls Royce the blogger refers to) in a room. Like many of the other adapted shots on the blog, the shot itself carries the link to the platform where the video can be found. The blogger claims to have heard that Dilly Emenyiora really does park the car in his sitting room and drive it out sometimes. The tone of astonishment runs through the blog post and it is passed on to the reader who may actually want to see the video for themselves to confirm if the car actually does rotate and is parked in the living room of the couple. In the opening statement of the blog post, the blogger sounds convinced that the couple parks a car in their living room (The Emenyioras *actually* have a car [that's a Rolls Royce, right?] rotating in their living room). The statement is dramatic as intended,

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[14] "Wait, Dilly and Fifi Emenyiora have a Royce Rolls parked in their sitting room? (video)" LIB, 1 January, 2017

considering the message it contains. She emphasizes the model of the car in the form of a rhetorical question intended to grab the attention of the reader. It sounds like embellishment, but then she invites her reader to "see" the video to "believe" it. As much as she may like to embellish her adapted video narratives, this one seems to have all the embellishments it needs from the onset. She sounds as though she has trouble believing it herself, hence her concluding remarks that she "heard he really does park the car there and drives it out sometimes".

As much as readers are advised to watch the videos that give rise to blog posts and accompanying shots, sometimes the videos are no longer available for viewing. On one occasion (1 February, 2017), readers are advised right from the beginning of the post that the video is no longer available. The post containing a picture of a young man with a car tyre worn around his torso is about a rapper musician, Young6ix, who claimed to have rescued his cleaner from hoodlums seeking to exact jungle justice on him (the cleaner). *LIB* relates the story thus: "Rapper, Young6ix shared a video *(which he has deleted)* of his cleaner whom he saved from being lynched by area boys who caught him stealing his properties" (emphasis added). In this way, the reader is being advised to either believe or question the existence of the said video since it is no longer available. On such occasions, readers just have to take the blogger for her words that the blog post is actually based on a video recording. Usually, adapted texts are easily accessible for the audience but it is just one of the peculiarities of the postmodern world of the new media where texts can be as permanent as they are ephemeral, and where popular culture artefacts and practices are whimsical. The question then is where did the blogger get the photo accompanying the post from if the source video had been deleted like she reports?

Similarly, on 06 January, 2017, *LIB* posted the story of a Kenyan woman who uploaded "a video on the internet where she demanded for a refund from a "native doctor" who could not secure her a husband in 2016 despite having met all the condition". The post contains one picture of the said woman which is assumed to have been cropped from the said video. The blogger comments that "the video was reportedly recorded three days before the end of 2016 when it dawned on her that no husband was forthcoming". Once again, the blogger takes the story with a pinch of salt, considering that—going by the post—the video did not

one way or the other contain these last details supplied by the blogger. Unfortunately, at the time of this research, the link to the video posted on the blog indicated that the video was no longer available. It gave the error message: "Video unavailable. This video may no longer exist, or you don't have permission to view it. Learn more". Possibly the person who originally uploaded the video (probably the lady in question) later removed it or protected it. As for the blogger, she appropriates the video to subtly cast aspersion on a woman who expected a "native doctor" to provide a husband for her. In adapting the video, culling still shots from it to support her narrative, she appropriates it to disparage such practice, as indicated in the title of the post: "Lol. Kenyan woman demands refund from native doctor after failing to get married in 2016 (watch)". The first word in the title, "lol" is short for "laughing out loud" and this shows that the blogger finds the situation hilarious and not serious like the affected party thought it.

On the other hand, when *LIB* has stories whose video contents can be controversial, it says so right from the title as is seen in a post of 07 February, 2017, the title of which reads: "Videos: These women claim they were offered N1k to come out to protest in support of Pres. Buhari". The shots adapted from the videos are of some women at the scene of the protest. The videos are available and in them a particular woman says she was offered one thousand naira and pure water to join the protest. The authenticity of the narrative of the blog post is therefore not in doubt as the videos lend credibility to it.

The kinds of videos uploaded and linked on *LIB* are not necessarily creative works like other works that are most commonly adapted. For one, although some of the recordings were probably actually done by professionals [e.g. the video contained in the post of 06 January, 2017: "Photos/Video: Amazing transformation of a once severely malnourished child abandoned by mother in Borno IDP camp", and the one contained in the post of 1 February, 2017: "Femi Adesina actually told Dede Mabiaku to keep quiet and not shut up (video)"], a majority of them are not done by professionals as they are amateur videos. This means that things like lighting, audio control and camera angles are not necessarily taken into consideration during their shooting. This assertion, however, may or may not be applicable to the only video featured on *Jarus Hub* during the period under study.

A link to a video of Suraj Oyewale, the owner of *Jarus Hub*, discussing on a talk show on a television station, TV Continental (TVC) was posted on 5 January, 2017. The post consists of the title ("Jarus Discusses Taxation on TVC"), three shots from the said video, and a one-liner containing a link to the video on YouTube. Of the three shots, two are close-ups of Jarus while one is a long shot view of all the discussants on the show. In fact, in the post, all three shots are compressed into one and not individualised unlike the practise on *LIB*. The feeling a reader gets from this adaptation is one of proof. It seems the blogger only wishes to prove to his readers that he was really on TVC as a discussant. As adaptations of the video, the extreme close-up shots may be seen to emphasize that Suraj really had something to say while on the show and they may just be seen as mere proofs of his presence on the show. While TVC featured Suraj to create content for the channel, *Jarus Hub* adapted the video recording into still shots for his blog and appropriated it to play up his own image as an expert on the topic of taxation. Despite the fact that his blog is about career and mentoring, he still sees the need to project his image as a tax expert since he trained as an accountant.

Plate 4.1: Screenshots on *Jarus Hub*[15]

While some readers may eventually view the video to better understand the narrative, others may just be content to view the shots alone, much as it happens with the more popular adaptations of novels to movies. The audience is usually satisfied with the adapted form of a narrative when it comes across it and will not likely bother to seek out the parent text. Although Hutcheon (2006) notes that "adaptation as adaptation is unavoidably a kind of intertextuality if the receiver is acquainted with the adapted text" (p. 21), and that adaptation is "a creative and interpretive transposition of a recognizable other work or works" (p. 33), for blog readers, some of them may only get to know about the video via the blog. The fact and degree of their acquaintanceship with the video may no longer matter as much as their knowledge that the video actually exists as shown on the blog. In other words, the fact that the blogger tells them that the video exists, even if s/he does not provide a link to it, already triggers an intertextual interpretation in them. And as Fiske (1987) notes, "there is no need for readers to be familiar with specific texts to read intertextually" (p. 108). Similarly, Barthes (1977) cautions against trying to find the origin of a text, or trying to "find the 'sources', the 'influences' of a work", because "the citations which go to make up a text are anonymous, untraceable ... they are quotations without inverted commas" (p. 160). *LIB* readers may, for instance, recall a neutral, similar story of a pet snake turned dangerous and thus link it with the story on the blog to create an intertext.

The nature of adaptation as an intertextual pattern that invites audiences "to enjoy both the similarities and the differences", and invites critics "to compare and contrast the two texts and the two experiences of encountering them" (Leitch, 2017: 1), also superimposes the agency of the resulting intertext and the adapted text on the adapter (i.e. the blogger), much like Barthes talks of the death of the author. The author of the original text becomes dead to the blog reader who is now encountering the text in another manner throught the blogger. However, since the blogger also makes it possible for the reader to access the original text, the reader is left to compare both the original and the adapted texts, thereby eliminating the blogger too and putting them to death. As such, adaptations prolong the lives of their source texts in the memory of the audience by replicating, rejuvenating and renewing them.

Adaptations are also known for embellishments, for purposes of replication, and the cases of the woman and the snake as well as the rotating car in the sitting room are not different. The story of the woman and the snake concluded thus: "Ms Fox reportedly needed a tetanus shot while the snake later died from silicon poisoning after biting the model's surgically enhanced breasts". The adapted video does not have this part of the story in its narrative but the accompanying write-up on the blog contains it. Going by the video as made available, the concluding part of the story as told on the blog is not necessarily untrue but it has been used to embellish the blog post and the blogger herself is careful to say that it is "reportedly" true. While other popular adaptations may not point out their departures from the original text and their embellishments, blogs apparently do so, if only occasionally.

Apart from still shots, another way that video recordings are adapted on *LIB* is the transcribing of words as rendered by talking heads. An entry which appeared on October 1, 2016, about "what the truly rich are investing in right now", is a sponsored post advertising a free cryptocurrency webinar where people can learn about investing in cryptocurrency. The striking thing about the post is that although it contains a video link and the video was available at the time of data gathering, it also contains typed words which happen to be transcribed directly from the video. The video does not contain subtitles but it is adapted to words to better suit the medium of the blog. Some other *LIB* posts where the words of talking heads in featured videos are either totally or partially transcribed are "Priest says women who wear jeans should be drowned for tempting men" (1 March, 2017) and "'I grew up in rat-infested apartments' Viola Davis opens up after Oscar win" (02 March, 2017). The blog shows its typical nature with regard to adaptation of video texts by making it possible for both the original text and its adapted version to be featured concurrently.

4.1.2   Parody

Parody is basically an intertextual strategy used to comically rework older texts for various reasons such as mockery, exaggeration and satirizing (Rose, 2011). It is the deliberate imitation of a text so as to comment on it in a generally humorous manner. In Korkut's (2005) words, "parody is an intentional imitation – of a text, style, genre, or discourse – which includes an element of humour and which has an aim of interpreting its target in one

way or another" (p. 26). Clearly, parody as an intertextual strategy involves a writer's active reworking of a target text. For bloggers, many times it entails briefly commenting on the target text. Sometimes such texts, especially photographs, are not merely imitated but more appropriately copied and pasted with new add-ons (in the form of comments) included at the target location—what Hutcheon (1991) refers to as "repetition with difference" or "imitation with critical distance" (p. 32, 36). A number of *LIB* posts comment briefly on photos in a humorous, satirical manner.

Plate 4.2: Dear sir, what are you wearing?[16]

Sagging, the fashion practice of wearing the trousers way below the waist in order to expose the underwear, is mostly practised by male youths. Although females also sometimes wear low-rise trousers in a bid to expose their G-string underwear (the whale tail), this is not generally regarded as sagging (BBC news, 2000). The practice has been found out to have health implications such as bad body posture (Davey, 2011) and erectile dysfunction (Miller, 2012). Young Nigerian men engage in this fashion which originated from the Western world because "others do it", "it is an *[sic]* habit" and because they just want "to show off" and also "for fashion sake" (Uzobo, Olomu and Ayinmoro, 2014: 41). Nonetheless, parents and school authorities in Nigeria are predominantly against the practice (Uzobo *et al.*, 2014).

The little boy in Plate 4.2 appears to be in a conversation with the young man beside him. The man sags his trousers with his underpants showing well above the band of his trousers. It is a picture and so there is no way of knowing what exactly their conversation is about, but the blogger projects herself as having an idea about their conversation as she tags the post "Dear sir, what are you wearing?" as a parodic allusion to the man's dressing, which she obviously disapproves of. She notes that it looks as though the little boy were asking the man about his dress sense, but she takes the sting out of her disapproval by ending the post with "lol", i.e. "laughing out loud."

Parody is noted for its ambivalent nature where the parodic text makes known that its comment on the target text is not necessarily based on strong feelings carved in stone but on a passing, flighty impression (Korkut, 2005). The blogger in this situation gives this impression as well, because it may well be that the conversation going on in the picture has nothing at all to do with the man's dress sense. As the blogger herself notes, it only "looks like that's what the little boy is asking". Another picture appeared on the same day in which a man bends one knee, tying his shoe lace while a lady standing in front of him stretches out one hand and covers her eyes with the other. A smiley appears on the picture to indicate the humour in the picture: the lady's pose where her left hand is stretched out with her fingers splayed is suggestive of an expectation, most likely a wedding proposal accompanied by a ring; meanwhile the man is merely tying his shoe lace and not at all preparing to propose. The post is titled "A man can't even tie his shoelace in peace

anymore!", and all the blogger has to say afterward is "lol". The post is an indictment on ladies who think of marriage proposals as soon as they see a man go down on one knee. It parodies every previous text and context of such nature and even future ones: a man might go down on one knee in front of a lady merely to tie his shoelace, and he should be allowed to do so in peace.

Plate 4.3: TF is this?[17]

"TF" in Plate 4.4 is a contracted form of "WTF", meaning "what the fuck". The other details on the signboard are a clothes hanger and telephone numbers, which give a reader the clue that it is an advert by a laundry service. The message the signboard seemingly wants to pass across is that men should patronise the laundry service rather than have their wives do their laundry and then killing them (wives) in the process. Instead, the message comes across as though from an assassination service wanting to be hired by men who wish to kill their wives. The message is ridiculous in its ambiguity. The blogger parodies it as such, demonstrating her disapproval of not just the ambiguity of the message but the carelessness of the people who wrote it, given what it suggests. The blogger's words, ("As seen somewhere in Lagos. Who knows what this is about?") which come after the picture, show her incredulity regarding the message of the signboard. She wonders if anyone knows about such a ridiculous signage which appeared in a rather non-decrepit part of Lagos ("somewhere"). Possibly, the exact place where the signboard is located is not a mystery to the blogger, but the message it contains warrants that it not be accorded the dignity of being given a definite location and therefore being anchored. Such an ambiguously and alarmingly worded message should remain a floating signifier both in the actual and the abstract sense. The blogger asking "who knows what this is about" could mean the blogger wondering aloud about the meaning of the words or either rhetorically or non-rhetorically asking her readers if they know anything about the advertiser. As off-putting as it is, the situation is rather humorous when considered from the angle of lack of mastery of language by advertisers. Parody is oftentimes satirical in this manner as used by the blogger to show her outrage at such careless language use. To be sure, an assassin would not so blatantly and pointedly advertise their service, but the suggestiveness of this message is a rude shock to the average person's sensibilities. However, the blogger appears to realise that many times advert messages thrive on shocking people's sensibilities in order to attract their attention. This is apparent in the way some digits in the telephone numbers displayed on the board are shaded so that the blog reader does not get the full telephone numbers. If the numbers were fully displayed and if the blogger mentioned the place where the signboard was located in Lagos, then it would be free advert for the advertisers.

Ideas, as presented in discourses, are also often parodied, as shown in *Geek Blog*. A post on the blog is about an internet service provider (ISP) that did not keep its advert promise[18]. In the post, the blogger is sarcastic about his frustration with his Smile modem. (Smile is the name of a data service provider which uses the 4G LTE technology in its data service offerings.) According to Geek, Smile promised affordable, unlimited data plan—a promise which it failed to keep. The discourse of the advertorial, as usual, suggests a pleasurable and seamless internet browsing experience but the blogger found out the opposite, hence his satirical appraisal of the discourse: "What's unlimited about this data plan when I'm limited to using less than 1GB a day?" The situation is even more off putting because he patronises another ISP (internet service provider) which he can compare Smile with. In the most basic sense, Smile has failed: internet pages are not opening as they should due to limited speed; download is slow; and data is seemingly unavailable even though it is supposedly unlimited and has been paid for. Smile's claim of no limitation in data use is parodied by the blogger who sees limitations not only in the availability of data but also in the usefulness of the data. Smile's promise is a sham as his experience is quite the opposite of what is promised. He satirizes using the word "limited" and stresses that although unlimited data is what he expects, he is limited in what he actually gets. All this makes him conclude that browsing with the Smile unlimited data plan is like surfing the web at the speed of General Packet Radio Services (GPRS). GPRS is a data transmission and reception service used on mobile devices. It is much slower than 4G LTE, the technology on which Smile is based. Comparing Smile service delivery to GPRS then is a way of saying the network does not live up to its technological claims and so makes a mockery of its advert.

Korkut (2005) submits that parody in the postmodern world is often directed at discourse just as this blog post has shown. The blogger satirizes based on the speed he experienced while browsing with the Smile modem, even accommodating the widespread belief that speed on Smile modem gets "throttled" after 30GB has been used. Using the language of internet connectivity and the Smile ISP itself then, he parodies the dominant discourse of high speed data connectivity purported by the Smile establishment.

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[18] Appendix 4

108

The discourse on the uncertainty of the health status of Nigeria's President Muhammadu Buhari was also parodied on *LIB*. The post is based on a Facebook post where a user posted supposed breaking news advising Nigerians against switching off their phones as President Buhari may wish to call them at any time. It is a satirical as well as sarcastic parody of Femi Adesina's report that he received a call from the ailing president whose health condition had not been explained to Nigerians. Adesina is the media adviser to the president; unfortunately rather than advise the president on how best to intimate the citizenry about his health status, all he could say was that he had received a call from the president and the president was well. The Facebook user further warned people that the DSS would arrest anyone who missed the presidential call. Considering that it is not very likely that the president would call the average Nigerian, this message parodies the text of Femi Adesina's Facebook post which is all about the president's media adviser thinking it news worthy to report the incident of a phone call from the president. Since Adesina deemed it necessary to report on such a mundane matter, especially considering that he had no pertinent message from the president, then any other Nigerian could expect to receive just as mundane a call from the president. By featuring the Facebook post, *LIB* signifies its support of the satirical message it contains, especially since she comments on it sardonically by saying that "Nigerians have no chill" (i.e. Nigerians are adept are parody). She adds "lol" at the end of her comment to show that she finds it amusing.

Lere Olayinka
9 mins · 🌐

BREAKING NEWS!!!

The Federal government of Nigeria has warned Nigerians not to switch off their phones for whatever reason. This is because the president may call at anytime of the day the way he called Femi Adesina.

DSS HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO ARREST ANYONE WHO MISSED THE PRESIDENTIAL CALL.

Please be guided accordingly.

😆 😄 😂
Chino Obasi

Plate 4.4: Nigerians have no chill….lol[19]

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[19] LIB, 2 March, 2017

A particular instance of parody stood out among the *Jarus Hub* posts studied. The post is about the excuses that Lagosians (i.e. residents of Lagos) give for being absent from work. The post was originally on the Jumia Travel website but it appeared on *Jarus Hub* on 24 November, 2016. A parody of the texts of the "funny" excuses that workers in Lagos give their employers, it is humorous right from its title and introductory paragraph; however, the body of the post features parody in the forms of ridicule, satire, and sarcasm. Most of the excuses noted in the post are arguably not tenable as reasons for absenteeism at work. Ordinarily, a cheating spouse, explosive diarrhoea, a mother who had a bad dream and a pet who put to bed are not occurrences that should be an employer's business, but when employees tender them as reasons why they are not at work, then there is parody.

Already the opening of this blog post tells of the writer's perspective on this. The writer calls the occurrences "little things" but submits that sometimes people just need time off work and so they come up with excuses—these excuses which are now the texts being parodied. This stand of parody by the writer is an indicator of the ridiculousness of the situation when people just wish to stay off work "to chill" (i.e. relax). Knowing this then, people come up with "hilarious, ridiculous and outrageous but REAL" excuses. The writer, although tags the post "hilarious", does not come across as amused in the body of the post. One could almost imagine the writer wearing a deadpan expression as he writes the post. This kind of parody does not necessarily aim at amusement but at exposing the peculiar social situation that drives people to make such untoward excuses. In fact, the writer seems to side with employees who arm themselves with these excuses as some of the expressions in the post suggest. For instance, he notes that the excuse of catching a spouse cheating may sound hilarious but stresses that the police may be invited to intervene if there is need. He also notes the stress involved in owning and raising a pet in Lagos and submits that such a pet putting to bed may be considered by some to be a legitimate enough reason for them to skip work.

The writer satirizes the high probability of explosive diarrhoea due to the proliferation of local food joints in Lagos. The noun "explosive diarrhoea" itself conjures up an image of a person messing up a restroom or almost exploding in the process of passing out faeces. (One wonders if it is even a medical term or vernacular.) Of course no employer wants

such an occurrence in his office even though the chances of it happening are likely very slim. However, the writer points out that explosive diarrhoea is a very convenient excuse because it is easily managed at home with adequate hydration and the average employer would thus not expect a hospital report to back up the claim and therefore confirm its genuineness. The writer's comment on the vehicle and fuel excuse is sarcastic as he notes that people really "do not expect to get penalized in any way" when they tender the excuse of their vehicle running out of fuel. There may be situations of fuel scarcity from time to time, but vehicle have fuel gauges that indicate the level of fuel in their tanks. How then can a vehicle running out of fuel be the text of a tenable excuse? The writer notes that these various excuses were "real" as they were actually given by people. However, they sound like imaginary situations, thereby confirming Hodsdon-Champeon's (2010) submission that there can be cases of hypothetical texts in intertextual practices.

4.1.3 Simulation

Simulation is about the interface between the real and the imagined. Reality can either be fantastically represented or fantasy can be represented realistically (Gayadri, 2008). In other words the distinction between the two extremes of experience (reality and fantasy) is dimmed to create the hyperreal. Hyperrealism is now the way that the world around us is constantly experienced: we combine imagination and fantasy to varying degrees as suit us.

The process of unboxing a device or detailing the workings of a software or an application is simulated for the blog reader who gets the feeling that he is physically present with the blogger who is doing the unboxing. The process of simulation is incomplete when the entity for whom the simulation is being done (in this case the blog reader) is absent. In other words, "the blogger needs an audience for which to perform, but may not necessarily need that audience to interact" (Baumer, Sueyoshi and Tomlinson, 2008: 4). The imaginary availability of the reader perfects the creation of simulation for the blogger, otherwise going through the trouble of taking pictures throughout the unboxing and describing in details the look and feel of a device will be in vain. When subsequently viewing the pictures, the blog reader—the audience—is under the illusion that they are witnessing the actions of the blogger when in actual fact it is a mediated, simulated version of reality. The blogger plays to his reader's imaginary, fulfilling their fantasy of laying their hands on the

device/software/application, and the texts of photographs are particularly useful for this process.

For the Geek Blog reader, the blog post that talks about the unboxing of a device represents the blogger's reality of unboxing the device and the reader's fantasy of unboxing it too. The illusion created by the conjoining of the blogger's reality and the reader's fantasy is further cemented with the accompanying pictures that solidify the narration. The pictures are the anterior texts that indicate the occurrence of intertextuality. The post about the unboxing of Infinix Zero 4 Plus has 12 accompanying pictures, ranging from a shot of the packaged device to a shot of the device in use. The make-believe starts from the state the device is in when purchased (i.e. still in its package) and then continues on to show the device lying in the box when the box is opened. This shot shows the different compartments in the box with the device and other items nestling in the compartments. Follow up shots show each of the items outside the box as well as details on the device such as the camera, the fingerprint sensor and the device colour. Extreme close-up shots show the indentations and bumps on the device. A reader who sees all these pictures can subsequently explain in detail what the device looks like. For such a reader, the boundary between the real and the imagined have been collapsed and he has experienced the hyperreal. Anyone he describes the device and its packaging to will no doubt be convinced that he has actually come into contact with the device to the extent of holding it. Note, however, that this post is only about the unboxing and a quick review. The full review, which details the workings of the device, its bonuses as well as excesses, came about a month later.

Plate 4.5: Infinix Zero 4 Plus Quick Review[20]
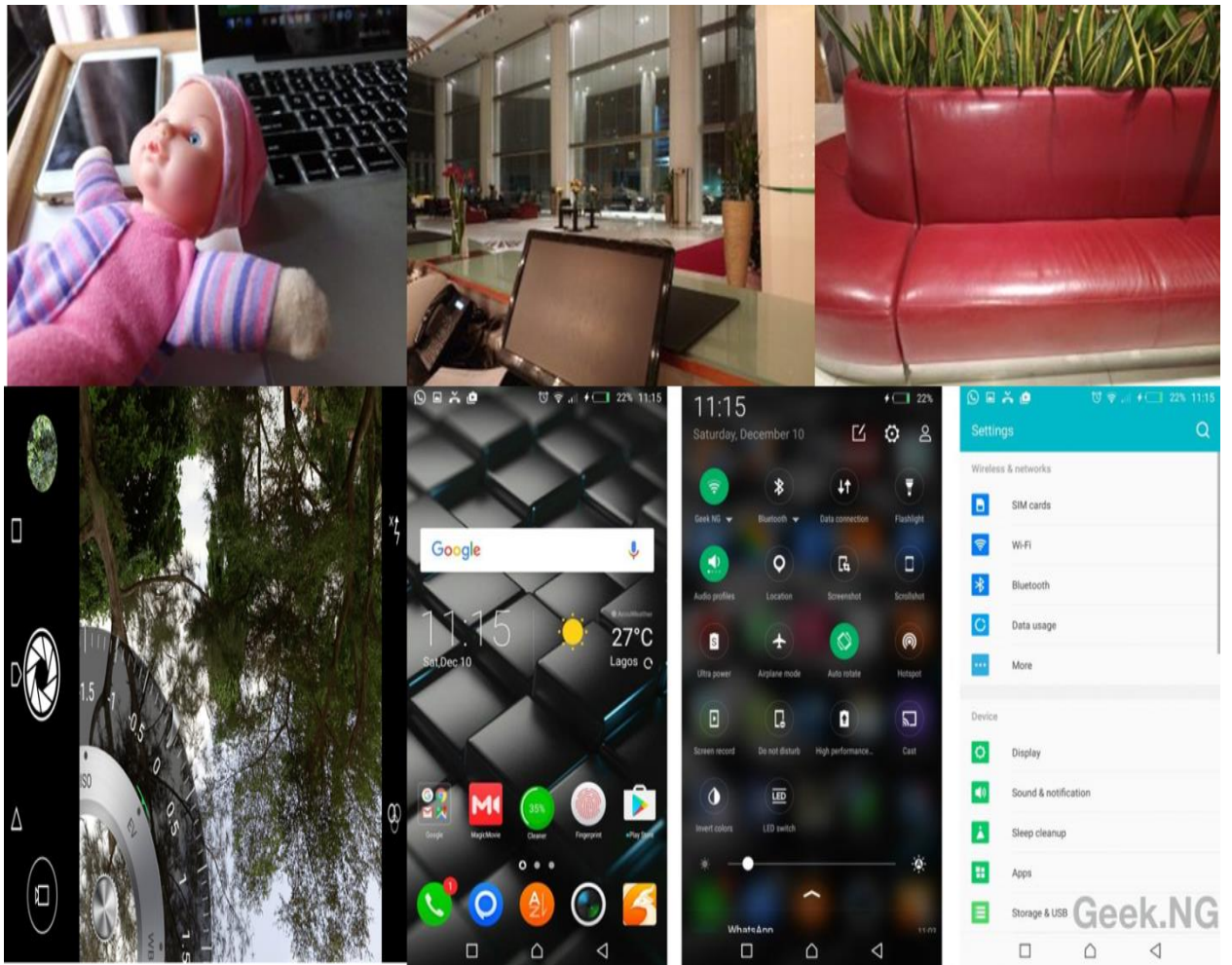
Plate 4.6: Infinix Zero 4 Plus Full Review[21]

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[21] *Geek Blog*, 10 December, 2016

As anticipated, this is indeed a full review detailing virtually all the workings of the phone. This post is accompanied by the same set of pictures as contained in the previous post on this device and then some. The pictures are the signs that are used to substitute the real (the actual unboxing exercise). The fact that pictures of the device can be taken shows that there is actually a device but then the pictures become substitutes for the device. The pictures that appear on the blog are copies of copies (i.e. the pictures are a set of copies representing the device. The set of copies is then copied for use on the blog). A reader is then put in a position where he no longer needs to access the original in order to experience it; the representation has taken the place of the original. The pictures are a simulacrum, "a copy of a copy, so far removed from its original, that it can stand on its own and even replace the original", at least in the sensibilities of the blog reader, because the real "is not only what can be reproduced but it is always already reproduced" (Baudrillard, 1983: 27). These set of pictures of Infinix Zero Four Plus displayed on *Geek Blog* are the reader's reality regarding the device.

The devices that are unboxed and reviewed are newly introduced to the market and so the first contact that the average reader has with them is on the blog where they are reviewed. For such a reader then, the map precedes the territory, just like it happened in Borges' fable which Baudrillard used for an analogy. The pictures of the device presented on the blog as well as the blogger's information on the device guides the reader's expectation concerning the device. For instance, in the Infinix Zero Four Plus post, the blogger mentions "the deceptive dual speaker grill". For good or ill, the blog reader is on the look-out for this as soon as they come across the device. If the reader is looking to buy the device this may be a determining factor. Meanwhile, it could be that the device the blogger reviewed was faulty, hence the supposed deceptive dual speaker, or it could actually be a ploy on the part of the manufacturer to really "deceive" people into buying the device, in which case the blogger would be right. Whatever the case, the illusion of a dual speaker is created and it is up to the reader to make up his/her mind whether to believe it or not. Like the painting in the museum mentioned by Baudrillard, most people will not see this device but only this simulacrum on the blog.

On 2 January, 2017, *LIB* posted pictures of American celebrities and Jesus Christ in native Nigerian attires and credited the photos to Fybcraft[22]. Kim Kardashian, Nicki Minaj, Rihanna, Beyonce and Drake are the American celebrities featured in the series of shots. There is also a photo of a Nigerian musician, Flavour, in a pose with American musician Rihanna as if they were a couple of northern Nigerian extraction. Drake and Rihanna also appear like a couple in one photo. The photos of Jesus Christ are accompanied by birthday wishes and words of thanksgiving. All the photos are simulations of the celebrities dressed in the manner shown and in the context suggested (as Nigerian brides, grooms and birthday celebrants). Most definitely, the images were "photoshopped" so that they are copies without originals since the characters portrayed did not actually put on the clothes, neither did they experience the contexts in which they were portrayed. There are no real images of any of these characters in the attires. Most *LIB* readers will never get to see the characters in the manner in which they are portrayed; more to the point, the characters may never find themselves in the situation in which they are portrayed. Regardless of all this though, these pictures paint a vivid picture of what the individuals would look like if they were in such situations and they do the job of making the situation real enough in the reader's imaginary.

4.1.4   Retro

Retro as an intertextual strategy deals in the critical reading of the past and of history. Although the past is idealized and revered, it is also sometimes shown to be flawed (Hutcheon, 2006). This intertextual pattern is therefore generally identified by its allusion to a specific incident or a time in the historical past, whether it reveres, valorizes and idealizes it or it reads it critically to identify its flaws.

It is generally taken for granted that age 25 is a prime of life when people make life-altering decisions about their career after carefully considering their options. *Jarus Hub* put up a post on this issue as written by Mariam Banwo Barry, for the Jumia Travel team[23]. It is based on another article written by Shane Rogers and shared on LinkedIn. The article touches on the idealized phases and assumptions attached to the 25-year age—a generic

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[22] "Check out these cute photos of American celebs in African outfits" LIB, 2 January, 2017
[23] "Career Advice: Letter to My 25Year Old Self (1)" *Jarus Hub*, 11 October, 2016

marker of transition between youth and adulthood—and shows the flaws in them. As reported in Barry's article, Rogers' article advises that as much as a 25-year old would like to be sure of what career to settle for, it is necessary to take time out, relax and not make the decision under duress or pressure. It suggests that youth can be exuberant and impatient, even with themselves, but advises against seeing oneself as a failure in the face of disappointments. Similarly, it condemns the whiz-kid syndrome and how young people are encouraged to have a network of friends made up of young minds like they. Rather than build a restrictive network of only young minds, the article advocates that youth should "feed off" the energy and experience of older people who can serve as mentors and "fast track career advancement". Apparently, the writer speaks about his youthful years when he brimmed with hope and life but is objective enough to see the downside of that period of his life. He thus "borrowed from the past without… longing" (Grainge, 2002:56). For this blog post, *Jarus Hub* adds his own signature in the form of the title "Career Advice: A Letter to My 25 Year Old Self (1)", indicating that he wishes to have come across such advice as a 25-year-old. The retro is shown through the "golden nuggets of wisdom" that Barry claimed to have got from the original article by Rogers; and then through the title assigned to Barry's reposted write-up on *Jarus Hub*. All three texts in succession reminisce about their writers' younger days, but it is without longing.

One of the founders of Guaranty Trust Bank (GTBank), Fola Adeola, wrote a tribute to another founder, Tayo Aderinokun, upon the latter's demise. The tribute was excerpted and posted on *Jarus Hub*[24]. In it, Adeola recounts how he and Aderinokun had not always been bankers but more accurately serial entrepreneurs. He tells the story of how they started a barber shop and also attempted to establish a gymnasium. Using the bankers' story as contained in the tribute, *Jarus Hub* does a retro of the past as shown in the title of the blog post "From Barbers to Bankers: The Story of Fola Adeola & Tayo Aderinokun". As successful as GTBank now is, its founders were once barbers. As unrelated as the two ideas are (barbing and banking), they show the entrepreneurial spirit in the two characters as well as their resilience, even though the story about their phase as barbers is not often told—probably because it does not match their status as successful bankers now. Starting

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[24] "From Barbers to Bankers: The Story of Fola Adeola & Tayo Aderinokun" *Jarus Hub*, 9 October, 2016

GTBank was also an idea shared by not just the two of them but a group of about five friends. As much as they may have enjoyed owning a barber shop, they definitely prefer owning a bank. This excerpt and the title given to it on the blog are the blogger's way of telling his readers that the past can often be reflected on without longing, especially when the present is much more preferable.

Rooting an Android device means installing a superuser, i.e. a system function (called root) that has access to all the files on the device, including that of the operating system. A root can alter the fundamental functioning of a device as it enables the owner to make of the device whatever they choose. As such, rooted devices lose their warranty because their security and integrity, as put in place by the manufacturer, is compromised. In the early days of Android technology, rooting was commonplace and quite popular. Because the early Android versions were limited in their functions, users made do by rooting their devices and subsequently being able to enhance their (devices') efficiency and functionality. The later Android versions have enhanced capabilities that preclude the necessity of rooting, but some users still use roots. Wale Adekile of *Geek Blog* casts his mind back to the days when he was an advocate of rooting, but then concludes that it is no longer advisable. In a post[25], the blogger alludes to his previous posts where he encouraged rooting, highlighting the thrills of the practice during the height of its popularity and then makes his submission on why he no longer sees the need to engage in it: "Most of the features you had to root your device to get now ship with your device by default." He notes that as much as rooting makes one a power user, it "opens your device to potential attacks. It makes it easier for hackers to gain access to private data. Certain Android malware are specifically targeted at rooted devices, stealing passwords, contact lists, credentials and other personal information." The activity of rooting gave people a rush of power and a feeling of being in control but it was fraught with inherent dangers. Though it is still tempting to root android devices, it is not advisable to do so. The blogger thus wonders: "Is it just me or there are Android users out there who no longer feel it's necessary to root their devices?" The past usage of Android devices in the form of rooting was very enjoyable but it was also risky and it is with the benefit of hindsight anchored not just on

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[25] "Android Rooting: Why I No Longer Do It" *Geek Blog*, 19 February, 2017

his past rooting practices, but on his previous blog posts about rooting, that the blogger can now say this. The current post now discouraging rooting is a retro on the history of rooting, its necessity in the past and its superfluity in the present and possibly the future.

4.1.5   *Pastiche*

Pastiche is the stitching together of various materials (texts) to make a new material. Murfin and Ray (2003) say it "involves open and intentional imitation or copy of the style of an original object or text" (160). It mimics many styles without guile and combines them without any ulterior motives. In the blogs under study, styles as well as whole works are combined to create pastiche. Pastiche in the blogs is not just about narrative styles, but also about the hypertext as made possible by Web 2.0. Blog posts are often replete with links to other blogs, other sites and even to posts within the same blog in a kind of back looping style.

When considered as a whole, each of the three blogs is a bundle of pastiche, with the different pages they feature as well as the adverts they display. However, the blog posts displayed on the home pages of the blogs, which are the preoccupation of this study, also contain their own peculiar elements of pastiche which are now discussed under the subheadings of narrative style/technique, manner of addressing reader and eclectic choice of subject matter.

4.1.5.1 Narrative Style/Technique

Under narrative style, blogger-reader correspondence, point of view and use of rhetorical questions were identified.

4.1.5.1.1   Blogger-reader Correspondence

One style of writing that appears on blogs is that of the letter, both formal and informal. Blog readers send write-ups in the forms of letters and other formats which bloggers either respond to or urge other readers to respond to. When bloggers respond to letters, their narrative tones vary. The tones employed by *Jarus Hub* vary from the intimate to the formal to the authoritative. As a blog that advises readers on career paths and seeks to mentor them, it is understandable that it sometimes chooses the intimate tone or the formal

tone and at other times it opts for the authoritative tone, and yet combines them in various ways on other occasions. The tone of intimacy is often noticeable in responses to letters. In a *Jarus Hub* post[26] which is the blogger's response to a letter written to him by a blog reader, Jarus responds in a manner suggestive of or tending towards familiarity, telling the reader an anecdote from his own experience to further encourage her to pursue her dreams. It is not surprising too that in keeping with the tone of intimacy, elements of the informal become noticeable. In his response, Jarus writes, "Guess what? The first test I was invited for shortly after my NYSC was an accounting job (because they saw ICAN student-membership on my CV)." "Guess what" is a colloquialism that is commonplace in popular culture narratives. It is rhetorical, often signalling that the person who said it is about to give some juicy bit of gossip, or in Jarus' case, give information about some unexpected occurrence. Blogs are noted for their "individualistic, intimate forms of self-expression" (Herring, Scheidt, Wright and Bonus, 2005: 142), so it is no wonder that Jarus strikes the intimate, informal tone with this writer. If bloggers can work at creating intimacy between they and the generality of their faceless audience, how much more a particular member of the audience whose name they know.

On another occasion, Jarus responds to a letter very briefly.[27] It could be because the letter is also brief. The response is rather formal and sounds very much like what a guidance counsellor (or in Jarus' case, a career advisor) would say—brief and to the point. It does not toe the line of intimacy that the previous letter shows. However, it seems that the tone of Jarus' response is dictated by the tone of the letter. In the first letter, the writer goes on and on about her "dilemma" as though she were talking to a friend and just letting her frustration over her career show. Thus Jarus responds to her in an empathetic manner by sharing his own experience. Ironically, the second writer, who is also a female, only gives a summary of her uncertainties. She rounds off by asking specific questions about professional exams, unlike the first writer who asks the murky question, "What do you think I should do?", and then goes on to ask about Jarus' other activities. The two writers set the tone which Jarus follows and this makes for a variance of styles.

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[26] Appendix 5
[27] Appendix 6

Linda Ikeji's Blog (*LIB*) and *Geek Blog* did not feature responses to letters in the period under study. This is not surprising because *Jarus Hub* as a mentorship blog expectedly receives letters from readers seeking career advice. As a filter blog, *LIB* is really eclectic, featuring human interest stories as well as news articles and scientific discoveries. Readers who write such a blogger and expect her to share their letters on the blog understandably expect to receive responses not specifically from the blogger but generally from other readers. Such letters appeared on *LIB* in the six month period when the blog was studied. The blogger posted the letters, offered no responses, but encouraged her readers to respond. On one occasion[28], only one line of the post indicates the blogger's familiarity with the letter. She only urges her readers to offer advice but she does not do so herself. In fact, the tone is rather detached. On the other hand, the letter does not specifically ask for her advice and this could be why she does not respond. It is a similar thing that the blogger does in a post where she claims to have got a distress call on her Instagram handle. She urges readers to reach out to the affected person if they have any information but she does not add any personal statement other than to thank her readers.

In another post of a content sent in by a reader, the writer celebrates her parents' 40-year marriage[29]. Once again, the blogger only advises her reader to read the write-up and go through the photos. As such, the narrative tones of each of the texts sent in by readers largely inform the tone the blogger uses to introduce their texts in the corresponding blog post. *LIB* readers often responded to such posts in the comments section. Geek did not post any letter from readers during the period under study.

4.1.5.1.2 *Use of Rhetorical Questions*

Rhetorical questions are quite popular in the three blogs. Sometimes they appear as the titles of posts, at other times they appear as subheadings and also as opening or body sentences on other occasions. In opening his narrative about a device whose CGI (computer-generated image) he posts in a 4 October, 2016 post[30], Geek asks rhetorical questions of his reader in a most engaging manner that builds up to the climax where the

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[28] Appendix 7
[29] "My parents' 40 years of blissful marriage- LIB reader" LIB, 07 January, 2017
[30] Appendix 10

SpotCam HD Eva is touted as the answer to all the questions. This style of asking questions, whether rhetorical or not, appears frequently on the blog. It functions to move the narrative forward and carry the reader along.

In the opening of the post on the SpotCam HD Eva post, the questions form the backbone of the narrative, as the final sentence (not an interrogative one though) points out. In the course of the post, each of the questions is addressed so that the opening group of questions is what drives the narrative. This group of questions, however, do not make up the totality of questions contained in the post; there are others in different parts of the post serving the same function as the grouped ones. Typically, such questions also form the opening in various subheadings which appear in bold letters. For each of the subheadings, an interrogative sentence forms the opening and alerts the reader to what comes after. The questions address the core of the discussion contained under the subheading. This same style occurs in a post of 27 March, 2017 (5 Cool Websites To Get Your Next Footwear Online), where, apart from the opening interrogative sentence of the post, three of the six subheadings have interrogative statements as their openings. One picture of footwear appears in the course of the narrative while links to other websites focusing on fashion also dot the narrative. These imported texts (of the footwear and the links) work with the rhetorical questions to keep the narrative interesting. They answer the questions, even though the questions are supposed to be rhetorical. In other posts too, the questions do not occur together as a group but are interspersed throughout. For *Geek Blog*, the point of the rhetorical questions is to whet the curiosity of the reader and fuel his anticipation of what comes next in the post as it focuses on the text(s) of its preoccupation.

On *LIB*, rhetorical questions feature often as post titles and serve to introduce the reader to the imported text, alerting them to what to expect. Other purposes served by rhetorical question on the blog include expressing incredulity, inviting the reader to imagine himself/herself in a situation, as an avenue for hilarity, and also for awakening readers' curiosity regarding the borrowed text. When the blogger asks in the title of a post on 2 October, 2016, "Is actress Daniella Okeke engaged?", she follows it up with a picture of the actress posing with a sparkling ring and comments that "The actress showed off this huge bling on her left finger Saturday evening on social media..." What she wants to

achieve is to start her reader wondering about the actress and if her relationship status is about to change, never mind that rings can be worn for other reasons than being engaged.

On 3 October, 2016 *LIB* asks in the title of another post, "Is your body type making you gain weight!". It is obviously a rhetorical question but the blogger does not add the indicative question mark, substituting with an exclamation mark instead. The sponsored post (it was an advert for a tummy flattening tea) expresses incredulity at the idea of a body type being the cause of weight gain. It passes across the message that the reader should not have to be at the mercy of his/her body type. The body of the post expatiates that overeating is not always the reason people gain weight, since body type is also a major factor in the situation. The post is like an eye-opener for people who are not aware of this before and the rhetorical question making up the title of the post is a call to the reader to look into the possibility of his/her body type being responsible for his/her weight gain. The same message of incredulity is passed to her readers in a post of 5 November titled "Whose girlfriend is this? Lol" The lady in the picture in the post poses in a skimpy polythene attire and holds a matching polythene bag. The blogger's rhetorical question is obviously a condemnation of the lady's attire which the lady's boyfriend (or maybe girlfriend) ought to have advised her against wearing. Although the post title contains the slangy "lol" (laughing out loud), the blogger's incredulity comes through as well as her disapproval. She finds it funny but also untoward for the lady to dress that way and she more or less wants her reader to see it the same way. In a post on 9 January, 2017, *LIB* asks, "Guys will you rock celebrity stylist Swankyjerry animal print outfit?" The post contains pictures of the said stylist and later asks rhetorically again, "You like?". The blogger is, in this manner, asking her reader to imagine himself/herself in the attire the hairstylist is wearing and see if he/she likes the picture.

Rhetorical questions in the titles on *Jarus Hub* are often posed to give the reader an idea of what the blog post contains. On 6 November, 2016 there is a post with a title that is a play on words: "Whitter Twitter?"[31] The post is about the revenue situation in Twitter as an organisation and how the organisation is having to lay off its staff due to lack of income, particularly from adverts. The post compares Twitter with Facebook and submits that

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[31] Appendix 21

Twitter is losing popularity while Facebook is gaining popularity. The blogger thus wonders if Twitter is headed for doom in the form of Golgotha. In this manner, the blogger borrows from the Bible, specifically the story of Jesus Christ dying at Golgotha.

4.1.5.2 Manner of Addressing Reader

With the help of pictures, Geek shows his reader what he is discussing and this often determines how he addresses them. Many times, Geek addresses a second person (you), but at other times he addresses an unknown person, using phrases like "a user". In the 6 October, 2016 post about the review of Infinix Note 3, and also the post on 24 March, 2017 (about the unboxing of Tecno Camon CX), the second person pronoun "you" is used generously. The blogger addresses his audience in a way that makes a reader feel that the blogger is talking to her/him directly, much like presenters do on traditional media outlets. While discussing the features of the Camon CX, the blogger shows one edge of the phone in a picture and empathises with his reader thus: "If you hate having to choose between a second SIM slot and an SD card, you should like the separate SD card slot on the right side of the phone just above the volume and power buttons." This observation of his has the potential to endear him to his reader who gets the feeling that here is someone who understands what it feels like to have to choose between using a SIM card or using an SD card. The feeling is heightened by the awareness that the blogger is first of all a phone user who basically understands the emotions and sentiments the average person attaches to their phone as property and their phone as device. It is also heightened by an appreciation of the fact that the blogger is also a critic and reviewer of technology. So, in the blogger, the reader finds an ally who not only knows what he is talking about, but can also show it, albeit in pictures. Intertextuality is useful for showing and telling an audience what an author intends.

Similarly, a statement addressed to the second person is the opening of the 6 October, 2016 post mentioned earlier: "We unboxed this device a couple of weeks ago, and Infinix Note 3 is one of the phones with a battery life that gives *you* peace of mind." The average Nigerian mobile phone user worries perpetually about the battery strength of her/his device, what with the power situation in the country. Electricity supply in Nigeria is less than the demand thereby creating a constant deficit and irregularity (Ayamolowo,

Buraimoh, Salau and Dada, 2019). What is "peace of mind" regarding mobile phone use as noted by the blogger if not lack of worries as occasioned by a strong battery which is able to retain power for long? Later on in the post, he goes further to declare, "It's the sort of battery that makes owning a power bank rather redundant." To make up for the epileptic power supply that determines smart phone usage, mobile phone users have resorted to having a power bank which they charge in anticipation of powering their devices when the device battery is dead and there is power outage as usual.

Power banks are quite affordable and are as portable as mobile phones and easy to use. Usually they can be charged with the same charger as the average smartphone in the Nigerian market and this enhances their ease of use. Nevertheless, no matter how cheap they are or how easy it is to use them, it is always preferable to have a phone with a long-lasting battery. So, when Geek tells his reader that the battery of this smartphone is so reliable that it makes owning a power bank rather unnecessary, one can be sure that the reader will take note. Geek is showing his awareness of the power situation, his experience with it as well as a possible way out for his reader who is a smartphone user. As evidence of his conviction, he presents a screen image showing the details of a session of battery use on the phone. On this image he superimposes another which he gets from the original image and this emphasises his point as intended. The *you* of the reader to whom he addresses his point will be hard-pressed not to believe him in the face of this evidence.

Plate 4.7: Phone screen image showing details of phone battery use[32]

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[32] *Geek Blog*, 6 October, 2016

Similarly, when Geek happens upon a freebie that will be most appreciated by his reader, he doesn't hesitate to share the information on his blog the way he might share it in a dialogue with a friend. This he does when he discusses the Free WinX DVD Copy Pro and presents a link to the product website as well as a picture of the product (a CGI) as is his usual practice.[33]In the post, he starts by emphasizing the fragility of DVDs in the business of storing data. Data is one important element to many technologically savvy people these days and reliable storage devices are always in demand. In this post, Geek outlines the usefulness of an application in preserving the data on a DVD. To drive his point home, walks his reader through the workings of the free WinX DVD Copy Pro by showing screen pictures of the application in use. He addresses his reader directly so that the post is filled with many "you" and the occasional possessive "your". The regular appearance of this second person pronoun gives an impression of assertion as the blogger speaks authoritatively about what this application can do, anticipates his reader's various needs for it and asserts that the application is up to all the tasks. Each of the "you" in this post is contained in a positive statement affirming what the reader can do with the app or what s/he wishes to do.

The only time the pronoun occurs with a negative statement is when the blogger cautions that this giveaway version of the application is not upgradeable, although the statement is not quite clear: "The only drawback with this giveaway version is that *you* won't be able to upgrade to a newer version unless *you* upgrade". Even then, he offers a way out of the negative situation: upgrading. In general, the tone in this post is rather jubilant, a celebration of the hurdle that the application can help a reader to cross when it comes to preserving data contained on DVDs. Since he is not the manufacturer of the product, one can safely assume that Geek had visited the product website and digested the information on the giveaway which is what he now relays to his reader. The original narrative on the WinX DVD website is the source text from which he derives this blog post. Same goes for the post about SpotCam HD Eva which appeared on 04 October, 2016. The blogger celebrates the device bringing "Ease of Use, Advanced Features & Affordability

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[33] Appendix 11

Together!" right from the title of the post and punctuates his post with necessary pictures and links.

4.1.5.3 Eclectic Choice of Subject Matter

Geek Blog was sometimes a bit eclectic in its posts. Although known as a tech blog, it posted stories about other things not having to do directly with technological know-how and devices. One such post appeared on 26 November, 2016 discussing Black Friday. In this post, he has comments made by people on Twitter and from these, he concludes that "many people are beginning to see beyond the 'discounted' Black Friday deals" since vendors are often dishonest about their prices. Another post appeared on 17 February, 2017 about teenagers and their parents. There was also another on 20 March, 2017, about smartphone addiction and the health of relationships. These two posts have links to external websites where their contents are better treated and the resulting hypertext makes for an encounter of intertextuality for both the blogger and his reader. Geek has no real competence in the subject matter of the two posts but he salvages the situation by supplying necessary external links.

Eclecticism was the norm for *LIB*. Human interest stories, hard news stories, tech news and stories based on religious leanings abound on the blog. Similarly, shots of book covers featured alongside excerpts from the books. A 07 December, 2016 post on *LIB* titled "Hilarious! How do court reporters keep straight faces?" contains a rather lengthy excerpt from a book, *Disorder in the Courts*. As for *Jarus Hub*, most of its posts revolved around the subject matter of career and entrepreneurship. However, it sometimes featured adjunct topics like how to make the best of an impromptu Monday trip, "amazing books for extraordinary entrepreneurs", the importance of cybersecurity in business and the importance of technical skills for entrepreneurs. A lot of these posts were sourced externally. Apart from the literary intertextual patterns that have been discussed, two others were identified and they are presented below.

4.1.6 Other Intertextual Patterns

4.1.6.1 Intralooping

It is a popular practice among bloggers to do some back looping that links current posts to previous ones on their blogs. This is a very self-conscious intertextual practice which the bloggers use to contain the reader's interest in the blog. Although hypertextuality (Landow, 2006) is sometimes at play here too through hot texts and link anchors, the reader's foray in this wise does not take them beyond the blog space. Sometimes they are merely reminded of a similar previous post through references to it, and at other times they are actually encouraged to read such posts again through the gateway of hyperlinks. This practice is particularly important when we consider that individual entries as well as the blog as a whole can be considered as texts. Back looping is a self-reflexive act that ensures the reader's continued and constant interest in the blog as a self-contained text and also the continued relevance of old blog posts. Accordingly, *Geek Blog* employed the first person pronouns in such back looping narratives in deference to blogging as a collective activity and also the unifying purpose that the back looping among blog texts is to serve.

Often, bloggers merely create links to previous posts in current posts, but at other times such links are part of a narrative where the reader is treated in a familiar manner with the blogger identifying with them through the use of plural pronouns in the first person. This creates a first person point of view of which the reader is part. Although *Geek Blog* did not feature letters and readers' write-ups, the first person point of view was very prominent in many of its posts and it was used to draw the reader in and remind them of past blog posts. One manner in which Geek stood out with regard to the first person narrative point of view was that it alternated between the singular and the plural. The plural first person point of view was employed in narratives about the review of devices but not review of applications or software. More specifically, in a lot of the posts about the unboxing and reviewing of devices, both the singular *I* and the plural *we* were employed alternatively, often to jog the memory of the reader about an earlier post on the blog which is pertinent to the current one, and also to create a sense of camaraderie. On 2 March 2017, when talking about the rumoured specifications of the next device in the Tecno Camon series, the blogger notes that "it seems the next device in the Camon series won't be named Camon C10. An insider

revealed that we should expect Tecno Camon CX instead." He then proceeds to remind his reader that the Camon C8 and the Camon C9 "visited this blog last year and underwent a positive review". "Camon C8" and "Camon C9" appear as hot text hyperlinks to invite the reader to click on them and once again read the "positive review" as rendered on the blog. The post[34] about the unboxing of Infinix Note 3, a mobile phone, opens with the plural first person pronoun "we" ("we unboxed the device"), which gives a reader the impression that the visual texts (i.e. pictures) combined with the narrative of the review were composed by more than one person, supposedly the blogger and his team, or maybe even the blogger and his reader, at an earlier time.

Unboxing denotes removing the device from the carton in which it came i.e. unwrapping it and shedding the manufacturer's packaging. It means "seeing what the device looks like" (as Geek himself describes it) and taking a closer look at a newly launched device once it has shed its protective wrapping as provided by its manufacturer. In taking a closer look at a newly launched device, Geek sometimes took on the persona of an individual and at other times he took on the persona of the organisation. On these two different occasions, he used the first person singular *I* and the first person plural *we* respectively. As expected, the singular and plural possessive pronouns in the first person also occur when occasion called for it. In this post about the unboxing of Infinix Note 3, after commencing the narrative by establishing that a group of people is involved in the telling of the story, the blogger goes on to talk about the features of the device under scrutiny. However, the next time the pronoun *we* appears, one gets the feeling that it is a reference to the blogger and his group of reviewers (i.e. the *Geek Blog* team) as well as his reader: "Aligned underneath this is the fingerprint sensor that's on par with what *we* saw on the Hot S". This expression also refers the reader to an earlier post which they are assumed to have read.

When Geek talked about unboxing a device, he consistently supplied pictures of the process of removing it from the carton. By going through the pictures, which appear to be taken step by step throughout the unboxing process, a reader gets to feel a part of the physical process. They feel as though they were having a collective experience of the unboxing with the blogger (Mark, Bagdouri, Palen, Martin, Al-Ani, and Anderson, 2012).

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[34] Appendix 8

This is the target of the blogger and it is confirmed in the narrative when he talks about "what *we* saw", referring to an unboxing that was previously done, also with the reader in attendance. The first person plural narrative point of view does not always denote just the blogger and other people from the blogger's end, but also the reader too, uniting all in the blogging activity. The way Takhteyev and Hall (2005) put it, blogging involves

> a dimension of sociality that is different from communication. Apart from being a means of communicating between friends, blogging can be seen as a creative activity practiced together with friends. In other words, …blogging is social not only in the same way as email or mailing lists, but also in the same way as quilting groups or club sports (p. 4).

Club sports capture the interest of both the athletes and the sport lovers—who may not necessarily be fans. In much the same way, blog readers may not necessarily be commenters and bloggers themselves, but their presence alone, even if as "lurkers" (Nonnecke, Preece and Andrews, 2004:202) make them a constant important part of the blogging activity and the making and preservation of the blog's communal memory.

In the post about Tecno Camon CX[35], the first person plural pronoun *we* seems to be referring to the *Geek Blog* team: "After weeks of teasers, speculations and rumors, we finally have the device and unboxed it already". He is reporting to his reader on something he and some others already did. In the next sentence, however, his reader becomes part of the group: "Nah, it doesn't exactly look like the renders and concepts we previously saw online, though there are still some similarities". Everybody is privy to information that is available online and so the blogger goes by the assumption that his reader has seen something similar online. He is thus answering his reader's anticipated question about the appearance of the device since they cannot see the device themselves as they are not physically with him. At the same time he is creating a sense of oneness with his reader by referring to "the renders and concepts *we* previously saw online". Of course, he did the unboxing of the renders and concepts too (on 02 March, 2017) and simulated it for his reader, which is why he compares what he and his team previously showed his reader to

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[35] Appendix 9

what he is now poised to show them. The link to the unboxing of the renders and concepts as it appears on the blog is included in the narrative.

A reader gets an inkling about the blogger identifying with them when he talks about Tecno "reminding *us* that the Camon is strictly for taking pictures." This expression is somewhat conversational, sounding as though the blogger and his reader were having a discussion about the Camon CX while unboxing it. However, in the next breath, he seems to remind his reader that as much as he may be carrying them along in the activity of unboxing the device, they are not physically present with him. He says, "While unboxing, a quick look at the camera produced some strikingly detailed images. More of this when *we* finally get to *put up* the full review of the device." The first sentence is a report of an activity he carried out in the absence of his reader, while the second sentence sounds like an activity he will be carrying out in the future with his team i.e. those people behind the scene at *Geek Blog*. He will *put up* the review for his reader since they will not be with him physically when he handles the phone, gets a feel for it and eventually reviews it. Nevertheless, the second sentence also sounds like an anticipation of what he will get to do with his readers in the nearest future i.e. part of the process of the unboxing which they started together.

The conversational style goes on further when he expresses his personal opinion regarding the camera on the device: "The centered selfie camera stares right back at you with the accompanying dual LED flash. Though *I*'m yet to try this out, it leaves the impression that you can take really bright selfies even in the dark." He reverts to the first person singular *I* when he's in doubt about the performance of the selfie camera. Later on, he also talks about his verdict on the device: "Overall, I consider the design great." Similarly, in the post on the full review of Infinix Note 3, Geek stresses that "As a rule of thumb, *I* try as much not to expect stellar performance from the camera on a mid-range device. However, Infinix Note 3 still delivers decent pictures." The blogger resorts to the singular pronoun when expressing [his] impressions about products and he does this in reference to similar devices which he has discussed in earlier blog posts, which is why he talks of rule of thumb and mid-range device. It is an indirect reference to his verdict in previous blog posts about the review of devices like the Infinix Note 3.

There were always tags accompanying post titles on *Jarus Hub* just as was the case on *Geek Blog*. These tags appeared as hot texts and link anchors indicating who wrote the post and the category to which the post belonged on the blog. To click on any of the tags is to navigate to some other part of the blog and so remain within the blog. Within blog posts as well, links to other posts on the blog often appeared. For instance, *CV* always appeared as a hot text linking back to the post on CV writing. On the last day of 2016, *Jarus Hub* collated its most read articles for the year and itemized them in a blog post as hot texts[36]. The post contains links to all ten posts identified as the most read on the blog within the year and the blogger rounds off the post by thanking his reader for reading the blog and also encouraging them to "subscribe free to JarusHub Career Website to receive fresh career and education tips as published". This post is a tactic to provide a reinforcing message as the year rounds off in order to encourage the reader to remain committed to the blog. It serves the purpose of helping the reader see the future relevance of the blog by referring them to its past relevance, thereby prolonging their interest in the blog. *Jarus Hub* even went as far as turning some words in a letter from a reader to a hot text so as to make it serve as a hyperlink to another post on the blog. In the letter, the reader asks about JarusHub Networking Saturday and the blogger seizes the opportunity to create a hyperlink to a post on the blog that talks about the event. As for *LIB*, there were no references to old posts and tags also did not appear in post headings to indicate categorisations since the blog had none.

4.1.6.2 Copy-paste Verdict

Press releases and other sponsored posts appeared on *LIB* and this was always indicated. They were copied and pasted without any additions except the explanation that they were either press releases or sponsored posts. For the other posts, most of them appeared to have originated from other sources with the blogger not merely reporting on them but copying and pasting them and then giving her opinion on them or giving her reader food for thought, albeit in a neutral manner. *LIB* did not often use the pronouns *we* and *I* but it sometimes implied the voice of an organisation, much like traditional media outlets do and at other times it just reported or passed comments. Usually, her post titles aroused readers'

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[36] "Top 10 Article on *Jarus Hub* in 2016" *Jarus Hub* 31 December, 2016

interest and her closing comments were like parting shots. There was a post on 1 December, 2016 titled "Na wa!", which colloquially means, this is serious. The post contains a screenshot from Twitter where a Twitter user (probably a female as the picture of a female is displayed beside the post) declares, "Like I said, nothing a Nigerian man does can surprise me. My uncle hid a child he had with another woman from his wife for 24yrs". Another Twitter user (this time probably a male as the picture of a male is displayed beside the post) responds to this and says, "In this same country that man found out at the embassy that 3 of his 5 kids are not his. See rest. Evil has no gender". The words accompanying this screenshot in the blog post are, "There is nothing one won't hear/read". In other words, everyone should always be prepared to hear or read the unusual. The reader is left to wonder if the blogger is befuddled by the story that each of the Twitter users relates or by the fact of their swapping stories in this manner. The second user's story seems to be aimed at countering the first user's story and casting shadows on the characters of both men and women ("Evil has no gender"), so it is plausible that the drama of the exchange as well as the content of the exchange bewilder the blogger as her words show. As for the reader, they can choose to feel either bewildered or amused.

In another post on another day, (1 February, 2017), *LIB* features a screenshot from Charlyboy's social media account (the platform is not mentioned by the blogger). The title of the post is extracted from Charlyboy's words on his social media account: " 'Most Presidents are only front men to distract us from the people who really run the country' – Charlyboy". The blogger quotes Charlyboy and attributes the quote to him in the title before pasting a picture of Charlyboy's social media page. Charlyboy's actual words were: "I trust you already know that most Presidents are only front men to distract us from the people who really run the country. Na so." To round off the bog post, Linder Ikeji writes, "As the activist/former singer shared on Social Media. True or not?" This sounds like the blogger mulling over Charlyboy's words and inviting her reader to do the same. She is casting doubt on the activist/former singer's submission and asking her reader to take it with a pinch of salt. In this manner, she starts her reader ruminating over it.

Of the two other blogs, *Jarus Hub* was the blog that obviously did copying and pasting like *LIB*. It always mentioned who the writer was and the organization for which they were

writing by way of registering that the post was not original to the blog. However, it always stopped at only copying and pasting without expressing any opinion about the text. This lack of comment shows a lack of criticism which could be taken as an endorsement of the borrowed text. It was not clear whether *Geek Blog* engaged in copy and paste as there were no indicators to show whether or not this was the case. Although hyperlinks to other websites in the form of hot texts and link anchors appeared in many of the posts, it was not apparent if some of the posts were written by the blogger or wholly copied from other sources. Only for the reviews was it certain that the posts were original to the blog. Having identified the intertextual patterns in the blog posts, we now consider bloggers' thoughts on intertextuality.

4.2   Bloggers and Their Intertextual Preferences

As T.S. Eliot (1982) says, "no poet, no artist of any art, has his complete meaning alone. His significance, his appreciation is the appreciation of his relation to the dead poets and artists…as a principle of aesthetic, not merely historical, criticism" (p. 37). The dead poets and artists here are not necessarily dead spatially or temporally, but they are dead with regard to their works which have acquired a life of their own. Rather than the poets and artists, the works are the living beings and entities that link current poets and artists (i.e. the ones whose works are being considered at the moment) to these "dead" authors. Through these links the new poets and artists acquire complete meaning in an aesthetic as well as historical manner. As artists, bloggers complete their meanings by acknowledging preceding texts relevant to their discourses in order to create beauty and appreciation for their blogging practices. This emerges in their preferred intertextual patterns whereby they look out for ways to promote the viability of their blogs. For blogs to be viable is for them to remain appealing to the audience, to be dynamic, and to be relevant. The principle of aesthetics is thus observed when bloggers realise the need to be appreciative of other texts in order to maintain their own significance. The *Jarus Hub* blogger, consulted outside sources because

> As a website that focuses on careers and mentoring, there is no way I would have been able to generate all the content of my blog. I need other people to share their own career success too, so I contact them. Apart from those I contact,

some other people contact me to publish their stories, some
to share their ideas and career tips with a view to indirectly
promoting their own websites. I also occasionally copy
content that I find very helpful for my readers from bigger
career websites like Glassdoor, The Muse, and publish. This
contributes less than 5% of the content of the website.[37]

The blogger noted that it would take superhuman effort for him to consistently post relevant content on the blog; hence the need to post content by other writers. He also admitted that some "bigger career websites" have contents that are helpful for his readers. As much as bloggers may not be literary minded in their profession, they exhibit some literary attributes which cause them to go intertextual. Writers who reference older texts often do this as a way of authenticating their own works. As has been noted that the viability of blogs is dependent on relevant content, Jarus tries to ensure the viability of *Jarus Hub* by acknowledging and featuring "bigger career websites" so that relevant contents will always be available for his readers. While *Jarus Hub* seemed to contact outside sources in order to keep the blog going, *Linda Ikeji's Blog* (*LIB*) contacted outside sources for credibility:

…often times when doing a foreign story, you have to refer
to them as sources because you're most likely not going to
do an American gossip story better than TMZ or Buzzfeed.[38]

LIB had a lot of "foreign" stories (meaning stories [originating] from outside Nigeria) so it is not surprising that it consulted many foreign sources. For *Geek Blog*, writing tech news demanded that he outsource the writing in order to meet the demand for the constant update. This is understandable, given the rate at which new technology is introduced into the market and the average consumer's need for information on such new additions. The blogger noted that this was the only time he was tempted to consult outside sources:

The only time I actively consulted outside sources to create
content was when I was trying to publish tech news article
on the platform. I had to outsource because I alone couldn't
meet the need for a constant flow of fresh content. If I'm

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[37] Suraj Oyewale In-depth Interview, 04 April, 2018 (e-mail)
[38] Adedayo Sowemimo, In-depth Interview, 12 December, 2017 (e-mail)

going to outsource content creating, I prefer working with
people I know to a large extent, people I can trust.[39]

It is clear that by his own judgement only tech news made him actively consult trusted outside sources. In essence, the people he can trust are those "dead poets and artists" whom he is convinced can give his work the needed "complete meaning". By noting his trust in these people, Geek emphasizes their importance to his aesthetic as well as historical significance. He has been critical of them and found them to be of importance to his art.

Bloggers are not literary artists and so they do not define or categorize intertextuality by literary standards. Due to the fact that they are literate and so aware of the prevalence of the plagiarism discourse, they are more conversant with plagiarism and not intertextuality. Since the bloggers reported that they consult outside sources mainly to keep their blogs going and ensure credibility and not to critique/appreciate a text or do social commentary, it is understandable then if they cannot explain why and if they employ any intertextual strategy. When asked how they make use of the materials they get from external sources, these were their responses:

> **LIB**: Quote directly, at times paraphrase. In case of website you should hyperlink back to the website.[40]

> **Geek:** In a lot of cases, there's a link back to the original source within the body of the article. Authors should be credited for their work and I encourage my writers to always do this. In some cases, they are quoted in the article as well.[41]

> **Jarus:** For those that send articles for us to publish, without soliciting for them, we do some editorial touch, if need be, and publish and attribute. For those from sources we sought out, we either quote directly or paraphrase. In all cases, we attribute. We don't ridicule or trivialize.[42]

Going by the responses of the three bloggers to the question of their preferred intertextual patterns, it is obvious that they do not set out to be literarily creative about their external sources but to meet the need of populating their blog with contents. As such, whatever

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[39] Wale Adekile, In-depth Interview, 23 March, 2018 (e-mail)
[40] Adedayo Sowemimo, In-depth Interview, 12 December, 2017 (e-mail)
[41] Wale Adekile, In-depth Interview, 23 March, 2018 (e-mail)
[42] Suraj Oyewale In-depth Interview, 04 April, 2018 (e-mail)

intertextual patterns that have been noticed on the blogs are accidental, thereby decentring bloggers as the centre on which meaning making in blog contents is hinged.

However, other factors become apparent in their responses. First is the fact that their responses tilt more towards acknowledging their sources rather than their manner of use of the materials. Considering that very few of the blog posts studied for this research had no references and attribution, then the bloggers' responses that they acknowledge their sources is true. As noted earlier, this is due to the fact that they can relate better with the issue of plagiarism, and by extension copyright infringement, than intertextuality. This shows that the content creation activities that take place on the social platform of the blog are judged by the literacy and individuation standards of plagiarism and Intellectual Property (IP) ownership and not the communal standards of intertextuality. It is also telling that a platform which is by nature both oral and literate of necessity has to be judged by literacy standards even by users. Like Adejunmobi's (2011) composer-performer respondents who saw their trade through the lens of textual composition rather than performance, the bloggers in the current study did not consider their textual composition in terms of intertextuality but more with regard to avoiding plagiarism and copyright infringement. This also points to the fact that as much as it has been said that orality and literacy exist on a continuum (White, 2009; Soffer, 2010; Waita, 2014), and as much as the oral nature of the virtual has been explained (Soffer, 2010, 2012; Olakojo, 2012), literacy still wields some contextual and contextualized power over orality, with communities of people also encouraging this as has been seen in the case of the bloggers. Whereas both the orality and literacy aspects of the practice of blogging ought to be acknowledged, bloggers are not comfortable doing this, giving voice rather to the literate aspect of their undertaking while subconsciously undermining its oral, communal nature. This promotes the use of the [academic] concept of plagiarism in describing blogging practices. Yet, as humans, we can do without academia but not without social interaction. So to judge the basic by the offshoot is to undermine the importance and fundamentality of the basic (wa Thiong'o, 2012).

Secondly, the *Jarus Hub* blogger introduces another dimension—that of unsolicited articles sent in by people who want them to be published. Ordinarily, the practice of

intertextuality entails a writer going in search of materials to combine in order to give voice to his/her own creative voice. Said (1983) stresses that the writer "thinks less of writing originally, and more of rewriting" (p. 3), just as Derrida (1985) notes that "the desire to write is the desire to launch things that come back to you as much as possible" (p. 157). Although Jarus was the only one to mention it, *LIB* also had a lot of unsolicited posts which it introduced as sponsored posts (e.g. "Here's what the truly rich are investing in right now" (1 October, 2016); "Here are solutions to get you out of the recession" (05 October, 2016); "Change your fortune in 2017!" (3 January, 2017) etc.). On *Jarus Hub*, it was never mentioned that an item was sent in, with the sender requesting that it be published; but *LIB* never hesitated to note this. Apart from duly labelled sponsored posts (which were probably paid for by the senders), there were other posts too which were said to be sent in by "LIB readers" (e.g. "blog reader needs advice on what to do" (05 December, 2016); "My parents' 40 years of blissful marriage- LIB reader" (07 January, 2017); "*LIB* Reader cries out for help after her car was snatched at gunpoint in Warri" (06 March, 2017) etc.).

This is a rather unusual occurrence in the traditional sense of intertextuality, but not in the postmodern sense where "transience, flux, and fragmentation describe the growing sense of how things really are" (Taricani, 2007:6). The writer (in this case, the blogger) sits back and transient and fragmented texts locate him/her. It not only decentres the idea of the writer initiating the process of intertextuality; it also shows that blog readers pay attention to blog contents and have an idea of what they expect to read on the blogs. Readers thus become *produsers* who nudge bloggers into intertextual practice by sending in contents and therefore suggesting what should go on the blogs (Bruns, 2008). Most of the sponsored posts and the unsolicited posts were posted without any major literary input by the bloggers so that the intertextuality noticeable in such posts is not necessarily domiciled just within the posts but also made manifest in the totality of the blog which then features various writing styles as presented by the various posts it contains.

The bloggers' lack of a literary understanding/appreciation of the concept of intertextuality is also evident in a response by the *LIB* interviewee. When asked why they consult outside sources to create posts, he answered:

> Depends on your definition of sources in this context; however, in blogging/journalism parlance, if you are working on a sensitive or huge story, it is important to speak with the parties involved who most times won't want to speak so you turn to their aides/handlers who in turn will want to stay anonymous thus the term 'SOURCES" often comes to play.[43]

The respondent obviously links blogging with journalism and not literature, hence his reference to "blogging/journalism parlance". However, the posts harvested from *LIB* for this study did not show any trace of newsgathering carried out by the blog as an organisation because most of them were copied from other platforms. The few stories with indications of attempts by the blog to source information were not quite hard news but more of celebrity news. An example is the *LIB* "exclusive" story on the impending divorce between singer Muma Gee and actor Prince Eke. The story was mainly an excerpt from an interview with Prince Eke[44]. Having looked into bloggers' intertextual habits, we now consider blog readers and their ability to identify/appreciate intertextuality.

4.3   Blog Readers and Intertextual Context

The process of intertextuality finds requisite meaning in a text reader who is able to identify it, relate to it and, therefore, interpret it. Blog readers' ability to identify and understand intertextuality was explored through the instrument of an online questionnaire. The demographics of the respondents and their responses to the questionnaire items are presented and discussed hereafter.

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[43] Adedayo Sowemimo, In-depth Interview, 12 December, 2017 (e-mail)
[44] "LIB Exclusive: I am no longer married to Muma Gee, we are heading for divorce- actor Prince Eke says" LIB, 5 January, 2017

Table 4.1: Demographics of Respondents

	Geek Blog	*Jarus Hub*	*LIB*	**Total**
Age				
13-19 years	17 (14.4%)	4 (4.1%)	18 (7.4%)	**39 (8.5%)**
20-25 years	35 (29.7%)	21 (21.4%)	63 (25.8%)	**119 (25.9%)**
26-35 years	36 (30.5)	37 (37.8%)	85 (34.8%)	**158 (34.3%)**
36-50 years	25 (21.2%)	29 (29.6%)	63 (25.8%)	**117 (25.4%)**
50 years and above	5 (4.2%)	7 (7.1%)	15 (6.1%)	**27 (5.9%)**
Total	**118 (100%)**	**98 (100%)**	**244 (100%)**	**460 (100%)**
Sex				
Female	46 (39%)	36 (36.7%)	93 (38.1%)	**175 (38%)**
Male	72 (61%)	62 (63.3%)	151 (61.9%)	**285 (62%)**
Total	**118 (100%)**	**98 (100%)**	**244 (100%)**	**460 (100%)**
Level of Education				
Postgraduate	38 (32.2%)	42 (42.9%)	106 (43.4%)	**186 (40.4%)**
First Degree/HND	55 (46.6%)	43 (43.8%)	110 (45.0%)	**208 (45.2%)**
NCE	0 (0%)	8 (8.1%)	3 (1.2%)	**11 (2.4%)**
OND	16 (13.6%)	2 (2.0%)	9 (3.6%)	**27 (5.9%)**
Secondary	7 (5.9%)	3 (3.1%)	15 (6.1%)	**25 (5.4%)**
Primary	2 (1.7%)	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	**3 (0.7%)**
Total	**118 (100%)**	**98 (100%)**	**244 (100%)**	**460 (100%)**

There were a total of 460 valid responses to the online questionnaire. The highest age range represented among the respondents was 26-35 years which totaled 158, accounting for 34.3% of the total number of respondents. Others were 20-25 years (119; 25.9%), 36-50 years (117; 25.4%), 13-19 years (39; 8.5%) and 50 years and above (27; 5.9%). There were more male (285; 62.0%) respondents than female (175; 38.0%) respondents. Postgraduate degree holders accounted for the highest number of respondents at 186 (40.4%). Others were first degree/HND holders (208; 45.2%), OND holders (27; 5.9%), secondary school leavers (25; 5.4%), NCE holders (11; 2.4%), and primary school certificate holders (3; 0.7%).

In order to appreciate intertextuality, a text reader first has to be aware of its presence. Blog readers were thus asked questions in line with this. First, the researcher tried to find out the frequency of their visits to the blogs because the more a text reader encounters a text, the more familiar he becomes with the text and the more aware he becomes of the elements in the text, including its intertext (Ricoeur, 1991). In the case of blogs, the more a reader visits them, the more familiar he becomes with the bloggers' blogging practices and this aids the recognition of intertextuality.

Table 4.2: Respondents' frequency of visits to the blogs

	Always	Often	Seldom	Rarely	Total
Geek Blog	23 (19.5%)	28 (23.7%)	35 (29.7%)	32 (27.1%)	**118 (25.7%)**
Jarus Hub	17 (17.3%)	21 (21.4%)	28 (28.6%)	32 (32.7%)	**98 (21.3%)**
LIB	21 (8.6%)	51 (20.9%)	71 (29.1%)	101 (41.4%)	**244 (53.0%)**
Total	**61 (13.3%)**	**100 (21.7%)**	**134 (29.1%)**	**165 (35.9%)**	**460 (100%)**

How often do you visit this blog?

Most of the respondents (165; 35.9%) rarely visited the blogs. A total of 61 respondents (13.3%) reported visiting the blogs always, while 100 respondents (21.7%) reported visiting the blogs often. One hundred and thirty-four (134; 29.1%) respondents seldom visited the blogs. The combined number of respondents who always and often visited the blogs was, therefore, 161 (35.1%). However, going by the fact that most of the respondents were highly literate, we can safely say that their ability to recognize the occurrence of intertextuality is considerable, regardless of the frequency of their visits to the blogs. The next two tables further confirm this assumption.

Table 4.3: Respondents' awareness of the occurrence of intertextuality

	Do you think this blog posts contents from other sources?			
	Yes	**No**	**Can't Say**	**Total**
Geek Blog	45 (38.1%)	22 (18.6%)	51 (43.2%)	118 (25.7%)
Jarus Hub	59 (60.2%)	15 (15.3%)	24 (24.5%)	98 (21.3%)
LIB	145 (59.4%)	17 (7.0%)	82 (33.6%)	244 (53.0%)
Total	**249 (54.1%)**	**54 (11.7%)**	**157 (34.1%)**	**460 (100%)**

Fifty-four (54; 11.7%) respondents answered "No" to the question of whether the blogs featured contents from other sources. One hundred and fifty-seven (157; 34.1%) respondents could not say if the blogs posted contents from other sources. This made for a total of 211 (45.8%) respondents who could not answer the question in the affirmative. These respondents were, therefore, the ones who were not aware of intertextual occurrences on the blogs. This shows that on the part of the reader, intertextuality is not always a given. As much as texts are always amalgamations of other texts, readers may not always be conscious of this. However, more than half of the respondents (249; 54.1%) were affirmative that the blogs posted contents or ideas from other sources. The researcher went further to note the level of education of these respondents who were certain of intertextual practices on the blogs. This is shown in the table below.

Table 4.4: Level of education of respondents who were aware of the occurrence of intertextuality on the blogs

	Pry	Secondary	OND	NCE	HND/First Degree	Postgraduate	Total
Geek Blog	0 (0%)	5 (2.0%)	8 (3.2%)	0 (0%)	16 (6.4%)	16 (6.4%)	**45 (18.1%)**
Jarus Hub	0 (0%)	2 (0.8%)	1 (0.4%)	8 (3.2%)	24 (9.6%)	24 (9.6%)	**59 (23.7%)**
LIB	0 (0%)	11 (4.4%)	5 (2.0%)	1 (0.4%)	65 (26.1%)	63 (25.3%)	**145 (58.2%)**
Total	**0 (0%)**	**18 (7.2%)**	**14 (5.6%)**	**9 (3.6%)**	**105 (42.1%)**	**103 (41.4%)**	**249 (100%)**

As suspected, most of the respondents who were certain of intertextual practices on the blogs were postgraduate degree holders. There were 103 (41.4%) of them. They were followed by first degree holders who were 83 (33.3%), HND holders (22; 8.8%), secondary school leavers (18; 7.2%), OND holders (14; 5.6%), and then NCE holders (9; 3.6%). There were no primary school certificate holders among them.

Having explored the place of literacy level in identifying intertextuality in the blogs, we consider another factor. We bear in mind that as reported by the respondents as shown in Table 4, blog readers may not visit blogs always but we also note that their occasional visits to the blogs is sufficient enough for them to be aware of intertextual occurrences on the blogs. To investigate this further, the researcher posed a question on the frequency of intertextual occurrences on the blogs in the respondents' estimation.

Table 4.5: Respondents' estimation of the frequency of occurrence of intertextuality on the blogs

	Always	Often	Seldom	Rarely	Total
In your estimation, how often does this blog display contents from other sources?					
Geek Blog	6 (2.4%)	34 (13.7%)	4 (1.6%)	1 (0.4%)	**45 (18.1%)**
Jarus Hub	15 (6.0%)	42 (16.9%)	2 (0.8%)	0 (0%)	**59 (23.7%)**
LIB	47 (18.9%)	78 (31.3%)	16 (6.4%)	4 (1.6%)	**145 (58.2%)**
Total	**68 (27.3%)**	**154 (61.8%)**	**22 (8.8%)**	**5 (2.0%)**	**249 (100%)**

Since 211 (45.9%) respondents were not aware of the occurrence of intertextuality on the blogs, the question of the frequency of occurrence of intertextuality was answered by only the remaining 249 (54.1%) respondents. These 249 respondents are thus the sole respondents considered in the research from here onward. Of this figure, 154 (61.8%) respondents estimated that the blogs often posted contents from other sources, 68 (27.3%) respondents estimated that the blogs always posted contents from other sources, 22 (8.8%) respondents estimated that the blogs seldom posted contents from other sources, while 5 (2.0%) respondents estimated that the blogs rarely posted contents from other sources. In keeping with the researcher's findings, *LIB* accounted for the highest number of respondents who estimated that the blog often and always posted contents from other sources at 31.3% (78) and 18.9% (47) respectively. It was followed by *Jarus Hub* (often: 42, 19.9%; always: 15, 6.0%) and then *Geek Blog* (often: 34, 13.7%; always: 6, 2.4%). We also wanted to know if blog readers appreciated bloggers' intertextual forays. We thus posed a question on this.

Table 4.6: Respondents' appreciation or otherwise of bloggers' intertextual attempts

Do you appreciate the efforts made on this blog to display contents from other sources?				
	Yes	**No**	**Undecided**	**Total**
Geek Blog	37 (14.9%)	0 (0%)	8 (3.2%)	**45 (18.1%)**
Jarus Hub	53 (21.3%)	3 (1.2%)	3 (1.2%)	**59 (23.7%)**
LIB	97 (39.0%)	13 (5.2%)	35 (14.1%)	**145 (58.2%)**
Total	**187 (75.1%)**	**16 (6.4%)**	**46 (18.5)**	**249 (100%)**

One hundred and eighty-seven (187; 75.1%) of the respondents reported liking bloggers' attempts at intertextuality; 46 (18.5%) respondents were undecided on this; while 16 (6.4%) did not like bloggers' intertextual attempts. Sanders (2016) notes that the derivation of pleasure is one of the reasons for reading intertextually. It is pleasurable for a reader to read a text and be able to relate it to another, either one with which they are familiar or one with which they are not familiar—the important thing is that the reading of the text is not done in isolation; rather the text is opened up expansively to linkages beyond itself in a rather pleasurable manner. Going by this, the researcher also tried to find out if bloggers' intertextual practice was a major attribute that these blog readers liked about the blogs.

Table 4.7: Respondents' reasons for liking the blogs

<table>
<tr><th colspan="7">What do you like about the blog?</th></tr>
<tr><th></th><th>Its Popularity</th><th>Originality of its contents</th><th>Its interesting posts</th><th>The fact that it displays contents from various sources</th><th>The fact that it treats different topics</th><th>Total</th></tr>
<tr><td>*Geek Blog*</td><td>22 (8.8%)</td><td>2 (4.4%)</td><td>3 (1.2%)</td><td>3 (1.2%)</td><td>15 (6.0%)</td><td>**45 (18.1%)**</td></tr>
<tr><td>*Jarus Hub*</td><td>12 (4.8%)</td><td>11 (4.4%)</td><td>20 (8.0%)</td><td>5 (2.0%)</td><td>11 (4.4%)</td><td>**59 (23.7%)**</td></tr>
<tr><td>*LIB*</td><td>64 (25.7%)</td><td>7 (2.8%)</td><td>27 (10.8)</td><td>26 (10.4%)</td><td>21 (8.4%)</td><td>**145 (58.2%)**</td></tr>
<tr><td>**Total**</td><td>**98 (39.4%)**</td><td>**20 (8.0%)**</td><td>**50 (20.1%)**</td><td>**34 (13.7%)**</td><td>**47 (18.9%)**</td><td>**249 (100%)**</td></tr>
</table>

As much as many of the respondents reported an awareness of intertextuality in blog posts and also that they liked it, it was not their major reason for liking the blogs. As shown in Table 4.7, of the 249 respondents who reported an awareness of intertextuality, 98 (39.4%) liked the blogs because they were popular. This was followed by respondents who liked the blogs because they had interesting posts (50; 20.1%); respondents who liked the blogs because they treated various topics (47; 18.9%); respondents who liked the blogs because of the fact that they posted materials from various sources (34; 13.7%); and then respondents who liked the blogs because of the originality of their contents (20; 8.0%).

Popular culture admittedly thrives on its own fame as indicated in its name (Storey, 2003). It is thus not surprising that the popularity of the blogs was the major reason that the respondents liked the blogs. This means that if the blogs were not popular, this set of respondents would probably not visit them. To another set of respondents, the interesting posts on the blogs caused it to like the blogs, and to yet another set the various topics treated on the blogs caused it to like the blogs. It is possible to conceive of these last two reasons (i.e. interesting posts and variety) as being linked because variety often makes for an interesting experience. As much as these blog readers liked the blogs due to the variety and interesting experience they afforded, they (the respondents) did not see this as being linked with intertextuality; hence their responses. This notwithstanding, their pleasurable experience on the blogs is largely due to the intertextual practice of the bloggers which ensures the constant availability of interesting posts, just as Table 4.6 shows that a majority of the respondents actually liked the fact that the bloggers engaged in intertextuality. This point was partially made earlier in the discussion on intertextual patterns in blog posts and bloggers' intertextual preferences, but more will be said about it later when we discuss the viability of blogs. For now we move on to blog readers' engagement with intertextuality. First we tried to find out if blog readers were always aware of bloggers' sources.

Table 4.8: Respondents' awareness of bloggers' possible sources

Are you always aware of the sources of this blog's contents?			
	Yes	**No**	**Total**
Geek Blog	28 (11.2%)	17 (6.8%)	**45 (18.1%)**
Jarus Hub	33 (13.3%)	26 (10.4%)	**59 (23.7%)**
LIB	40 (16.1%)	105 (42.2%)	**145 (58.2%)**
Total	**101 (40.6)**	**148 (59.4%)**	**249 (100%)**

Of the 249 respondents, 148 (59.4%) reported that they were not always aware of bloggers' sources while 101 (40.6%) reported otherwise. We therefore tried to find out how blog readers learnt about bloggers' sources.

Table 4.9: How respondents learnt about bloggers' sources

	From other readers' comments	From social media	From memory	From the blog itself	Others	Total
How do you know the sources?						
Geek Blog	0 (0%)	1 (0.4%)	12 (4.8%)	31 (12.4%)	1 (0.4%)	**45 (18.1%)**
Jarus Hub	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	15 (6.0%)	43 (17.3%)	1 (0.4%)	**59 (23.7%)**
LIB	2 (0.8%)	1 (0.4%)	49 (19.7%)	87 (34.9%)	6 (2.4%)	**145 (58.2%)**
Total	**2 (0.8%)**	**2 (0.8%)**	**76 (30.5%)**	**161 (64.7%)**	**8 (3.2%)**	**249 (100%)**

In the study of the blog posts, links to sources were often noted and so most of the respondents (161; 64.7%) reporting that they found out about bloggers' possible sources from the blogs is in tune with the researcher's findings. However, other respondents mentioned other ways of finding out bloggers' possible sources. The most prominent among these was memory (76; 30.5%). The other ways through which readers learnt about bloggers' sources (coded together as "others" in the analysis) were the social media, other celebrity news media, and the internet in general. There was a myriad of responses because the respondents were requested to specify these sources. Despite knowing these sources, however, blog readers may not be familiar with them. Fiske thus (1987) submits that "there is no need for readers to be familiar with specific texts to read intertextually" (p. 108); all a reader needs is the awareness that an author alludes to other texts and a self-awareness that they can relate the text to their field of experience. But then readers who are aware of an author's possible source texts may wish to consult these other texts. To find out about this in the case of blog readers, the respondents were asked if they attempted to access these sources.

Table 4.10: Respondents' attempt at accessing bloggers' likely sources

Do you attempt to access these sources?			
	Yes	**No**	**Total**
Geek Blog	29 (11.6%)	16 (6.4%)	**45 (18.1%)**
Jarus Hub	43 (17.3%)	16 (6.4%)	**59 (23.7%)**
LIB	55 (22.1%)	90 (36.1%)	**145 (58.2%)**
Total	**127 (51.0%)**	**122 (49.0%)**	**249 (100%)**

There is not much difference between the number of respondents who attempted to access the bloggers' likely/possible sources and the number of those who did not. This means that blog readers may or may not choose to explore the sources that bloggers also explore despite the presence of encouraging hyperlinks (Landow, 2006). Nonetheless, those who attempted to access the blogs (127; 51.0%) were more than those who did not (122; 49.0%), however marginal the difference. We thus tried to find out their reasons for accessing bloggers' possible sources.

Table 4.11: Respondents' reasons for accessing bloggers' sources

	To better understand the posts on the blog	To confirm or disconfirm where the blogger claims to have got the information	Total
Geek Blog	21 (16.5%)	8 (6.3%)	**29 (22.8%)**
Jarus Hub	27 (21.3%)	16 (12.6%)	**43 (33.9%)**
LIB	30 (23.6%)	25 (19.7%)	**55 (43.3%)**
Total	**78 (61.4%)**	**49 (38.6%)**	**127 (100%)**

<div align="center">

If you answered "yes" above, why do you attempt to access the sources?

</div>

Most of the respondents (78; 61.4%) who affirmed visiting bloggers' possible sources submitted that they visited these sources in order to better understand the blog posts; the others (49; 38.6%) reported that they visited the sources in order to confirm or disconfirm the bloggers' sources. When a reader tries to gain a better understanding of a text by visiting other texts, they are essentially putting the author of the original text to death, displacing him/her as the sole source of meaning and ascribing this power to the text in connection with their own field of experience. In such a situation, the author becomes dead to the reader. Unlike the 49 (38.6%) respondents whose aim of visiting bloggers' source texts was to check the validity of the information relayed by the bloggers, the 78 (61.4%) respondents were more concerned with the process of meaning making independent of the bloggers' bias. They may get to check the validity or otherwise of the information in the process, but this comes second to the desire to read the information in their own way, to their own understanding, using their field of experience. This only goes to confirm Riffaterre's (1980) submission that in its most base form, intertextual reading demands a reader's awareness of the existence of the intertext in order for intertextuality to be made manifest.

Having an idea of what a text is about even before reading the text heightens the reader's expectation of the text. Such a reader looks forward to the points of emphasis and downplay within the text (compared with what one already knows), the points of connection and departure, as well as the new meaning that will be derived from the new text. Going by this, it is possible for a blog reader to have come across a blogger's source before even visiting the blog so that going back to the same source becomes a rereading. Blog readers are thus apt to approach blog posts with familiar stories with the expectation of whetting and soothing their appetite. When blog readers see beyond blog posts for processes of meaning making, the blog posts become nodes in a network of texts where the entry and exit points vary for individuals (Landow, 2006). Simultaneously, both the blogger and the blogger's source are decentered as the unitary origin of meaning since meaning is being sought laterally. The blogger and their source become dead to the reader who not only links up the two texts but also pieces them apart from one another. In the process of linking up the two texts, other possible texts come into the equation to form the hypertext as made possible by the availability of hyperlinks. The possibility of hyperlinks

becomes stronger when the source texts are online and can therefore harbour hyperlinks. A large number of the respondents noted that these sources which they attempted to visit were many times online sources.

Table 4.12: Respondents' report on location of bloggers' possible sources

	Online	Offline	Both	Total
Are the sources online or offline?				
Geek Blog	21 (16.5%)	0 (0%)	8 (6.3%)	**29 (22.8%)**
Jarus Hub	43 (33.9%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	**43 (33.9%)**
LIB	46 (36.2%)	3 (2.4%)	6 (4.7%)	**55 (43.3%)**
Total	**110 (86.6%)**	**3 (2.4%)**	**11.0%**	**127 (100%)**

More than half (110; 86.6%) of the 127 respondents who attempted to access the bloggers' sources noted that the sources were online. This is not surprising, given the fact that blogs themselves reside online. However, bloggers' sources may be easily identified but not easily accessed. We thus asked our respondents about the ease of accessibility of bloggers' possible sources.

Table 4.13: Respondents' report on ease of accessibility of bloggers' sources

	Yes	No	Total
Are the sources easy to access?			
Geek Blog	26 (20.5%)	3 (2.4%)	**29 (22.8%)**
Jarus Hub	39 (30.7%)	4 (3.1%)	**43 (33.9%)**
LIB	43 (33.9%)	12 (9.4%)	**55 (43.3%)**
Total	**108 (85.0%)**	**19 (15.0%)**	**127 (100%)**

Most of the blog posts studied provided links to their online sources and the origins of their offline sources. Correspondingly, when blog readers report that bloggers' sources can be easily accessed, it can be safely assumed that they are referring to the hyperlinks contained in blog posts since they also report that the sources are mostly online. The hyperlinks were identified by "hot texts" or "link anchors" such as brightly coloured letters and underlined words (Landow, 2006: 17) as a manner of embedding. Hyperlinks can also be represented by pictures or images. A total of 108 (85.0%) of the 127 respondents noted that bloggers' sources were easily accessible. Landow (2006) also notes the ease with which a reader can follow a link contained in the body of a text. Because the 127 blog readers showed an active engagement with intertextuality and not merely an awareness of it, we further tried to probe for their capacity to appreciate intertextuality. We asked about their reasons for appreciating bloggers' efforts at visiting various sources in order to create blog posts.

Table 4.14: Respondents' reasons for appreciating bloggers' intertextual efforts

	Why do you appreciate the posting of external materials on this blog?			
	It gives access to information that one may not get otherwise	It makes the blog more interesting	It makes the blogger work hard to satisfy his/her audience	Total
Geek Blog	17 (13.4%)	12 (9.4%)	0 (0%)	**29 (22.8%)**
Jarus Hub	28 (22.1%)	14 (11.0%)	1 (0.8%)	**43 (33.9%)**
LIB	29 (22.9%)	24 (18.9%)	2 (1.6%)	**55 (43.3%)**
Total	**74 (58.3%)**	**50 (39.4)**	**3 (2.4%)**	**127 (100%)**

For some of the respondents, the blogs were news and information sources. A total of 74 (58.3%) of them responded that they appreciated the bloggers' intertextual efforts because on the blogs they got information they may not get otherwise. Fifty (50; 39.4%) other respondents said they appreciated the bloggers' intertextual efforts because they made the blogs more interesting. Of course, intertextuality brings about variety which in turn creates the pleasurable intertextual reading experience pointed out by Sanders (2016). Three (3; 2.4%) respondents saw intertextual efforts as an avenue via which bloggers worked hard to satisfy their readers. By asking the respondents their reasons for appreciating bloggers' intertextual efforts, we note the merits and demerits of intertextuality on blogs as understood by blog readers. Whether it is giving information or entertaining, intertextuality represents bloggers' efforts towards satisfying their readers; whether or not blog readers are adequately satisfied is a subject for another research. For this research however, we have been able to establish blog readers' awareness of intertextuality in blogs. We now turn our attention to the relationship between intertextuality and plagiarism in the blogs.

4.4 The Interrelatedness of Intertextuality and Plagiarism in Blogs

It is necessary to reiterate that all instances of plagiarism are essentially manifestations of intertextuality since intertextuality is basically about the embeddedness of texts in one another. Plagiarism only presumes to dictate how "best" this embedding should take place, given that texts do not write themselves but are the products of people's permutations. The question of plagiarism thus arises when intellectual property or copyrighted material is used without appropriate attribution. As such, plagiarism is of particular interest to academics and the generality of media practitioners who are in the business of generating knowledge through rigorous thinking and research. When an academic writer consults a text, it is expected that they do this for purposes of extracting the writer's idea, digesting it and relaying it from their own fresh perspective, if need be, and then acknowledging the writer. It is not to merely rewrite the idea and then choose not to acknowledge the owner of the idea. For creative writers and cultural propagators, intertextuality serves the purpose of recycling and regenerating, without necessarily acknowledging the owner of the idea. In fact, for culture, an idea is never individually owned but communally owned and so citing the owner of an idea or a cultural unit is rather unusual to cultural curators.

Where intertextuality is a literary construct, plagiarism is more of an academic and copyright construct; therefore it is arguable whether the term should be applied to blogging, an activity that is not necessarily academic. However, the practicalities of plagiarism as a lack of intellectual courtesy may well be applicable to blogs, after all blogs also showcase contents that are the result of thinking, whether rigorous or not. In addition, as products of the era of literacy where intellectual property (IP) ownership, copyright and plagiarism thrives, blogs are naturally prone to plagiarism (Share, 2006). In spite of this, blogs still retain some attributes of orality due to their electronic nature so that applying the standards of plagiarism to them has to be done with caution. To this end, we take a careful look at the nature of textual interaction in blogs.

4.4.1 Textual Interaction in Blogs: Intertextuality or Plagiarism?

The real crime in plagiarism is the attempt to pass off another's work/idea as one's own, but this does not seem to be the case with many bloggers who are in the business of cultural propagation. Going by this, it would seem that the nature and contents of a blog are the major factors to be considered in checking for plagiarism on the blog. For instance, *Linda Ikeji's Blog* (*LIB*) is a filter blog and according to Blood (2000), filter blogs contain a lot of external links to other sites. The owners of such blogs "pre-surf" the web and collect articles to post on their blogs. As such, they thrive on large volume of content and "pithiness on the part of the writer" (p. 5) because of lack of space occasioned by the many contents they post. Since it is in the nature of filter blogs to always post materials from other sources, we submit that plagiarism on *LIB* can only be said to occur when sources are not referenced either through outright mentions or through links.

The links that bloggers post give rise to the concept of the hypertext as proposed by Landow (2006). The hypertext is a "text composed of blocks of words (or images) linked electronically by multiple paths, chains, or trails in an open-ended, perpetually unfinished textuality" (Landow, 2006: 2). The text takes on an attribute of infinity where the hyperlink—the connection among all the texts—is the tool with which one makes sense of this infinity. The hyperlink (hypertextual link) makes for non-linear reading, a situation whereby any of the linked words or images could be the entry or exit point for a potential reader and there is actually no fixed centre for the links. A reader thus determines which of

the paths is of value to him/her. For blogs where links are posted, a reader who veers off the path of the blog to pursue the link may find themselves on another website with other links that are quite unrelated to the blog where they first entered the hypertext. In essence, the hyperlinks presented on blogs are meant to serve the purpose of attribution because they are bloggers' ways of letting the reader know that the idea does not originate from them.

Plagiarism is broad, encompassing the use of both copyrighted and uncopyrighted works in a wrong manner as dictated by establishments such as the academia, the law and also the principle of ethics. For an analysis of the relationship between intertextuality and plagiarism in the blog posts, we consider the plagiarism categories identified by Turnitin and the copyright expert, having already discussed strategies of intertextuality. We then discuss textual interactions in blog posts using intertextual strategies as well as the plagiarism categories of Turnitin. Turnitin categorises cases of plagiarism into two: sources not cited and sources cited (but still plagiarized!)[45]. Under the category of "sources cited" there are five subcategories: the forgotten footnote, the misinformer, the too-perfect paraphrase, the resourceful citer, and the perfect crime. The "sources not cited" category has six sub-categories: the ghost writer, the photocopy, the potluck paper, the poor disguise, the labour of laziness, and the self-stealer. On her part, Barrister Ohwaguono, the copyright expert interviewed in the course of the research, noted that:

> Plagiarism in printed works is not necessarily different from that in an online environment. Works, whether artistic, literary, musical are capable of being plagiarized regardless of the form. The most important thing is that what has been plagiarized is in a fixed medium of expression. However, there are unique terms used to describe plagiarism common in blogs and they are:
> i) Content scraping: This is the act of completely copying and pasting the contents of a website (e.g. an article, report) into another website without giving credit to the original owner or crediting the source.
> ii) Spun Content: This is the act of taking an article off another website, changing about half of the words or more and then passing off the article as your own.

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[45] Turnitin.com

iii) Unintentional plagiarism: This is where a blogger puts a quote in an article and fails to provide appropriate attribution to the quote, for instance, providing a link to the source of the quote.[46]

The researcher tried to look at occasions for each of the subcategories identified by Turnitin and the copyright expert in the blogs under study. While the Turnitin subcategories cater for both online and offline situations, the types of plagiarism identified by the copyright expert are applicable only to the virtual context of blogs. This is not to say, however, that there are no points of overlap in the various categories. Content scraping, as identified by the expert could also pass for Turnitin's subcategories of photocopy and ghost writer; while spun content could pass for the poor disguise.

It is interesting to note, however, that while Turnitin (and arguably the generality of plagiarism apologetics) do not allow for unintended plagiarism, the expert draws our attention to the fact that there can indeed be situations where plagiarism is not intended in the online environment, even though it manifests. This speaks to the secondarily oral nature of computer-mediated communication as posited by Ong (1982). He reminds us that by nature words are oral and so they are dead on arrival, essentially going out of existence as they are coming into existence. Capturing words in writing both spatially and electronically is what freezes them, but electronic folks seem to accommodate the ephemeral nature of words still, which could be an explanation for the unintentional plagiarism category mentioned by the expert. It seems to suggest that folks in an online environment are willing to forgive a speaker who blatantly uses another's words (he draws attention to this himself with the quotation marks) but then forgets to credit his source. The community of communicators are able to overlook this because in the first place words are communally owned and expressions do not belong to anyone in particular. And it should count for something that a speaker already alerts his audience to the fact that his words are borrowed. In contrast, imagine the writer of a book (which essentially belongs in the print and manuscript culture) forgetting to mention the source of a quote. The book will not be published until he does the needful.

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[46] Barrister Joan Ohwaguono, Key Informant Interview, 30 May, 2018 (e-mail)

The Nigerian Copyright Act does not make provision for the online environment. Consequently, it is difficult to apply the principle of copyright, beyond the principle of plagiarism, to blog posts. As Barrister Ohwaguono noted, "there is currently no provision in the Copyright Act on online plagiarism as the Act does not envisage new media and therefore has no clear provision on plagiarism on the internet."[47] The fact that intellectual property and copyright ownership are not as strict online (at least in the Nigerian environment) as they are offline shows that spatial representation of words on pages (as basically represented by books)—the culture which brought about the phenomenon of IP ownership—is the practice that has a stronger link to copyright and IP protection. Meanwhile,

> Plagiarism has been mostly applied in literary works especially in academia and journalism. The reason for this is not far-fetched as academics and journalists tend to make use of literary works such as articles, essays, reports, speeches etc. Plagiarism should be distinguished from copyright infringement. The former is the wrongful appropriation of another's work without giving credit and passing it off as your own irrespective of whether the work is a subject matter of copyright. The latter, on the other hand, is the use of a work, the subject matter of copyright, without the consent of the copyright holder.[48]

The issue of copyright thus comes into our discussion in an ancillary manner because it talks about work ownership, albeit in the legal sense, and also because printed works are usually copyrighted and bloggers' sources are not limited to the online environment. Similarly, domains on the internet are also often copyrighted. Expectedly then, the availability of Creative Commons has resulted in "a vast and growing digital commons" (creativecommons.org/licenses/) where people make their works, either printed or not, available to other users on lenient conditions. Also, "to varying degrees many cultures and subcultures, even in a *high-technology ambiance*, preserve much of the mind-set" of orality (Ong, 1982:11; emphasis added), perpetuating the feel of and actual communal ownership of works. The internet, of course, is high technology and its ambience is felt on the blog where many works cited and used by bloggers are not copyrighted. The Nigerian

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[47] Barrister Joan Ohwaguono, Key Informant Interview, 30 May, 2018 (e-mail)
[48] Barrister Joan Ohwaguono, Key Informant Interview, 30 May, 2018 (e-mail)

Copyright Act may not make provisions for the online environment, but bloggers have to beware of the provisions of the Cybercrime Act 2015, which prohibits the sending of messages that are "false, for the purpose of causing annoyance, inconvenience, danger, obstruction, insult, injury, criminal intimidation, enmity, hatred, ill will or needless anxiety to another…" Anyone who does this "is liable on conviction to a fine of not more than N7m or imprisonment for a term of not more than 3 years or to both such fine and imprisonment..." (Section 24)[49]. Bloggers need not be the authors or creators of such messages, but once they engage in posting/publishing them, they become liable. Similarly, since a limitless range of electronic evidence is admissible in legal proceedings (Omolaye-Ajileye, 2016), a case can be made for electronic intellectual works used indiscriminately. To be sure, many people are neither authors nor co-authors but members of a community who have equal access to a text. In much the same way, some materials on the internet are not traceable to any particular source as their sole owner or creator, even though users and readers may get the impression that they are the product of some particular, vague entity (Schultze and Bytwerk, 2012). Bearing all of this in mind, we now discuss textual interactions in the blog posts in the light of intertextuality and plagiarism.

4.4.1.1 The Case of LIB

Blog contents are prone to be suspected of plagiarism when they do not explicitly relay the personal experience/musings of the writer or when a writer does not provide attribution for them. Between October 2016 and March 2017, *LIB* contained posts that were either implicitly or explicitly attributed to other (online/offline) sources. Many times, social network sites (SNSs) like Facebook, Instagram and Twitter were mentioned as the sources and at other times websites such as those belonging to media houses (e.g. *The Punch*, *The Guardian*, *ThisDay*, *MediaTakeOut* etc.) were referenced. Similarly, it also had contents that were not at all referenced. To consider the limits of intertextuality vis-à-vis plagiarism on the blog, we look at all three categories of contents: those that were implicitly referenced, those that were explicitly referenced and those that were not referenced at all either by outright mention or through hyperlinks and try to match them up with the

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[49] Cybercrime (Prohibition, Prevention etc.) Act 2015
https://www.cert.gov.ng/file/docs/CyberCrime__Prohibition_Prevention_etc__Act__2015.pdf

Turnitin plagiarism subcategories and the plagiarism categories identified by Barrister Ohwaguono. Let us consider the post below.

> **Photos: Woman nearly lynched in Onitsha for physically abusing her housemaid in public**
> The woman pictured carrying a child was nearly lynched by market women at Kano street in Onitsha, for physically abusing her housemaid in public. It was also gathered that she had stopped the victim from going to school. According to Martins Sammie, who posted the photos on Facebook:
> "If not for the prompt intervention of the White House Security; the woman pictured would have been lynched by the Market Women of Kano Street Onitsha for abusing her maid in the open. I learnt she stopped the maid's schooling and abuses her at will."[50]

The post also contains pictures from the said incident, the narrative of which the blogger explicitly credits to a Facebook user, Martins Sammie. There is a quote from the Facebook page of the narrator, but the quote is first summarised by the blogger. As such, the two paragraphs of the blog post say exactly the same thing but in different words. Although this idea is credited to a source, by the standards of Turnitin, it is a case a "resourceful citer"—one who "properly cites all sources, paraphrasing and using quotations appropriately. The catch? The paper contains almost no original work!"[51] As can be seen, the post contains virtually no original thought, but this is not surprising since the blogger did not witness the situation herself. For the post to contain anything original, then the blogger would need to relate her own interpretation of the report, recall something similar she witnessed or heard about, cite statistics on such situations as given by the authorities etc. She does none of these and so Turnitin would call her a resourceful citer for this. If the post above is resourcefully cited from just one source, then the following one is a combination of at least two sources as shown in the post:

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[50] LIB 2 October, 2016
[51] Turnitin.com

Photos: He pulls cars with his teeth, eats bottles and can't be brought down by 15 men, meet 77-year-old Akwa Ibom Superman

This Akwa Ibom man said to be 77 years old performs amazing feats such as pulling a car with his teeth and eating bottles.

Super Sampson, The World Sampson or Super Dragon, as he is called is so strong that he cannot be pulled down by 15 men. Check out photos from his show held on 29th December, 2016 at his hometown; Ifjukot Eyo, Nsit Ubium L.G.A.

"Today I had the rare privilege to take this shot with The World Sampson Super Dragon who had gone far across the globe performing shows in major continent including Europe, Asia and England to mention but few, He has been in the system since 1960 -2000 and he is still active in service" Owoh Etukudo, who shared the photos wrote on Facebook.

"World Sampson was/is still a personality, an Icon that is sort [*sic*] after wherever and whenever the name is mention, an indigene of Ikot Eyo in Nsit Ubium L.G.A, Aks.

"#World_Sampson was one among the highly placed icon like Tizan Esshiet, a world heavy weight boxing champion, #The_Mandators; a renounced reggae musician that made the list in the then 60's, 70's, 80's, 90's till late 2000's in the social atmosphere."[52]

The story is a combination of both the account of Owoh Etukudo and the content on a blog called Sitippe. A hyperlink of the blog, in the form of a screen image, appears in the story:

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[52] LIB 2 January, 2017

Plate 4.8: Hyperlink screenshot on *LIB*[53]

The original words of the two sources are quoted (or shown) and so we can be certain that the blogger resourcefully cites them by Turnitin standards because it is evident that the story as it appears on *LIB* has no original words of the blogger's. The two posts can also be categorised as cases of photocopy because the blogger apparently copied "significant portions of text straight from a single source, without alteration", even though she cites her sources. The combination of the two sources which portray different writing styles makes for a case of pastiche. As the apparent intertextual strategy employed in the blog post, pastiche makes the coming together of the two different sources a blending of similar ideas. Another example of a photocopy post is one sourced from the *Daily Mail*. Because the source of this content is mentioned, it would not qualify as content scraping even though the totality of the content is from the source. The blogger credits *Daily Mail* as the source of this narrative, meaning that she lifted it bodily from *Daily Mail* and has not added her own words or interpretation of the events described to the report. However, this kind of plagiarism is indeed one of photocopy, by Turnitin standards, because the blogger has simply created an exact copy of a *Daily Mail* post on her blog.

The practice of publishing the exact copy of a publication, particularly a press release, is not unusual, even in mainstream journalism. Observing this trend, Davies (2008) concludes that there are "journalists who are no longer out gathering news but who are reduced instead to passive processors of whatever material comes their way, churning out stories whether real event or PR artifice, important or trivial, true or false" (p. 25). The extent to which this submission is applicable to filter bloggers is uncertain because bloggers, regardless of how much their activities might resemble journalism, do not practice mainstream journalism. Besides, filter bloggers do not wait for "whatever material comes their way"; rather they go in search of the materials, albeit majorly online. However, because they publish stories just like other journalists, there is the tendency to expect of them the standards expected of mainstream journalists.

For mainstream journalists, Davies (2008), whose research was conducted in the UK, notes that the factors that cause them to recycle news are (i) journalists have become news processors instead of generators; (ii) market demands force smaller workforces to produce more output; (iii) journalists have become less wary of PR copy; and (iv) editorial

independence in UK newsrooms has decreased. For filter bloggers, they are actually news processors and not quite newsgatherers; the virtual environment in which they carry out their trade already presupposes a small workforce, with computers doing most of the work (of web surfing and information gathering); PR copies are not a bad idea for filter blogs because they are just one of the many sources of contents; it remains to be researched what exactly the editorial policy of filter blogs in general is (For *LIB*, however, the blog self-reportedly concerns itself with "news, events, entertainment, lifestyle, fashion, beauty, inspiration, and yes… gossip!"). Sometimes blog posts of press releases fall under the subcategory of photocopy; at other times they are a "poor disguise", retaining the essential contents of their sources. There was a paraphrased press release on *LIB* which was sourced from the website of the American Academy of Arts.[54] It is noted in this blog post that the press release was accessed via the website. This tells of an active search for blog-worthy material. Unlike the post sourced from *Daily Mail*, in this post the blogger's words are noticeable. From her introduction of Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie as an "award winning Nigerian author", to her observation of Wole Soyinka being the first Nigerian to receive the honour (in 1986), the reader is provided with a background against which they can pin the story and make better sense of it. Nevertheless, the post still contains considerable chunks of text from the source website. This qualifies it as a poor disguise. In contrast, two of the blog posts in October 2016 feature the totality of two press releases. One is in word format while the other is a picture of the press release. According to Barrister Ohwaguono, the post of 1 October, 2016 titled "'Largely peaceful, widespread inducement and vote buying' Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room assesses Edo state election" would have qualified to be called content scraping, but for the fact that the blogger duly credits her source—The Nigerian Civil Society Situation Room.

Coming from another angle, a post of 2 October, 2016 titled "Kannywood actress Rahama Sadau, expelled from Hausa film industry for 'immoral' appearance in a romantic music video" contains a picture of the press release issued by the Motion Pictures Practitioners Association of Nigeria (MOPPAN). It is not clear how to categorize this post with regard to plagiarism because the source text has been transformed and appropriated to take a new

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[54] Appendix 12

form; however it is a case of adaptation with regard to intertextuality. Adaptation also took place in the word-for-word transcription of a sponsored post which appeared on 1 October, 2016. The post is a kind of advert for a webinar on cryptocurrency. It contains the video of a talking head but all that the talking head says (save a few words) is what makes up the post. This could be a case of self-stealing as identified by Turnitin, because the words in the blog post are the same words in the video whose link appears in the post. However, it is not certain if the blogger should be accused of plagiarism in this case because certain facts are not clear: 1.) It is not apparent whether the post sponsor sent in the words or if the blogger transcribed from the video discretionally; 2.) If the sponsor sent in the words then the sponsor did the self-stealing but we may not be able to refer to this case as plagiarism because the sponsor is not the publisher of the post; 3.) If the blogger transcribed from the video then it is not a case of self-stealing but a kind of photocopy. Another post is discussed below:

> **Photos: Suspected armed cultist narrowly escapes lynching in Owerri**
> An armed man said to belong to a cult group in Owerri, Imo State, narrowly escaped lynching Tuesday by an angry mob at Alvan Guest House, Amakohia, Owerri. It was gathered that six alleged armed cultists stormed BET NAIJA house which was also a sports viewing center, and made away with two laptops. They also attacked a young man, who tried to stop them.
> According to Ifeanyi Njoku, the suspects hit the victim's head with a gun before fleeing.
> However, one of them was caught and was nearly burnt to death, but for the intervention of Civil Defense officials and armed policemen, who arrived the scene and took the suspect away.[55]

Like the posts featured before it, the above post does not appear to contain any original thoughts from the blogger, not in the form of her interpretation or a recollection of something similar. One problem with the post is that the reader does not even know who Ifeanyi Njoku is, neither do we know how exactly the blogger got this story from the person: via a social media platform, by word of mouth, or through a letter sent in by the said person? Unlike the other posts, its source is not quite clear—the story is attributed to a

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[55] LIB, 1 March, 2017

source but the source is not verifiable. For all a reader knows, Ifeanyi Njoku might be a friend of the blogger's, a social media user, or even a random person relating a story to friends when the blogger happens to pass by. What matters is that the story was of interest to the blogger who then adjudged it to be of interest to her readers. This passes for a case of the Turnitin category of "The Misinformer", the writer who "provides inaccurate information regarding the sources, making it impossible to find them", because the information given about this source is not verifiable. The post is possibly an adaptation from an audio message or video recording as is usually the case with eye witness reports. The post about a gay Nigerian who shares his story is a summary of a video, the link to which was posted. The words are not transcribed from the video; rather they capture what the talking head in the video says in a direct reference to the text (Hodsdon-Champeon, 2010). The post has a photo and a link to a video. It contains an implicit mention of the source of the content: "the first video of their [Brooklyn Community Pride Centre] new series", and then an explicit link to the source, i.e. the actual video recording. The post does not appear to have any form of plagiarism, only a direct intertextual reference to the source text. [56]

A similar case is when a source is fudgy so that proving or disproving plagiarism becomes almost impossible. *LIB* once posted a story about the release of CBN governor, Godwin Emefiele's wife, who had erstwhile been kidnapped.

> **Kidnappers release wife of CBN governor, Godwin Emefiele**
> Margaret Emefiele, the wife of CBN governor, Godwin Emefiele, has been released. Margaret who was abducted by heavy gunmen on Thursday along the Benin Agbor expressway, was released today at about 1am. According to unconfirmed reports, a ransom was paid for her release but the police has not confirmed this. [57]

The above post stresses that the story was from unconfirmed reports and that the police were yet to confirm the new development. Going by this submission, the source text is not traceable and so plagiarism is not confirmable. Hodsdon-Champeon (2010) notes that the

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[56] 'Photo/Video: Gay Nigerian man shares his story: "It was difficult for me to maintain my apartment"' LIB, 2 October, 2016
[57] LIB, 1 October, 2016

online environment is home to non-existing texts too, i.e. "hypothetical texts (texts which have never been written or said, but which the speaker refers to as though they had)" (p. 35), just like tabloid journalists and paparazzi refer to fictitious sources. Although the release of Mrs Emefiele was later confirmed, it is possible for reports like this to emanate from the blogger herself so that there will be no source to which the "reports" can be linked. It is similar to a 3 November, 2016 post where Pope Francis is reported to have told a journalist in an interview on board his papal plane that women would never be Catholic priests. The name of the journalist is not mentioned, the media house the said journalist worked for is not mentioned, neither is the source of the story mentioned in any way. There is no plagiarism explanation for this kind of textual referencing where there is a vague source. There was also a post that centered around pictures but that was not referenced. It was about an American gospel musician and his weight loss efforts. The post read,

> **Reuben Studdard has gained back all the weight he lost in 2014**
> In 2014, American Idol winner, Reuben Studdard lost a ton of weight - more than 100pounds - when he participated in the hit show 'Biggest Loser'. (left). Right is what he looks like these days. He's gained back the weight...[58]

For all a reader knows, the pictures may not have been taken at the time the post says they were taken. However, this cannot be confirmed since we do not even know where the story and the pictures originated from. There was a similar post about the usefulness and timeliness of the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC).[59] This post may have been written by Linda Ikeji herself, one of her staff writers, or a blog reader. The writer is not stated and so it has no apparent source. As the author whom the reader can immediately and readily identify, this blogger does not necessarily retain the power of meaning and interpretation contained in these possibly plagiarised blog posts. However, the blog reader cannot deny her presence as well, particularly because the posts are not attributed and there are no links to external sources.

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[58] LIB 2 January, 2017
[59] Appendix 18

LIB is hosted on the Google Blogger platform and it was once accused of plagiarism and copyright infringement which led to it being shut down by Google from 8 to 10 October, 2014. Taiwo Kola-Ogunlade, the Google communication and public affairs manager for Anglophone West Africa, stressed Google's strict stance on issues of copyright[60]. However, Linda Ikeji was of the opinion that the popularity of her blog was the reason people were accusing her of plagiarism. She asked rhetorically, "Which website in the world doesn't? [plagiarise]"[61] and reiterated that she always acknowledged her sources. However, her accusers who invoked the Digital Millennium Copyright Act (DMCA) in reporting her to Google claimed that she used materials from their website without due permission[62]. The DMCA is a copyright law of the USA that criminalizes the use and/or production of technology and services for circumventing the standards of copyright use and infringing on copyright. According to Aye Dee, one of her accusers who was based in the USA, some of the offending materials had been removed from *LIB* by Google even before the eventual shutdown[63]. It is instructive, however, that regardless of the nature of its crime, whether plagiarism or copyright infringement, it was just a matter of days before the *LIB* was back online.

Yambo Ouologuem was accused of plagiarism in his award-winning novel, *Bound to Violence* (1968, 1971). The book was originally published in French but Ouologuem was accused of plagiarising a section of Graham Greene's *It's a Battle Field* (1934) in its English translation. Graham Greene pressed copyright infringement charges and won. However, *Bound to Violence* later got to be published again 30 years after it went out of circulation following the plagiarism scandal (Hughes, 2011). In Hughes' (2011) estimation, "readers are interested in the work as a whole, not whether this bit comes from here and that bit from there" (p. 387). Similarly, the "Introduction" by Christopher Wise in the new edition of the novel does not mention which parts of the book brought on the accusations of plagiarism, even though it touches on the plagiarism issue, possibly because there are recognisable allusions to a great many texts in the work. Understandably, the span

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[60] "Google explains why it shut down *Linda Ikeji's Blog*" DailyPost, 9 October, 2014
[61] "Google shuts down *Linda Ikeji's Blog*" The Cable, 8 October, 2014
[62] "Why Google shut down Linda Ikeji blog" Premium Times, 9 October, 2014
[63] "Why we shutdown *Linda Ikeji's Blog*, Google Explains" www.nigerianmonitor.com Accessed 25 June, 2019

of 30 years in the world of book publishing can bring about this respite, especially considering that a number of critics rose up in Ouologuem's defence. For instance, Erickson (1979) noted that "the fact remains that [the novel's materials and composition] were combined by Ouologuem into a narrative structure that did not exist prior to its combination and one that succeeded powerfully" (p. 229); and Miller (1983) averred that the novel is "an assault on European assumptions about writing and creating" where individual authorship and ownership of works is the norm (p. 64). Miller's reference to "European assumptions about writing and creating" is his way of drawing attention to individual ownership of works being a modern, largely European development anchored on literacy.

In contrast to the Ouologuem case, when Rotimi Babatunde was accused of plagiarising in his short story, *Bombay's Republic,* the work did not go out of circulation because it was not banned like Ouologuem's book. For one, the matter never made it to the courts as his accuser, Ahmed Maiwada, was not the author of *Burma Boy* (2007), the book he was alleged to have plagiarised. *Burma Boy* was written by Biyi Bandele. Although *Bombay's Republic* was published in 2011 in Lagos (*Mirabilia Review* Vol. 3.9)[64], there are evidence that it had been written as early as 2005 and so could not have plagiarised a 2008 publication.[65] In addition too, critics rose up in Babatunde's defence[66]; but most instructive is that the work won the 13th Caine Prize for African Writing in 2012. To be sure, the Caine judges would have made certain that the work was a worthy original before announcing it as winner. Babatunde thought his accuser had a poverty of the mind and cautioned people against calling him (Maiwada) a literary critic considering that his accusation was baseless and only exposed him as "an attention-hungry hustler".[67]

Back to the *LIB* case, possibly too, as was the case with Ouologuem, *LIB* still published the affected materials in another manner—and within a short time span, considering that it is a blog—without mentioning that they were the ones that brought on the accusation and her readers were also not very much concerned about this. Also, because *LIB* is a blog and by

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[64] https://www.africabookclub.com/tag/bombays-republic/
[65] https://www.africanwriter.com/rotimi-babatundes-bombays-republic-of-similitude-and-verisimilitude/
https://blacklooks.org/2012/05/on-maiwadas-foray-in-plagiarism/
[66] https://nigerianstalk.org/2012/08/11/conversation-with-rotimi-babatunde/
[67] https://nigerianstalk.org/2012/08/11/conversation-with-rotimi-babatunde/

nature publishes frequently and also publishes several texts in one as a kind of megatext, it is possible to see why it was back in business within a matter of days. It would serve no purpose for a blog which publishes tens of text in a day to be shut down (possibly for years) for plagiarising in one of its numerous texts, especially when the offending text has been taken off the blog. Unfortunately, the offending part of Ouologuem's book could not be taken out as easily, hence the 30-year gap. Nonetheless, the accusation of plagiarism levelled against *LIB* reminds us that as much as the internet may have an oral, communal nature where texts are readily available and easily copied, the fact remains that literacy is now more prevalent than ever and it continues to colour how we regard ownership of works.

4.4.1.2 The Cases of Geek Blog *and* Jarus Hub

In cases where bloggers post contents from other verified sources without attributing the sources or creating links to them, then plagiarism can be said to have taken place. Ordinarily, this situation would be most witnessed in knowledge blogs like *Jarus Hub* and *Geek Blog*. By nature, such blogs are expected to create and post original contents arising from observation, original thinking and research, no matter how small scale the research may be, because they are knowledge generators and knowledge is generated via these three processes. For instance, the unveiling and unboxing of new devices that Geek features regularly can be seen as some mini research carried out by the blogger in order to advise his readers about a device. The same applies to software and apps posts where he talks about the advantages and disadvantages of the software and apps. He always uses the first person singular when narrating the use of the devices, software and apps so that the reader is convinced that he is talking from experience and so featuring an authentic post. The *Geek Blog* posts contain links for backing up their claims and not for attributing the texts. For *Jarus Hub*, all the posts that appeared within the study period are attributed to individuals and/or online sources, with links to back up the attributions.

In the *Geek Blog* posts studied, the blog does not feature many external sources but simulation abounds in the posts. For every post on how to go about some technicality or familiarise oneself with a gadget, an app or software, the blogger posts pictures and screen shots and also offers step by step guides. From his words, a reader understands that Geek is

relaying his personal experience of familiarising himself with the software or gadget and in the process helping others to do same. In a particular post, the blogger recalls that he reinstalled Pokemon Go just to cheat the game.[68] He puts up pictures as well as screenshots of his activities of playing the game. In the accompanying write-up, he provides links to the game and to an earlier post of when he uninstalled it. He also gives details of how to go about playing the game even though it is not yet supported in Nigeria. In another post,[69] *Geek Blog* advises parents on "How to Safely Let Your Kid Use Your iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch". He then proceeds to guide his reader on how to go about locking their devices without blocking access to "an educational app". This is accompanied with appropriate and explanatory pictures and screenshots. The blogger does a similar thing with the post on "How NOT To Let Facebook Announce Your Birthday To Friends", which appeared on 15 March, 2017. Some other Geek posts that have been mentioned so far in this study also follow this pattern: a relay of the blogger's own experience and encouraging words on how the reader can have the same experience. Such posts include the reviews of Infinix Note 3 and Tecno Phantom 6 Plus as well as how to get a Free WinX DVD Copy Pro Licence. In much of these posts where he simulates for his reader, he provides necessary links to external sites as well as links to previous posts on the blog.

By Turnitin standards, *Geek Blog* does some self-stealing in some of its simulations, which is the intralooping form of intertextuality. Particularly in cases of phone reviews, pictures used in previous posts on quick reviews are also used in full reviews, but with new ones added as needed. For instance, in the full review of the Infinix Zero 4 Plus which appeared on 10 December, 2016, the post comprises all the pictures from the quick review of the same device. The quick review appeared on 19 November, 2016. Rather than take a new set of pictures to depict particular attributes of the same device, the blogger opts to use the old pictures which are good enough for relaying the same message. He thus borrows generously from his previous work (i.e. quick review) and simulates with both old and new pictures for his current work (i.e. full review). In his post about Black Friday, Geek mentions that "social media reactions continue to trail" the Black Friday event of that year (the post appeared on 26 November, 2016). He then posts individuals' tweets with each

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[68] Appendix 13
[69] Appendix 14

person's Twitter handle boldly displayed as harvested from source. In this case he appropriates the texts of the tweets in a direct intertextual manner and makes comments that apply to them all as an aggregate. There is no plagiarism here since the tweets are adequately referenced.

Jarus Hub featured many posts from other platforms and the blogger often did not comment on the posts so that their original forms remained totally unaltered. These posts were written by different writers whose names and organizational affiliation often appeared alongside their write-ups. Sometimes the pictures of the writers accompanied the blog posts and at other times they did not, but the source websites were always explicitly stated (Jumia Travel and Jumia Market featured often in this wise). In the post on tips for running a business,[70] Jumia Travel is mentioned right from the beginning as the source of the write-up and the name also links to the site. The post about smartphones and productivity was copied from the Jumia Travel website as indicated in the write-up. This detail is explicitly stated as the opening paragraph informs the reader that "Jumia Travel urges you to read on".[71] The name of the writer of this post is not indicated but in the post on making the most of time at the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) camp, both the writer of the post and the source website are mentioned. For the posts as full-fledged texts in their own right, there is neither plagiarism nor ready-made intertextual explanation for them; at best they can be referred to as cases of copy and paste. However, as part of the larger text of the blog as a whole, they would make for pastiche and there would be no indication of plagiarism since they are direct quotes with the requisite details of their sources.

Another regular practice with *Jarus Hub* also was that links were always inserted in the blog posts. Some of the links were to external sites while the others were for previous blog posts, in an intralooping manner. The word "resume", appears in the post about PMP[72] a couple of times and it is actually a link to another post on the blog which is about CV writing. The same thing applies to the word "interview" which is a link to a post on interview coaching which earlier appeared on the blog. As well, links to the original

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[70] Appendix 16
[71] Appendix 17
[72] Appendix 15

writer's (Hasibbudin Ahmed's) own blog are also contained in the post. The links appear as "course in project management" and "learningnaukri.com". There is also a link to his LinkedIn account. Similarly, in the post on business tips, "Jobs" is a link to HotProForum, *Jarus Hub*'s discussion forum.

The interactions among texts—i.e. intertextuality—speak to the nature of cultural life because texts are abstracted and conceptual representations of culture. Where such interactions are regulated by IP and copyright laws, there is need to sound a reminder as regards the essence of these relations. As extensions of intertextuality and plagiarism then, intellectual property and copyright issues have come to take on so much importance that the United Nations saw it fit to make pronouncements on how they can and should be applied to cultural life. The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESR) represents the UN's pronouncement on the matter.

4.4.2   Intellectual Property, Copyright and the Right to Take Part in Cultural Life

It used to be that even with article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights mentioning it, States found it hard to define what the noun "cultural rights" mean, so that promoting and enforcing cultural rights was problematic for them. With article 15(1) of the United Nations International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural (ICESCR) rights later providing legal binding for them, however, their meaning is becoming clearer. (Nigeria is a party to the Covenant, having ratified it in July 1993.) The article, which was adopted by the UN General Assembly in 1966, and which came into force in 1976, stresses that "State parties recognise the right of everyone… to take part in cultural life…", because states are agreed on the fact that culture is an important aspect of human life which needs to be protected (Donders, 2008). "Everyone" means people from all walks of life: the rich and the poor, the educated and the uneducated, the rural dwellers and the urban dwellers, the professional and the amateur, the old and the young, people of every gender label/identification and in essence the generality of the human race. All of these categories of people have the right to consume, contribute to and engage in science and culture anywhere they may be in the world so long as they have the opportunity. The opportunity is always available as human societies and communities exist everywhere there are humans, both online and offline. With regard to the essence of culture and the environment

in which it may be experienced, Point 13 of the General Comment (GC) section of the Covenant states that among other things, culture consists in

> ways of life, language, oral and written literature, music and song, non-verbal communication, religion or belief systems, rites and ceremonies, sport and games, methods of production or technology, natural and man-made environments, food, clothing and shelter and the arts, customs and traditions through which individuals, groups of individuals and communities express their humanity and the meaning they give to their existence, and build their world view representing their encounter with the external forces affecting their lives…. culture shapes and mirrors the values, well-being and the economic, social and political life of individuals, groups of individuals and communities.[73]

As noted above, people give meaning to their experience as individuals and as groups, thereby interpreting and representing their encounter with the external forces affecting their lives. The encounters that individuals and groups have with external forces contribute to their worldview, thereby shaping the meaning they give to existence itself and the ways it might be experienced in the natural and the man-made environments. The natural environment include ethnic groups, geographic locations, water bodies, land masses etc.; while man-made locations include physical social gatherings such as the school and other associations as well as non-physical locations like the internet, where blogs are domiciled. Culture thus encompasses the life essence of people; hence the United Nations' recognition of the right to cultural life as a fundamental human right. This right belongs to individuals (e.g. bloggers, blog readers) and communities (e.g. blogging community comprising bloggers and blog readers). The avenues for participating in cultural life include

> folklore, scientific journals, how-to books, and Wikipedia; storytelling, Haiku, detective novels, and blogs…. folk song, gamelan, the Beatles, and mp3s; Ndebele house painting, Pablo Picasso, scrap-booking, and digital photography. Cultural life includes ritual performance and kabuki theatre; Bollywood and YouTube. Twenty years from now, it will include new media and genres not yet imagined (Shaver and Sganga, 2009: 644).

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[73] United Nations Economic and Social Council Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights Forty-third session https://www2.ohchr.org>english>bodies>cescr>docs>E_C_12_GC_21. Accessed 18 September, 2019

To reflect our cultural heritage in Nigeria, we may as well add *gelede* dance, *egungun* festival, *atilogwu* dance, *argungu* fishing festival etc. to the list compiled by Shaver and Sganga above. The scholars rightly note that blogs (and, by extension, blogging) are also avenues via which people can take part in cultural life. The right to take part in cultural life, as stated by the Covenant, is accompanied by two other rights: the right to enjoy the benefits of scientific progress and its applications; and the right to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which a person is the author. The application of scientific progress manifests in technology, the science-based, improved and more effective method of getting things done. In technology, science and culture give voice to one another to showcase the triumph of the human mental capacity. The importance of blogs to Shaver and Sganga's list thus consists in their nature as new media and their global appeal. In blogs, as in most other SNSs, we find a fusion of science and culture: science brings about the technology that created them while culture ensures their sustainability and viability.

Ferri (2014), cited in Campagna (2017), interprets cultural rights as identity rights "to access to the references that make possible, for each person, to build and express his/her own identity […] and of being recognized in his/her dignity" (p. 173). The right to take part in cultural life manifests in participation and contribution, or as Shaver and Sganga (2009) put it, it is the right "to access, enjoy, engage with and extend the cultural inheritance; to enact, wear, perform, produce, apply, translate, modify, extend and remix; to manifest, share, reinterpret, critique, combine and transform" (p. 646). The right to cultural life also suggests that people be encouraged and equipped to participate in culture. Bloggers thus exercise this right in their engagement with other people's text through the instrumentality of intertextuality. They access, enjoy and extend the cultural inheritance inherent in these texts, enacting, applying, translating, modifying, remixing, sharing, reinterpreting, critiquing, combining and transforming them for their own benefit as well as the benefit of their readers. In doing all of this, they upend the tyrannical nature of "ordinary culture" of centring the meaning and essence of a work on "an author, his person, his life, his tastes, his passion" (Barthes, 1977: 143), and rather expose texts and their readers to many other possibilities of meaning making. By engaging in their business of propagating popular culture, they do not just exercise their right to take part in cultural

life; they also aid their readers to do same. Indeed, many blog readers identify with blogs and bloggers because of the idea they stand for which more or less reflects their own (blog readers') inner person. Social media users in general have been found to define themselves by their use of social media platforms and what other users of the platform think of them based on their typed self (Sundén, 2003). Blogs thus dignify blog readers' personhood as suggested by Ferri (2014), cited in Campagna (2017). Therefore, Campagna's (2017) observation of Ferri's (2014) definition of cultural rights as identity rights aptly captures this dynamic, after all the right to dignity, even if not explicitly stated in the UDHR, is surely just as important as the right to life. An undignified existence is a lifeless one.

The third right in the Covenant speaks in effect to the question of intellectual property, that is the right to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production of which a person is the author. The creator of a scientific, literary or artistic production has the right to benefit from the moral and material interests that result from his production. The moral interest is the recognition of his/her efforts and acknowledgement of same and material interest is the gain, usually monetary, accruing from the said efforts. This third right applies to creators and producers in the form of IP right; while the other two apply to all humans.

With the entrenchment of literacy and the resultant proliferation of knowledge, it becomes necessary to distinguish between producers of knowledge and consumers of knowledge. As such, literacy, which has brought about segregation in the generation and dissemination of knowledge, has also brought about the attribution of creative works to individuals. The pristine oral society was not structured this way, and so its successor, the secondary oral society of electronic communication, appears to be taking us back to this state where the concept of individual ownership of works can be easily ignored. Although in the pristine oral society no one laid claim to any work as every work was already communally owned, the closest that the electronic society has brought us to such a scenario is the ease with which authorship can be shared. This is due to the fact that the electronic world also easily bestows a sense of the communal and an ease of camaraderie. As much as people do not see one another physically on the internet, this protection of identity ironically makes it easy for them to relate with one another.

Expectedly then, the pristine oral society had no need to verbally spell it out that everyone had the right to take part in cultural life. Cultural life, the lifeblood of any community of humans, be they online or offline, in the primary oral society or a secondarily oral society, should ideally be participated in by everyone. Since culture is an aggregate of the way of life of a people and elements of culture are co-created by the people, then everyone should have access to them. However, it is understandable that the nature of the post-industrial and postmodern human society is that individuals should be recognised and duly compensated for their contribution to the society. Nevertheless, as much as possible these people should also see the need to make their work more available for the propagation of culture and the uplifting of the society to which they belong. Perhaps, it is for this reason that the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights is quick to point out that the right to benefit from the protection of the moral and material interests resulting from any scientific, literary or artistic production interprets as "proclaim[ing] the intrinsically personal character of every creation of the human mind and the ensuing durable link between creators and their creations". In other words, this right is to acknowledge and honour people's mental and intellectual efforts in creating the works and not necessarily to ensure that any material benefit accrues to them. This is perhaps in recognition of the fact that although culture is communally created, owned and shared, it is possible for individuals to be the passage through which cultural ideas and evolutions come into being. These individuals are the copyright owners whose creative production has the potential to move their communities forward (Shaver and Sganga, 2009).

It is ironic that the culture of electronic literacy (which is more or less hyper-literacy compared to writing and print because it is a combination of both) is what brings us back to the point where we are reminded of our communality as in the era of pristine orality. Bloggers, by default, have to be literate (and all three of our bloggers are first degree holders), but they, as well as other online curators and authors, are essentially in the business of reminding us of our communality as humans and encouraging us to sustain it. The right to take part in cultural life needs to be—and has actually been—spelt out for the literate society, but bloggers are one of the groups of people helping us to navigate our way around it.

Where IP rights are transient and can be revoked, human rights are irrevocable, immutable and timeless. Whereas IP rights are about individuals and corporate entities, human rights are about the entire human race and the essence of our collective humanity. If either of the two is to adjust to suit the other, then IP rights have to be redefined to suit the generality of the human race. Inasmuch as authors' interests need to be protected, human rights need to be protected the more. By this token, it is important that State parties take care not to jeopardize human rights in order to protect copyright. At the same time, copyright owners (i.e. IP owners) ought to be interested in reducing the gap between their right to their production and every other person's right to cultural life, of which their productions are a part.

In advocating for less stringent IP laws so as to ensure greater access to knowledge and information for both online and offline groups, including bloggers, the motivation for use of such knowledge and information has to be specially considered. For persons wanting access to information in order to make money off them either directly or indirectly, it may not be ethically and financially reasonable to give them the same unfettered access as those who need same information for research. In the spirit of the Creative Commons (CC) then, the Nigerian Copyright Act makes provision for fair use:

> The Copyright Act, however, contains some provisions in line with the practice of granting CC licenses. Acts categorised as fair dealing such as using a copyrighted work for the purpose of commentary, criticism, news, educational and research purposes are permitted subject, in some cases, to the author's right of attribution. The Act by virtue of Section 11(1) also allows authors to assign some of their works if they so wish or for a period only. These provisions are compatible with CC licenses.[74]

Linda Ikeji's Blog is adjudged the most popular Nigerian blog and probably the blog making the most money from advertising revenues. Advertisers pitch their tents with the blog because of the traffic it commands and it comes by its traffic through its contents which are sourced virtually from everywhere. Directly or indirectly then, *LIB* makes money off the contents it posts, most of which are not original to it. The question of fair

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[74] Barrister Joan Ohwaguono, Key Informant Interview, 30 May, 2018 (e-mail)

use thus arises: is it fair on the owner of the work for a blogger to make the money which the owner of the work does not make with the work? There is always a possibility that a person who reuses another's IP may be able to make money out of it. What matters is that the permission granted by the original, licensed owner of the work is not violated. What also matters is whether the works used by the blogger are copyrighted/licensed in the first place. Most of the works used by *LIB* in particular originate from social media platforms where contents are user-generated and there is no authorial ownership of works. Using such randomly created works helps to promote the viability of blogs as cultural artefacts.

4.5   The Viability of Blogs as Cultural Artefacts

As artefacts, blogs are ready-made avenues for representation and they can be expected to display cultural expressions, for in the process of a person or community expressing their thoughts, aspects and elements of their culture come through. Individuals and folk communities are responsible for the propagation and expression of culture and blogs provide ample opportunities for this. Folks are a group of people who have at least one thing in common (Dundes, 1980). In the case of blogs, the folks are the bloggers and the blog readers who are united by the act of blogging. Blog readers visit the blogs for content that interest them, tell of their experiences and reflect their aspirations. Essentially, blogs become a medium via which they negotiate their identities and the viability of blogs in this regard is dependent on the extent to which the blogs cater to their needs for continual identification with one another. In other words, blogs can be seen to be viable as cultural artefacts when they publish those texts that reflect the lores of folk communities. Folklore are "a cultural phenomenon that reflects genuine systems of informal, everyday knowledge, values, norms, traditions, and stereotypes accepted by a given social group or local milieu" (Krawczyk-Wasilewska, 2016: 29). They are easily transmitted from one person to another in the community and they take on different shades and forms as they move from person to person. To determine the viability of blogs as cultural artefacts then, we look into the folklore presented on the blogs as well as the place of intertextuality in this presentation.

4.5.1 Folk Expressions in Blogs

Traditionally, folklore manifest in the forms of tales such as jokes, and also rumours, legends and myths. As for digital folklore, they are variants of the traditional ones but with the attributes of the digital world where they are generated. They include urban legends, e-mail forwards, internet memes and so on. Whether traditional or digital, folklore are characteristically vernacular productions repeated from person to person and so have many variants but a common core that links them all together. A vast majority of the folklore found on the blogs were imported from other platforms. We discuss tales under the subheadings of jokes and urban legends for *LIB*. For *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* we discuss the memetic. In this manner, we are able to tease out the peculiar folkloric expressions in each of the blogs.

4.5.1.1 Tales

Tales are regarded as

> traditional prose narratives that are strictly fictional and told primarily for entertainment, although they may also illustrate a truth or point a moral. [They] range in length and subject matter from… stories about fantastic wonders and magical events that take hours—even days—of narration, to brief… topical jokes with concentrated plots and snappy punch lines that are told in minutes. (Brunvand, 1968: 125).

For the purposes of this work, jokes and urban legends will be treated as tales because jokes are more or less "humorous… *narratives*—simple in form, earthy in content… ubiquitous in distribution, and endless in variety" (Baker, 1996: 414; emphasis added) and legends are essentially stories of fantastic occurrences.

4.5.1.1.1   Jokes

Jokes take on forms that are as varied as lengthy, punchy or short. What matters most is that they are humorous and they are narratives. For blogs, the various forms can be published given that there is no constraint regarding word count unlike what obtains on microblogging sites. Jokes typically end in punch lines and they were easily identifiable on *LIB* only as *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* did not feature jokes at all in the six-month period.

Understandably, *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* as topic blogs are more focused on technology and entrepreneurship/career respectively and so did not publish jokes. On *LIB*, the jokes and other humorous posts were usually accompanied with the slangy "lol" (laughing out loud) and many of them originated from other social network sites which were mostly duly credited by the blogger either explicitly or implicitly. She either mentioned that she got the post from another platform or showed through screenshots that the post originated from another platform. The post about the possibility of President Buhari putting through a telephone call to a random Nigerian appeared on the blog in the form of a screenshot from Facebook.

President Buhari was on medical vacation in the UK at the time and there were speculations about his health status. Rumours were making the rounds as regards the state of health of the president and the fact that no one was giving Nigerians actual updates on it. It was at this time that Femi Adesina, Special Adviser to the President on media and publicity, said he had heard from the president. Adesina posted an abridged version of his conversation with the president on Facebook on 25 February, 2017 and many media outlets reported the story. Herein lies the crux of the joke: The matter of the president's health is too weighty to be treated on social media; yet that was where the Special Adviser saw fit to talk about a development that would most interest Nigerians. According to *Premium Times,* Adesina posted that before the said call he had not spoken to the president for more than a month since the president's aides were usually the ones who gave him updates on the phone. It was therefore interesting that this all important presidential telephone conversation that Adesina spoke about was more like a chatty call between two friends containing no information of significance. According to him, the president often called him Femi during their conversations and asked about his (Adesina's) family, just like he did on this occasion. To Nigerians who needed concrete information about the state of the president, this was rather ridiculous, but Adesina apparently felt that it proved the good state of health of the president since it apparently made his day that the president spoke to him (Adesina) of his (president's) own volition.

Going by this post on *LIB* then, the joke was on Adesina who instigated it with his rather inappropriate Facebook post and thus invited Nigerians to take jabs at him and the

president. The Facebook post featured by *LIB* opens the joke with the familiar "Breaking News" title used in news rooms all over the world to catch the attention of listeners/viewers and break the flow of mundane everyday activities in order to report an event of great magnitude. *Premium Times* reported that Adesina's Facebook post was titled "And President Buhari Called at 2:43 p.m". The joke thus starts right from the titling of the two posts. While Adesina's title ironically paints the event of the phone call as a mundane occurrence requiring no special treatment, the Facebook user viewed it as breaking news material. However, instead of Adesina being the receiver of the call, it is now open to all Nigerians with the president deciding whom to call and when to call the person. This is a vernacular interpretation of the presidential call, going against the establishment to suggest that the president could call the average Nigerian—even in the middle of his health crisis—to ask about their and their family's welfare.

The average phone user never switches off their phone, especially not during the day, since the phone is the means for reaching a person in instantaneous transactions. For this post then to warn against switching off phones is another testament to its humorous nature. It is commonplace for phones to always be switched on, particularly the mobile version more popularly used in Nigeria, so the warning to not switch off one's phone is to further locate Adesina's call with the president in the mundane. The Facebook user gives the reason for this advice and does not shy away from linking it to the presidential call to Adesina: "This is because the president may call at anytime of the day the way he called Femi Adesina." Recall that Adesina gave the exact time of the call in the title of his Facebook post. To wrap up the joke, the Facebook user gives the punch line, which does not originate from the Adesina phone call but from the general misuse of power in the Nigerian state: "DSS HAS BEEN DIRECTED TO ARREST ANYONE WHO MISSED THE PRESIDENTIAL CALL." It is instructive that he types the punch line in capitals. It is a kind of oral transposition indicating a voice raised in warning. He ends it all thus: "Please be guided accordingly". Of course no one is likely to arrest anyone for missing a presidential phone call, neither is it likely that the president would call just any Nigerian at random; it is all part of the joke.

The former US president, Donald Trump, had a lot to say about immigrants during his campaign. His rhetoric was about deporting illegal immigrants and making America great again. The period before the US presidential election in 2016 was thus an anxiety-filled one for immigrants, particularly the coloured ones, in the US. A Twitter user took to her handle to joke about the situation and her preparation toward the eventuality of Trump winning the election. *LIB* posted the tweet as a screenshot.

Plate 4.9: Hilarious tweet of the day[75]

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75 LIB, 7 November, 2016

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In the American society and a large part of the larger modern society, women get their nails, hair and facials done for special occasions such as parties, dinners, galas etc. Such events are usually places where the average guest wants to see and be seen. To make such detailed preparations for a possible slave auction draws some funny but thought-provoking paradoxes between black tie events and the slave auction. The formal, black tie events are avenues for meeting business tycoons, movers and shakers in politics as well as heirs to vast fortunes. As such, they are occasions for cinching business deals and forging business relationships, much as it happens at slave auctions. But here the paradox stops. As shown above, the tweet is about how the user had prepared and pampered herself for a possible auctioning off as a slave upon Trump's win. The dark humour in it is that slaves hardly ever look decent, what with the ill treatment they go through. Similarly, if slavery actually goes on in the modern human society, it is not so blatantly done that a potential slave would be aware that they are about to be sold off, neither would an [open] auction be held for such a sale. The joke portrays the deep-seated fear that coloured Americans harboured about the implications for them if Trump won in the elections. It also shows that modern slavery may come in a disguise (the Twitter user actually has the right to vote but also considers herself a potential slave): a person may be well groomed and well-dressed but could possibly be or become a slave.

The punch line of the joke "so I look decent at the slave auction on November 9 if Trump wins" reads humorously but also challenges the supposed modern and democratic society to rethink its value system since some people consider that they can be seen as slaves depending on whoever is at the helm of affairs. Jokes often serve moral functions of pointing out the ills in the society, and this joke in particular is instructive and sobering. As hilarious as the tweet may be, it contains a shocking moral of the possibility of a dressed-up slavery in modern America, because socially excluded groups often live on the fringes of society. They may not be sold off outright as slaves, but they also may not be at ease within the society where they live. Nigerians, with their historical experience of slavery as well as their current experience of neo-colonialism, can easily identify with the coloureds in America living in fear of the implications of a possible Trump administration. A similar post touches on marital relations and makes a joke out of it. It also appears as a picture that originated from another source.

A husband told his wife that he's going to
"The Second Wife" for dinner.
He didn't get the chance to explain
that it was a restaurant.
He is now in hospital recovering.

Plate 4.10: Hilarious pic [76]

[76] LIB, 4 November, 2016

Infidelity is always a volatile subject in the average modern human society. With the trend of globalization, monogamy is increasingly popular, especially among educated folks. Even in polygynous situations of one man with numerous wives, relations are tense and the man is careful not to rub his preference for one wife in the face of another, especially by not voicing anything relating to such. A restaurant that goes by the name "The Second Wife" exploits all the social implications associated with the phenomenon of the second (or, more generically, the other) wife, and suggests that their meals rival those coked at home by [first] wives. Cooking is a major part of the average wife's domestic chores and the general belief is that bad cooking by his wife can cause a man to be adulterous. A second wife thus signifies a man's dissatisfaction with his first wife for any number of reasons, cooking inclusive. There may be other wives (third, fourth, fifth etc.), but the second wife is paradoxically the first evidence of a man's infidelity. So the second wife phenomenon is a syndrome in its own right, representing the start of a significant new phase in a marital relationship. For a man to then tell his wife that he is going to the second wife for dinner is almost an unforgiveable sin against the wife who is being addressed. The man may as well mention a wife in any other position, but the second wife is generic for the other wife (or wives). Furthermore, all a man's wives are in perpetual competition for his attention and they do not hide the fact of their rivalry from one another. The onus is on the man to be diplomatic among them, being careful not to be openly partial to anyone of them. Thus a man who makes the mistake of showing preference for one wife in the presence of another runs the risk of a physical attack.

This explains why the man in the joke did not get the chance to explain that the second wife is a restaurant, and then, the punch line: "He is now in the hospital recovering". In many quarters in the African society, it is regarded as insolent for a man to tell his wife he is going to eat dinner at a restaurant, much less at a second wife's. Dinner is usually taken at a time reserved to double as meal and family bonding time so the man in the joke appears to have committed two offences. Deductively, the consequence of his blunder is that the wife he addressed his comment to attacked him physically and caused him to sustain life-threatening injuries. No wonder he is in the hospital. *LIB*'s vitality and viability is thus maintained by its constant allusion to social issues using texts originating from other places than the blog. In this manner, intertextuality is seen to play an integral role in

the perpetual circulation of cultural artefacts and to animate the blog in the process. Apart from jokes, other humorous forms appeared on the blog. These include pictorial forms like graphic arts and pictures, memes and dialogues *(rejoinders)*.

4.5.1.1.1.1   Pictorial forms

Flavour, a Nigerian musician, is shown to be a female pole dancer dressed in a bikini and high heel shoes in a graphic representation posted on 03 October, 2016. The blogger's comment ("Choi, who did this to Flavour?"), which doubles as the title of the post, shows that the post does not originate from the blog. The cartoon-like depiction shows Flavour as a muscled female dressed in a bikini and wearing high heel pumps while wrapped around a pole in a dance motion. Despite Flavour's muscular frame, the graphic artist is able to pull off the picture of him as a female because Flavour keeps dreadlocks which he packs into a pony tail, thereby giving him the appearance of a female. Meanwhile, female pole dancers are usually slim and svelte and so a muscled female pole dancer paints an almost abominable picture in a humorous manner.

Plate 4.11: Choi! Who did this to Flavour?[77]

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[77] LIB, 3 October, 2016

There was a picture of the American celebrity couple Kim Kardashian and Kanye West where the faces of the spouses were swapped for each other. The photo appeared on 04 November, 2016. As in the post about Flavour, the title here also shows that the blogger got the picture from somewhere ("Now they have swapped Kim Kardashian and Kanye West's face"). The "they" that the blogger refers to is most likely the person who either created the photo or made it available to people. The female body in the picture has the husband's (Kanye) face which is toned to match the body's skin colour. The same is done for the male body which bears the wife's (Kim) face. A similar post appeared on 02 January, 2017 where various US celebrities (Beyonce, Drake, Rihanna, Nicki Minaj and Kim Kardashian), a Nigerian celebrity (Flavour) and Jesus Christ are featured in various poses and photos wearing African attires. Flavour is paired with Rihanna in one of the photos, while Jesus is wished a happy birthday in the photos where he appears. *LIB* credits the pictures to FYB Craft and titles the post "Check out these cute photos of American celebs in African outfits".

Another example is the post that contains the picture of a lady wearing a skimpy plastic attire. The title of the post ("Whose girlfriend is this? Lol") is a jocular reference to the lady's boyfriend (or even female friend) who could not advise her against wearing such a material and such a style too. These borrowed pictures on *LIB* demonstrate Nigerians' imaginary by the kinds of unusual images that they depict. They also show the humorous side of Nigerians who, for myriads of purposes, capture moments pictorially.

Plate 4.12: Whose girlfriend is this? Lol [78]

[78] LIB, 5 November, 2016

4.5.1.1.1.2   *Rejoinder*

A rejoinder is a response to another person's position or submission on a matter. Rejoinders are so called because they are usually published and available for public consumption, just like the opinions they respond to. *LIB* published a number of posts and their rejoinders as they appeared on other SNSs. The blog referred to the rejoinders as "epic" or "hilarious" responses, betraying the blogger's opinion of them. A series of the Economic and Financial Crimes Commission (EFCC) tweets which were responses to other Twitter users' comments appeared in a post titled "EFCC and their hilarious twitter replies" on the blog.

EFCC Nigeria @officialEFCC · 18h

The bird deals with a profusion of fraudulent activities. Seeing the corruption per square metre is astounding. You would be angry too.

x @__imBoomin__
@officialEFCC why do you have an angry bird on your logo? 🚶 🚶

↩ 7   ↻ 37   ♥ 28

EFCC Nigeria @officialEFCC · 18h

If na laugh go make pessin cooperate, we go help am laugh out stolen funds.

Mikhail Barnabas @barnaby04
This @officialEFCC with epic replies. Abeg shey na comedy una dey take investigate ni? twitter.com/officialEFCC/s...

I

EFCC Nigeria @officialEFCC · 18h

Please endeavor to crawl your way to our nearest zonal office. #spiritLed #EFCCNearYou

Ṭhə 2 Bŕoþhėṛş @UgwaRabin
@officialEFCC please I have snake spirit & vulture spirit and I crawl into people's bank accounts & steal money. How can I be stopped.

Plate 4.13: EFCC Twitter replies [79]

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[79] "EFCC and their hilarious Twitter replies" LIB, 1 February, 2017

It is funny that EFCC, despite its official status, resorts to broken English even on its official Twitter handle and responds to questions in the language/manner in which they are posed. It is the nature of SNSs that informal communication is more commonplace than its formal counterparts, even with establishments/institutions. In this case of the EFCC however, the questions that people ask are also funny. By harvesting the tweets and posting them, *LIB* demonstrates Nigerians' vernacular engagement with the institution of the EFCC. It also shows the EFCC as an institution assuming the attributes of the vernacular in order to engage its audience.

The blog posts originating from individual users' social media handles represent the users' thoughts, plans and activities. The post overleaf is about two Twitter users' thoughts.

Resa
@DippedCocoa

My goal in a relationship is to make my boyfriend a better person, keep him out of trouble & show him things about himself he never realized

#NailedIt
@BongoMuffing

My goal is to find a man after he's gone through a woman like you 😍

Plate 4.14: Epic Twitter response [80]

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[80] "Check out this epic Twitter response" LIB, 1 March, 2017

The above post on *LIB* appeared on 1 March, 2017 and was titled "Check out this epic Twitter response". Where the first poster is interested in positively shaping a man, the second poster plans to wait for such a man to break up with his girlfriend so that she can step in. In other words, she is not interested in moulding the character of a man, but enjoying an already well moulded man. It is a humorous response trivialising what the first poster sets out to do and pointing out that positively moulding the character of a man does not necessarily equate keeping the man.

Ekwemalor Evelyn
Oct 29 at 7:08pm · 🌐

Covenant university : School fee #432,000 ranked 6th best school
Unilorin : school fee #25,000 ranked 1st. How wise is your father??

👍😂❤ 129   67 Comments 5 Shares

Efan Osigbodi
Graduate from Covenant, work in Chevron, Shell, First Bank.

Graduate from UNILORIN, work as MMM agent, 7up distributor.

How wise is your generation?

Sun at 2:46 PM · Edited · Unlike · 👍 37 ·
Reply

Plate 4.15: Facebook hilarious reply [81]

[81] "Lol....see the hilarious reply on this Facebook post" LIB, 2 November, 2016

The above two posts, lifted from Facebook, are comments on the state of university education in Nigeria and the employability of graduates trained in Nigeria. Whether true or not, the rejoinder to the first post gives one pause and makes one wonder about the disparity in the fees between government-owned and private universities, the employability of Nigerian graduates and the many questionable money making avenues in the country (like the Ponzi MMM scheme through which many Nigerians were defrauded). The generality of these posts featured on *LIB* gives the reader an idea of what goes on in the social media spaces where they are copied. The posts are cultural artefacts that are moved from their original domains to the blog where they become available to another audience— the folk group of *LIB* readers.

4.5.1.1.2 *Urban legends*

Urban legends, unlike traditional legends, are not always totally fictional; they sometimes have elements of truth in them. Bacon (2011) reports that snopes.com, a website dedicated to investigating urban legends in the United States, "does its best to give a scholarly breakdown of all urban legends it publishes with references to where the site obtained the information used to debunk or verify the urban legend" (p. 15). On *LIB*, urban legends were merely reported as the blogger did not attempt to either verify them or debunk them. Often though, it was easy enough to determine that the legends were true to some extent. The *LIB* post of 1 October, 2016 about then US President Barack Obama and former President Clinton is true enough, but the blogger's interpretation of it introduces the element of a legend into it. Although the blogger does not indicate where she got it from, it is apparent that she copied the story from some source because it is very much unlikely that she witnessed the occurrence described herself. The point of the legend seems to be one of humour. Ordinarily, it is not a humorous situation when one person shouts at the other to get on a plane. However, the humour in the story is appreciated in the narrative of the blogger about President Obama growing "kinda impatient". He may not have shouted out of impatience but due to the noise of the plane. As for the blogger who is doing a retelling, the fact that President Obama shouted at all tells of the easy camaraderie between these two powerful men and the relaxed manner in which they relate. Although he shouted for Clinton to join him on the plane, Obama was smiling all through and this took the sting

out of the shout. The humour in it is the realisation that when they let down their guards, the rich and powerful can be expected to behave like ordinary men.

The original story is an audio-visual recording of the occurrence, but in conformity with the narrative nature of legends, the blogger takes the time to tell the story in her own words, inserting the slang "cool" into her narrative. The narrative exercise casts the blogger in the role of a reteller, a transmitter of the message of the narrative (James, 2010). As a reteller then, she tells the story in the language of her community, employing the vernacular "cool", which indicates her approval of the president letting down his guard and behaving in the carefree manner of common folks. Folklores are always characterised by such retelling and transmission that bring about permutations and untold number of versions of the same narrative.

In another narrative posted on 6 January, 2017, the blogger tells the story of a Kenyan woman who demanded a refund from a "native doctor" when the latter was unable to secure her a husband ("Lol. Kenyan woman demands refund from native doctor after failing to get married in 2016 (watch)"). This post also contains a video link but it is accompanied by a narrated version of the video. The narrative touches on highlights like the lady fulfilling all the conditions set by the "native doctor", including getting a bow-legged ant, a hen and dust from a vehicle passing a specific place and being driven by a specific driver. The legend in this tale consists in the conditions set by the "native doctor", the fact that anyone would actually employ the services of a "native doctor" to secure a husband within a time frame, and also the fact that such a person would take to social media to demand a refund from the "native doctor" in the event of an unsuccessful job. Even the conditions set by the "native doctor" are ingredients for the making of a legend, whether traditional or urban. The blogger notes that "the video was reportedly recorded three days before the end of 2016 when it dawned on her that no husband was forthcoming", thus giving herself away as a reteller and transmitter of the legend.

One other such post is about a man sighted at an airport in Malawi in his underwear. All the blogger had to say after the title was,

According to Malawi news who shared the photos on Facebook, the man smoked Malawian weed at Cape Maclear and then arrived Kamuzu airport, Lilongwe, Malawi wearing only briefs. Lol! More photos after the cut.[82]

Whether Malawi weed is so potent as to make a person walk around almost naked is a starting point for unravelling this urban legend. It leaves a reader wondering how true this could be. However, the moral the story preaches is abstinence from weed smoking. The moral in the story below is not clear but it makes for an interesting urban legend.

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[82]"South African man arrives Malawi airport in his briefs after smoking Malawian weed..lol (photos)" LIB, 1 November, 2016

Winners Chapel NL
@WinnersChapelNL

⚙ **Follow**

TESTIMONY:
An 87 year young lady, testifies that about 30 robbers on a mission to rob her, fled on sighting PAPA's picture at her premises.

Plate 4.16: "Like really?... Lol" [83]

[83] LIB, 6 January, 2017

According to *LIB*, Winners Chapel Netherlands put this up on their Twitter handle. Papa refers to the founder and general overseer of the church, Bishop David Oyedepo, whose picture appears in the post. It is the stuff of which urban legends are made, especially since it happened to "an 87 year young lady", the identity of whom could not be verified by the average Twitter user. It must be why *LIB* thought the story interesting enough to be shared and why the blogger registers her distrust of the story. "Like really?" is a colloquial expression for registering doubt. The urban legends shared on the blog are examples of topics that fascinate the average *LIB* reader enough to warrant retellings. The retellings done on *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* are based on folkloric texts captured by the bloggers themselves. Armed with an understanding of memes, we tease out these texts.

4.5.2   The Memetic in *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub*

According to Shifman (2013), memes are units of culture that spread gradually from person to person. They represent the ideas of a social group while at the same time shaping the mindsets, forms of behaviour and actions of the group (Knobel and Lankshear, 2007). While internet users refer to concrete material (e.g. a picture, a video, a word text) as memes, for researchers, both concrete and abstract phenomena, so long as they are easily spread by individuals, with the resultant effect of imitation and mimicry leading to variations, can be regarded as memes. Memes, in essence, are folkloric expressions. It is from this perspective that we consider the memetic in *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* as folkloric elements. For *LIB*, memes are easily recognizable as they take on the concrete, textual, vernacular and folkloric forms that have so far been discussed and many of them are credited to SNSs by the blogger. However, for *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* closer attention has to be paid to them in order to discover the memetic in them, particularly because their folkloric elements are not texts imported from external sources but are narratives around folk concepts that exist both online and offline. From these folk concepts, the bloggers create written texts—"transcriptions made for the moment" (Gay, 2000:98)—which they then build their blog posts around. In these posts they digitize and virtualize memes, invoking and evoking folklore as a "cultural frame of reference for creatively relating experience, particularly in narration and imagery" (Bronner, 2009: 25).

We consider some of such blog posts in light of the folk process which comprises the retelling of folklore.

The memetic in *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* fit into the category of tales. For instance, the launch and unboxing of a new gadget takes the form of a narrative on *Geek Blog* and the fact that his readers engage him quite a lot on this speaks to the folkloric nature of the practice. Software and technology consumers in general engage in swapping stories about and discussing their use of familiar and new gadgets. As such, there is always a retelling of stories about gadget use and from such retellings are distilled highlights such as the look and feel of gadgets, battery life, ease of use, affordability/pricing etc. These highlights are captured as texts and they stand out in Geek's retelling of stories about new mobile phones in particular and also software.

The performance of reviews on *Geek Blog* is reminiscent of occasions of age group gatherings in traditional folk communities. When reading through a review or an unboxing, one can almost feel the anticipation of readers and the excitement of the blogger as the process unfolds with the blogger performing for his audience of readers. Just as in the traditional settings there is no end in sight for age group gatherings, so long as there are new births in the community, for *Geek Blog* too, so long as there are new gadgets, software and applications, as well as users of same, there will always be occasions for review of the products. Such reviews tell of readers' preoccupation with the appearance and potential usefulness of gadgets, as well as how usefulness is defined by the folk community of the blog readers. Whereas advertisers target potential buyers and encourage them to commit to spending their money on the devices, Geek assumes the role of a user of the devices and speaks to potential buyers as members of a community of users. His narratives cover experiences of use and talk of familiarity with the devices, hence helping potential buyers to anticipate what they will encounter as users of the device. He seems to present his readers with the question: "Would you be content using such a device with so and so features and shortcomings?" Just like tales, the narratives of reviews are useful for warning and encouragement. Two examples of his reviews are excerpted below.

Infinix Note 3: "It doesn't come with all the bells and whistles design-wise"; "it doesn't look very ground-breaking"; "The front panel doesn't tell much: The earpiece at the top

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has the camera and light sensor on the left, and the LED flash and notification light on its right."; "The 6-inch display comes with 1080p resolution and of course, it has a screen worthy of a mid-range phablet. You shouldn't expect crappy displays on smartphones these days unless you're buying a budget device with an ultra-low resolution on a wide screen"; "With the space between the volume down button and power key just a few millimeters apart, a volume rocker here would've been a better option"; "Infinix Hot 3 comes with a non-removable 4500mAh battery that performs greatly. It's the sort of battery that makes owning a power bank rather redundant. With regular use, this should last for two days, but then, we have different definitions of regular use"; "At least, it processes whatever you throw at it. A 2GB RAM too is expected to handle multitasking to a very reasonable extent"; "The benchmark scores are moderate"; "The custom skin has only one shortcoming: the default alphabetical arrangement of the app drawer you are not allowed to change"; "As a rule of thumb, I try as much not to expect stellar performance from the camera on a mid-range device. However, Infinix Note 3 still delivers decent pictures. As with most of its smartphones, Infinix Note 3 doesn't come with a barebone camera app."; "The settings puts full control in your hands and the professional mode even lets you get the best out of the 13MP rear shooter"; "If you're keen on getting a device that supports 4G connectivity, the variant used for this review may not be the right device for you. There's a "Pro" version said to support 4G/LTE but this is nowhere to be found in the market for now" (6 October, 2016).

Tecno Phantom 6 Plus: "This doesn't necessarily mean this device is the definition of perfection, but Tecno Phantom 6 Plus has proven to be a great device"; "I've been unable to locate an LED notification light"; "Tecno Phantom 6 Plus has a 6-inch screen that some may find rather too big"; "Except for the camera bulge at the back, the design is beautiful"; "It is worth noting that the Phantom series have been plagued with one major defect since the beginning of time: staying on the same Android version without any major upgrade"; "Although there's an SD card slot, you have to decide between using a microSD card or a second SIM card. This isn't really a problem as most people would be content with the huge internal storage"; "Right until this moment, I really can't figure out why Tecno Mobile thinks just the basic sensors found on budget phones are the only things needed on a high-end device"; "Compass applications won't work on this device because there is no

magnetometer. You won't be unable [*sic*] to watch 360-degree videos on YouTube or enjoy virtual reality games and apps because there is no gyroscope. There are several other sensors too missing"; "The device also comes with the Eyeprint sensor first seen on the Camon C9. However, it's still not a feature I would like to use to unlock my device"; "Unlike iris scanners that use near-infrared light to read iris patterns even in the dark, this looks more like an ocular-based biometric technology that uses the blood vessel pattern in the white part of the eye. It won't work if there's inadequate light and this makes it unreliable"; "It doesn't look like you're going to be able to charge the phone with a computer though. The unit I have appears to be charging when plugged into a computer but the battery percentage stays the same after almost 10 minutes"; "The camera has a Super Pixel feature that extrapolates your image to 80MP. This sounds absurd but it comes in handy when you need to zoom an image without losing much quality. Also if you choose to crop out a small part of your image, this becomes particularly useful"; "If, like me, you have one of those universal lenses for mobile phones, you can be rest assured they are compatible with the Phantom 6 Plus"; "However, the absence of common sensors found on devices in this price range can't go without being noticed. For some, this alone might be a deal-breaker. Still, a huge percentage of smartphone users don't really give a hoot about this" (15 October, 2016).

Tales of gadgets' capabilities and shortcomings definitely spread from person to person and even from institutional sources to the masses in the digital age of blurring boundaries between interpersonal and mass, professional and amateur, and bottom-up and top-down communications (Jenkins, 2006). It is the memetic nature of talks about gadgets that causes Geek to transcribe them into written form and make such statements as "we have different definitions of regular use" and "It doesn't look like you're going to be able to charge the phone with a computer". These tell of a community of users with assumptions and established ways of judging the performance of devices. Shifman (2013) notes that Richard Dawkins, the originator of the meme concept, reckons with abstract beliefs as part of the cultural units with memetic qualities. So also can regular use as an abstract concept be approximated differently by individuals.

Furthermore, the excerpts above show the blogger's intention to help his reader make informed decisions. On the average, mobile phone users in Nigeria are particularly concerned with the battery strength on devices as well as the camera functionality. Geek takes his time to dwell on these two factors as he explains what his reader can expect from the two mobile phones. His personal opinion always comes through in his analysis but he ultimately leaves the decision to his reader (e.g. we have different definitions of normal use). On other occasions, he tries to sway his reader to reason the way he does ("I would rather use a second SIM than add additional storage to a 64GB device; A huge percentage of smartphone users don't really give a hoot about this"), but this is a regular occurrence with bloggers whose readers expect to share their most intimate thoughts and personal experience (Schmidt, 2007). Such statements might make a potential user feel bad about being fussy regarding the use of a second SIM tray, but then one still gets an overall feel that Geek is looking out for the interest of his reader.

The post about the Wondershare Filmora Video Editor[84] opens with an assertion about the "basic features of a great video editor". This expression (a great video editor) is captured by the blogger as the text representing how video editors refer to preferred video editing software. Here, the blogger talks as an expert on video editing and as a member of a community where it is a general understanding that "ease of use" is a basic feature of a great video editor. For this community then, ease of use takes precedence over usefulness because "even with all necessary features packed into the program, they become useless if the video editor program doesn't offer an easy way to make use of these tools." This assertion made by the blogger right at the beginning of the post alerts the reader to the possible content of the post. Expectedly, he is intent on the ease of using the software and he sets out to explain to his community—his readers—how this makes the software great. He goes ahead and mentions advanced colour editing, ripple edit/delete, pan and zoom, saving customised text and new transition tools as the easy to use features that make this software "special". By detailing these features, he engages the greatness meme expected of a good video editing software as preferred by his community.

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One other meme that *Geek Blog* engages is that of the classification of smart phones in Nigeria. In a post titled "'UK-Used" Phones vs Chinese Android Phones: Making The Right Choice"'[85] which appeared on 10 January, 2017, he speaks of the three categories that Nigerians have devised for smartphones: new Chinese Android phone, UK-used phone, and Nigerian-used phone. Geek captures the texts of these terminologies which have attained meme status among mobile phone users as they are labels for discussing and identifying mobile phones of certain attributes. Although Geek mentions the Nigerian-used phone in his categorisation, he does not write further on it. As the title suggests, the post is just about UK-used phones and Chinese Android phones. The blogger thus discusses the pros and cons of acquiring a phone in each of the two categories and also takes his time to explain what a reader should expect once they go for either. For UK-used or London-used phones, he notes that it is a generic label for used phones imported into Nigeria and stresses that the phones can be imported from any country, the label notwithstanding. The phone brands in this category are the expensive, status symbols ones which the average Nigerian phone user finds too expensive to acquire. For the less than buoyant person who is intent on acquiring the status that these phones confer on their owners therefore, buying the used ones is a way of getting them "without breaking the bank", although luck determines the condition of such phones and it can be very expensive to repair them. The Chinese Android phones are proliferous. Chinese is generic for manufacturers of these phones who are mostly Asians. According to the blogger, the manufacturers such as Tecno and Infinix helped a lot by making affordable handsets available for everyone. He suggests that although people may feel that the brands in this category are not good enough, they are getting better. He can attest to this as he has reviewed a number of them on the blog. In any case, if a person decides to buy these phones, they "get the peace of mind that comes with buying a new gadget" and all the advantages associated with this: warranty, support and "people to yell at if your phone suddenly dies the next day". In all, it all boils down to brand names and this is what he concludes.

For *Jarus Hub*, memetic content played out in the form of narratives that readers could identify with. Jarus posted contents that spoke of the assumptions and everyday

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experiences of job hunters, entrepreneurs and career people. On 9 November, 2016, the blog had a post titled "7 Kinds of People You Find in a Nigerian Office". The title is a testament to the vernacular nature of the post. Why a Nigerian office and not just any office? And why should any particular kind of people be the ones to be found in an office, even a Nigerian one? The post goes ahead to mention the seven categories of people and these constitute the text that the blogger refers to in writing the post: the oppressor, the veteran, the complainer, the slacker, the by-product of nepotism, the gossip and the kiss-ass. Of the seven categories, at least three have vernacular, slangy names (the oppressor, the slacker, the kiss-ass) that point to the fact that the narrative is to be appreciated by a particular community of people. In its usual manner of asserting without any real evidence or proof, this vernacular narrative is emphatic about the presence of these categories of people in every workplace in Nigeria: "Of course, each working environment can differ greatly according to its industry and company culture, however, there are certain types of people you're destined to meet in every workplace in Nigeria." In much the same way as urban legends present speculations as definitive occurrences, the blog post insists that there are certain types of people who inhabit the Nigerian office environment. These categories are only seven of the possible ones, meaning that some other person might list other categories of people to be found in a Nigerian office and also insist on the validity of their claim. This is just as well because integral to the make-up of memes and folklore in general is the law of variations (James, 2010).

The *Jarus Hub* post about Lagosians and their hilarious excuses for absenteeism at work (24 November, 2016) noted earlier is another evidence of the memetic nature of the blog. Lagosians as a folk group have common experiences regarding urban life in an industrialised city like Lagos, therefore one can be sure that the six reasons the blogger harvested must have made the rounds among workers in Lagos. Going by its narrative, the blog post indicates that workers often look for excuses to stay away from work when the hustle and bustle of life in Lagos gets to them. The post acknowledges that sometimes there are genuine reasons why people need to stay away from work, but at other times, they just want to chill (i.e. relax). The excuses (i.e. the memetic texts) highlighted in the post range from the ridiculous to the silly and so have the makings of tales that have been told and retold any number of times. For instance, "one chance" is a meme and an expression

having to do with individuals' tales and experiences of boarding vehicles manned by kidnappers. The people who relate the stories are supposedly survivors, their friends and relatives. However, other people learn about them from the mass media too. (The "one chance" meme has even mutated to connote a run of bad luck.) A person who uses the "one chance" excuse to stay off work only makes the excuse days after the first day of absenteeism.

The excuse of explosive diarrhoea may not necessarily be ridiculous, after all a person with diarrhoea needs medical attention not only so that they can get well but also so that they do not infect others. So, staying off work because of diarrhoea, whether the explosive type or not, is reasonable. The adjective (explosive) used to qualify the diarrhoea is what makes the excuse sound both dubious and alarming. According to the post, it is the most common excuse, so adding the "explosive" is a variation on a theme/meme. The other four excuses are plausible occurrences but their validity as excuses for absenteeism casts them in the light of possible fodder for tales. A cheating spouse, a mother's bad night, a dog giving birth and a vehicle running out of fuel hardly qualify as reasonable excuses for absenteeism, but if the blog says people peddle them, then it must be that they do, after all social media like blogs are platforms where the real workings of a community can be observed. The writer of this blog post must have heard about these excuses (or tales of these excuses), ridiculous as they sound, from people. Many of such vernacular and memetic narratives, alongside their transcribed texts, abound on the blog and they cover topics of interest among folk groups regarding jobs, career and entrepreneurship.

4.5.3   Hybridity in Blogs: Folklore, Mass and Popular Cultures

If we say a folk group has at least one thing in common, then it stands to reason that the group may not be very large population-wise. However, such pocket groups are the ones that make up a mass of people scattered all over. Mass culture may dominate the internet which is the hallmark of communication media in the present time, "but an increasing prevalence of participatory media extends into growing webs of network-based folk culture" (Howard, 2008:192). This embeddedness creates a situation of hybridity whereby folks are at once participants in a mass of people and also partakers of the popular and the folk among this mass of people. Although the popular is understood in some quarters as

that which is produced and intended to appeal to large numbers of people in order to ensure commercial gain, the popular is just as well that which many people identify with and can relate to, not necessarily with the end result of making some others rich.

Blogs, as offshoots of the internet, blur the boundaries of class in media production and consumption. They may start out as institutional, but in practice, when communal participation is allowed, they tend to become folksy and vernacular. Even when their subject matters suggest class distinction, the fact that literacy is essential in accessing a blog further helps to collapse the boundaries since education has been democratised and the masses now also have access to it (McDonald, 1953).

Folk productions are characterised by vernacular language, i.e. the language developed by members of the folk community as against institutional language or the language of the establishment. However, for the blog, its contents are not unaffected by their medium of expression, the internet, which is more or less an institutional tool controlled by governments and large corporations. Since the medium is the message, but the vernacular stands in opposition to the institutional and SNSs like blogs are more often than not vernacular webs of discourses, their "communications are amalgamations of institutional and vernacular expression" (Howard, 2008: 192). Blogs as "dynamic webs of discourses" and "zones of contestation" (Howard, 2008:200), as well as sites of neologisms, ensure that "national, mass and folk culture provide both mill and grist for one another" (Appadurai and Breckenride, 1995:5). The culture of the mass is the culture depicted in the mass media which serve all manner of groups, from folks to mass to national. The mass media unite all classes of people in their indiscriminate relay of information. The elite, the middle class and the working class are all target audience in mass media messages, be they news, adverts or even soap opera. Specific information may be targeted at specific people (e.g. advert of an exotic car), but the fact that the limitations of accessibility have been reduced to a considerable minimum ensures that the elite as well as the middle class and the working class get to see all manner of messages. In the course of making the most of available technology and communication platforms, messages also take on different hues: they can be mass messages, folklore, memes etc. They even mutate from one form to the other and these mutants manifest on various media platforms, including blogs. We take an

example each from the three blogs to demonstrate how the texts of mass mediated messages (i.e. hard news stories) are reported on the blogs where they thereafter take on vernacular forms through choice of words/language.

When Twitter announced late in 2016 that it was downsizing in order to keep its costs low, the news was a subject of interest to a vast majority of people globally. The reason for this is not far to seek: Twitter is a global company catering to a global clientele and it was laying off 9% of its workforce, signalling that it was experiencing an economic downturn. Major news media dwelled on the implications of this, the soon to be jobless people who would be shown the door at Twitter, what would become of the organisation, and what would become of Twitter users as a result of the development. The announcement by Twitter had economic as well as social consequences and so it was a story of great significance which *Jarus Hub* featured. Consulting the text of the layoff memo that Twitter sent to its staff as well as the analysis done in newspapers regarding the state of the organisation, Jarus gives his reader a rehashed version of the Twitter situation. This version conforms to both the vernacular and the institutional in its choice of words and its analysis.

As much as it is an organisation that owns a vernacular platform, Twitter is still very much institutional, hence its attribute of being able to hire and fire as an employer of labour. Already a hybridized subject, *Jarus Hub* discusses it in a hybridized manner too, right from the onomatopoeic title he gives the post: "Whither Twitter?"[86] In the opening of the post, he acknowledges another hybrid character of Twitter's: "Twitter was outpacing Facebook as the preferred social media platform, especially among the upper end of the social class". Social media and SNSs are more often associated with the masses as media of popular culture but here Jarus notes that "the upper end of the social class" (the elites) were also using it. This is a case of the vernacular and the institutional invoking each other as Twitter has to explore popular, vernacular, folksy practices (like Facebook) in order to function even among the upper echelons of society, while the folks of the social media world also have to rely on the institutional platform of Twitter to carry on their communal practices.

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Jarus goes on to talk about the details of Twitter's financial distress, noting that its revenues were declining and it was losing its competitive advantage. He dwells on the crisis, its consequences and what experts are saying about the situation. All this still seem to fit into the nature of hard news as stories about events of great magnitude. However, he concludes his post with a rather vernacular expression: So I ask, where is Twitter going? Golgotha?" Golgotha is an allusion to the biblical story of Jesus Christ who was made to carry a cross to Golgotha Hill (more popularly known as Calvary) where he was thereafter crucified. Asking if Twitter is going to Golgotha therefore is asking if Twitter is set to die, probably in a spectacular manner like Jesus Christ since Twitter seems to be already carrying its cross by laying off some of its staff. Jarus echoes the apprehension of folks in this manner but does not relay it in the institutional language used by the British newspaper that explained that Twitter was in stage 3 of its crisis: "Denial – that state when you refuse to accept there is serious problem and keep saying all is well, the stage just before acceptance." On behalf of Twitter and the members of the folk community for whom he is writing, Jarus seems to be seriously considering the possible (or probable) for Twitter: a trip to Golgotha.

In November 2016, the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC) directed the four telecommunications company in the country to increase the cost of data. According to *Geek Blog*, the NCC wrote a letter to the mobile operators where it advised them that the directive was necessary so as to ensure a level playing field for all. In his blog post[87], the blogger is very impassioned about the subject matter. This is understandable, considering that the situation is immediate and personal to him and so likely to have a great effect on him and his blogging activity. Geek does not hesitate to declare his feeling on the matter of data price hike and he is also quick to tie it to the political administration of the country. He links this new development with the earlier directive by the Governor of the Central Bank of Nigeria (CBN) that Nigerians should be taxed on phone calls. He notes that recharge cards are sold VAT (value-added tax) inclusive and so in a tone of utter frustration, he asks rhetorically, "Paying tax for making calls made with recharge cards you've already been taxed for?" It is hardly surprising that he treads this path because at

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[87] "NCC And Data Price Hike: A Totally Clueless Move" *Geek Blog* 30 November, 2016

the time the post was featured, Nigeria was starting to wake up to the reality of a change that could not be immediate. (President Buhari had promised change during his campaign and so the electorate was expecting instant gratification upon his emergence as president in May of the same year). This stance is more blatant as the post goes on.

Telecommunication with regard to phone calls and data usage is such an ingrained part of life in the 21st century that Nigerians are not left out. Because data is such an essential commodity, an increase in its price will be felt by a large percentage of Nigerian telecom users and it is this discomfort that Geek tries to capture in his post. This post is thus an amalgamation of the news about the data price hike as well as the blogger's impression of government and its policies. In the vernacular practice of passionately opposing the establishment, Geek notes that "the country is in recession thanks to the many idiotic economic decisions our government has taken so far. The economy is in shambles, they've successfully ruined it. The power sector has been ruined since the beginning of time and it's going to remain that way for a long time to come. The next sector to be ruined is our dear technology sector." Of course the technology sector is understandably dear to him personally because it is where his business is domiciled. His expertise is put to use in the technology sector and so he is particularly affected by this policy of government's. No wonder he expects it all to go "to shit" and anticipates the excuse the government would make by then: blame the past administration. Data usage, government policy and blogging have thus become intertwined in this hybrid content.

TuFace Idibia, a Nigerian pop singer, took to Instagram early in 2017 to announce a planned nationwide protest against the Nigerian government because of the situation of economic recession in the country. The protest, slated for 5 February, 2017 (and later shifted to 6 February, 2017), was well received by Nigerians and so it gathered momentum. However, on 4 February, he went back to Instagram to announce the cancellation of the protest, citing security reasons. A trail of reactions followed the planned protest and then its subsequent cancellation. *LIB* captured many of the reactions, right from the announcement of the protest to its cancellation. The blog reported a professor's condemnation of the protest as well as his latter apology for condemning the protest. Another singer, Black Face, who was in the same singing group with 2Face before a split,

also condemned the planned protest and *LIB* posted a picture from his Twitter page containing his thoughts on the protest: "Don't go out to protest against anything people! It is useless and baseless especially in this sensitive period, don't be used by politicians" (*LIB*, 1 February, 2017). The then governor of Ekiti State, Ayodele Fayose was reported to have stated his support of the protest. A number of people reacted negatively to this and *LIB* also chronicled the reactions on Twitter and alluded to them. Personal assistant to President Buhari on New Media, Lauretta Onochie, also tweeted a message, urging 2Face to "come and tell us your beef with President Buhari on National TV" (*LIB*, 1 February, 2017).

Thereafter, the hints at the possibility of the protest not holding were reported on *LIB*. First, the Lagos State police commissioner addressed newsmen and told them the state police command might stop the planned protest because information reaching them suggested that some hoodlums were planning to "hijack" the protest. Then Ekiti State governor, Ayodele Fayose, reacted to the police command's position, asserting that Nigerians do not need any permit to protest. A Twitter user's words on the protest also appeared on the blog: "With this Tuface roar enn; even if Jesus wants to lead a protest, I'm sure some Nigerians will remind him his father is just a carpenter". Former education minister, Oby Ezekwesili was reported on the blog to have reacted on Twitter that "no government has a right to repress citizens." *LIB* also posted its exclusive interviews with the then commissioner of police in Lagos State, Fatai Owoseni, who insisted that the protest was being banned because it was going to affect public safety and order. Another *LIB* exclusive interview with the 2Face foundation reported that the foundation had not been informed by the police that the protest would be banned. Lawyer and human rights activist, Festus Keyamo, also said in an *LIB* exclusive interview that even a permit from the police for the protest to hold would not safeguard against the breakdown of the protest and that only on the actual occasion of the protest would it be certain if it was peaceful or not. Vice president, Professor Yemi Osinbajo was also reported to have said, through a special assistant during a programme on Channels TV, that citizens have the right to protest.

Later on, the blog reported that the police had rescinded the ban on the protest and was instead committed to providing security during the protest. It was after this that 2Face himself announced the cancellation of the protest and then other reactions trailed the announcement. Many people were not happy with this development and *LIB* recorded people remembering the Afrobeat singer, Fela, and his commitment to checking the excesses of government. The blog reported Reuben Abati, who was part of the administration before the Buhari administration, taking jibes at 2Face and imploring people not to be too aggrieved with the singer since he was only acting as his name (two face) implies. *LIB* noted that some people even went so far as saying that 2Face only cancelled his own participation in the protest as they would go on with it. At this juncture, the protest had taken on a life of its own. It actually went on as planned but 2Face did not take part in it. *LIB* reports on 6 February, 2016 that over five hundred people, including Sahara Reporters publisher, Omoyele Sowore, and controversial singer, Charly Boy, eventually turned up for the protest which lasted two hours 30 minutes in Lagos.

Going by this chronicling, the discourse on the protest took on many different forms in different texts before dying out. It started out on social media, with 2Face announcing it to his folk community on Instagram. When it acquired its own life independent of 2Face, it became the #IstandwithNigeria movement, appealing to a mass of people across various social media platforms. And then it became a news item which the presidency, the police force and the vice presidency reacted to. Even *LIB* treated it as news with its claim to exclusive interviews with the police commissioner, the 2Face foundation and the lawyer, Festus Keyamo. In all of its forms, the discourse was featured on *LIB* which houses its hybridity while at the same time contributing to it. The memetic fall out of the discourse on the protest was the collective assertion that protest is an exclusive right of citizens and it was this persistent meme that invariably caused the police to give in and rescind the ban. By the time it was moving out of existence, the discourse had made the rounds of folk culture, popular culture and mass culture. However, the original convener of the protest who invariably launched the discourse had bowed to pressure (*LIB* reported people's claims that 2Face pulled out of the protest because he was threatened by the Department of State Security) and abandoned the planned protest.

Unlike the 2Face protest, the #EndSARS protest of 2020 enjoyed far reaching popularity and support, lasting days and garnering international attention. It also began on social network sites, particularly Twitter, with Nigerians demanding police accountability and an end to police brutality. Its success was apparent in the fact that it went on simultaneously in various cities in Nigeria. And even when government announced the disbandment of the Special Anti-Robbery Squad (SARS), the Police unit against which the citizenry levelled accusations of high-handedness and brutality, protesters were undeterred, rightly claiming that such previous moves had amounted to nothing. This time around the protesters were not easily dispersed and although the protest ended on a bloody note with the shooting of protesters by soldiers, "the #EndSARS protest constitutes a major turning point in the yearnings of Nigerian citizens for police accountability, [and] the campaign has some far-reaching consequences on policing and law enforcement in Nigeria" (Ojedokun, Ogunleye and Aderinto, 2021). From the discourses of police brutality online emerged folks' decision to organise themselves for mass action against perceived injustice. Government and the mass media could not but take note and so came about the situation of "national, mass and folk culture provid[ing] both mill and grist for one another" (Appadurai and Breckenride, 1995:5).

4.5.4   Bloggers and Language Use

As Moody (2013) notes, peculiar language use in popular culture is not a spontaneous occurrence as a lot of editing goes into it to make for great appeal. Without the appeal factor, the language is not embraced and it becomes useless. Editing ensures that "translocalization (drawing on linguistic and cultural resources from multiple locations) and transculturation (drawing on multiple cultural resources)" (Sultana and Dovchin, 2016: 4) take place and that the language becomes acceptable to the target linguistic community.

The graphic representation of male pop musician, Flavour, as a pole dancer on *LIB* is accompanied by the words, "Choi! Who did this to Flavour?" The expression draws on many linguistic and cultural resources, both local and global, to capture the unexpectedness evoked by the picture. For one, "choi" is a colloquial version of "chei" or "chai", an Igbo exclamation expressing shock, perplexity or horror. Although the expression on *LIB* is a rhetorical question, its exclamatory nature however draws attention to the disdain

associated with cross dressing and transgender tendencies in the Nigerian society. "What!" as an English expression could approximate the shock and horror of the situation, but it would not convey the humour that the blogger also sees in it. Similarly, *chei* and *chai* would not carry enough humour; neither would they remove the sting of condemnation of the transgender attributes suggested by the picture. In essence, in one word (*choi*), the blogger at once conveys humour in the picture and the society's aversion for what it represents. She draws from local and global linguistic and cultural resources to do this.

In the same manner, *Jarus Hub* colloquially wonders aloud about the fate of Twitter when it announced its decision to downsize. When Jarus asks, "Whither Twitter?", the play on words tones down the gravity of the situation. Because popular culture is designed to appeal to the masses, it necessarily does not toe the line of high culture in its language use, even in matters of public importance (Bal, 2018). Vernacular language use is deployed to represent the interpretation given to such development by the masses of people. For the Nigerian masses who are interested in Twitter, an American company, their concern understandably stems from their use of Twitter as a microblogging platform and not from any vested interest as employees or friends of employees. Jarus therefore focuses on what "the guys at Facebook" were doing, which was innovation and addition of new features to "enhance user experience". The "guys" at Facebook are the Facebook employees who, because they came up with *popular* innovation, became personalities who could be addressed in a familiar manner and so referred to as "guys". By referring to Twitter in the words *Whither Twitter* and calling Facebook employees *guys*, Jarus cultivates an identity of oneness with Facebook and an "othering" of Twitter. His language use shows his negotiation of his and others' identities (Sultana and Dovchin, 2016).

Subversion of power is noticeable when linguistic choices associated with high culture make their way into popular culture and are appropriated as needed. *Geek Blog* subverts Smile's unlimited data claim by showing its limitations with regard to browsing speed, which he compares to that provided by the General Packet Radio Services (GPRS) technology. GPRS was designed for the older 2G and 3G technologies, but with Smile's claim of operating on the later 4G technology, GPRS data speed should not be comparable with it. Smile is not the only data service provider with the rhetoric of unlimited data

which denotes speed and efficiency; virtually all the other service providers in Nigeria say the same thing of their services. Geek testifies to Ntel's reliability in this wise but points out that Smile is really quite limited. He uses the language of the establishment (limited/unlimited, GPRS, 2G, 3G, 4G) to counter their narrative and subvert their arrogation of power to themselves in terms of service delivery.

Popular culture is a culture of globalisation and localisation (Storey, 2001, 2003), with English being its major driving language (Werner, 2018). In using English, popular culture texts bend its grammar rules to accommodate the vernacular context of its use. Such deliberate flouting of grammar rules, while considered poetic licence in the literary world, is more of a case of resistance in popular culture whereby infelicities are normal (Trotta, 2018). It is another way of subverting the assumed power and structure embodied in high culture and tumbling them down from their high pedestal. In the blogs we see cases of wrong or lack of punctuations as well as wrong lexical choices. The post below appeared on *LIB* on 2 October, 2016 and it is inundated with such infelicities.

Photo: Condition of man whose kidneys were removed by a doctor in Adamawa who thought they were tumors, is getting worse

This is according to Mustapha Atiku Ribadu who has being following the case. He gave an update. Please read below
Isa Hamma the victim of a doctor's quackery is still in Kano,waiting for the appointed time. Isa Hamma's kidneys were removed by a doctor named Dr Yakubu Kwaji at Jimeta clinic,the doctor mistook the patient's kidneys for tumour,rendering him without both kidneys,for about 3 months now the 23 year old is surviving through heamodialysis 3 times a week.
It could be recalled that the Adamawa state governor Senator Bindow promised to give the patient N2.5 million personally and the government also pledged N2.5 million making it N5million.The patient armed with this was taking to Kano for a possible kidney transplant. It could also be recalled that a young man named Muhammad Sani came forward to donate one of his kidneys to the patient if it matches. The patient was taking to Kano with the donor who got to know the news through our activities in the media, together with other two person who are also ready for the kidney donation.
The patient health seriously detoriated at Kano, his mother even cried that her only son was taking to Kano to be killed ,the mother'

s worry was not unconnected with the new pains he is complaining and the patient who never fainted while at FMC Yola is now fainting at Aminu Kano teaching hospital,AKTH,he faints every now and then.

The patient fainted three times yesterday night and nothing is said about the possibility of a transplant.As the patient family are illitrates they were told the patient and the kidneys donors blood is taking to LONDON for tests,to LONDON!!!

Why cant the government tell us the true picture of what is happening,where is the said money been given for the transplant?

If nothing is done urgently the patient may give up any moment ,even though donors are available the resources seems to be a mere PLEDGE.

We are calling on all those concern and all the good people of Adamawa and Nigeria as a whole to come to the rescue of this poor boy.[88]

It appears that the writer of the above piece could not be bothered to take note of grammar rules, being more concerned with airing his grievance. Grammaticality takes a backseat to his need to vent and make his frustration known. He does not bother to edit his piece, which would be a sign of his caring for the establishment. Meanwhile he is highly furious with the generic establishment—including government and promoters of English grammar—and his words, alongside his neglect of grammar rules, make this very clear.

Similarly, slangy expressions are the hallmark of popular culture. In slangs are codified the practices, value system and preoccupation of popular culture per time. Many times the slangs have a global appeal while at other times they are localized. When *LIB* declares that "Nigerians have no chill" with regard to the news of the presidential call received by Femi Adesina, she means to say that Nigerians never let an opportunity for parody slip by because they do not overlook anything. As such, we see *LIB* laughing out loud (lol) on several occasions because Nigerians have no chill and they really do comment on and take note of very many things. From "epic replies" to "hilarious tweets", *LIB* takes note of these non-chill gestures and often posts them with a record of her own reaction to them: lol.

Schneebeli (2019) reports that lol no longer depicts only laughter in its most basic form as it has acquired a "subtler" meaning such as a "marker of empathy" and "a marker of

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[88] LIB 2 October, 2016

accommodation" (McWhorter, 2013). It could mean "a chuckle, chortle or a snort" (Schneebeli, 2019:9). However, although it is the acronym of laughing out loud, it sometimes means something other than mere humour, taking on the functions of emojis and emoticons and even traditional punctuations and interjections such as question marks and exclamation marks. The appearance of lol in the Facebook post about Femi Adesina and President Buhari connotes a chuckle, chortle or snort, while its appearance in the post about the lady in plastic attire connotes an exclamation. As for the post about the South African man who arrived in Malawi airport in his briefs allegedly after smoking Malawian weed, lol here definitely connotes laughing out loud. These different uses to which lol is put show *LIB* as a site of popular culture where language undergoes editing to make for mass appeal.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   Summary

A blog in its entirety can be treated as a text and its individual entries can also be treated as texts in their own rights, much as Julia Kristeva's theory of intertextuality suggests. In this manner, blog entries may be regarded as subtexts but more appropriately they are full texts, considering that a blog is also a platform, much like a TV channel. This brings about the possibility of applying intertextual interpretations to the blog as a whole, but more specifically to its individual entries. In particular, pastiche, a literary practice and an intertextual strategy which is concerned with the combination of various styles in the making of a text, has been used to interpret the three blogs holistically. By its nature, pastiche speaks better to lengthy texts which are the ones with enough room and space to manoeuvre and accommodate various styles. For *Linda Ikeji's Blog* (*LIB*), which had numerous pithy posts that were short, the concept of pastiche was better applied to the blog as a whole. As for *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* which are topic blogs, they had lengthier posts and so in addition to the whole blog, individual posts were also examined for elements of pastiche.

The other intertextual patterns discovered in the blogs, particularly individual blog entries, include simulation, parody, retro as well as adaptation and appropriation. The bloggers simulated not necessarily to create a situation of make believe but to authenticate their claims. In the case of *Geek Blog*, its posts on the unboxing and reviewing of devices contain vivid pictures that lend credibility to all he has to say. *LIB* simulations border on the humorous many times. Parody in the blog posts takes on forms of satire, humour and ridicule, depending on the topic treated by the bloggers. For instance, *Jarus Hub*'s post on excuses given by Lagosians for being absent from work has elements of satire as well as humour and ridicule. Adapted and appropriated posts display bloggers' bias as in the

videos from which *LIB* takes shots. The unusual kind of adaptation witnessed on the blogs (i.e. video to still shot and video to word text) represents a transposition of ideas from the semi-oral (audio-visual) to the written. The source text is visually and aurally decoded while the destination text is only visually decoded in cognisance of the basically scriptocentric nature of the blog. Although adaptation and appropriation have been discussed as a pair, instances of appropriation on the blogs are not very many.

The other, non-literary intertextual patterns noted in the blogs were intralooping and copy-paste verdict. It was discovered that for *Geek Blog* in particular, referring to previous posts on the blog either through hyperlinks or outright mentions was a constant practice. In reviewing gadgets, the blogger often made reference to past posts that reinforced the points he was making in the current post. For this, the first person plural pronouns, both the singular form and the plural form, often came in handy to create a sense of camaraderie with his reader and a sense of the blog as a unified whole. *Jarus Hub* looped previous posts through tags. The header section of posts had hot text tags identifying the writer of the post as well as the category to which the post belonged on the blog. Hyperlinks to other posts within the blog also appeared as hot texts. The practice of intralooping was the bloggers' way of ensuring sustained interest in the blog and minimizing reader's navigation away from the blog. *LIB* did not intraloop but it had opinions about the contents it copied and pasted. These opinions were often delivered as one-line verdicts in the blog posts, which was also the practice in some posts on the other two blogs.

The nature of the blog as both a gigantic whole and also a multifaceted whole makes it difficult for bloggers to see their original write-ups as being made up of ideas from various sources. Similarly, as non-literary people, bloggers do not explain their trade with intertextuality since they do not have an understanding of it. To the *Geek* blogger, only blog posts that are "outsourced" (i.e. harvested from outside sources) contain elements of external influence; once he as a blogger writes a post himself, he does not see it as being informed by any external source. His blog as a whole may be considered an intertext, but certainly not all the individual posts, at least not the ones written by him. The *Jarus Hub* blogger also only sees materials received from external sources as having intertextual elements because "there is no way I would have been able to generate all the content of my

blog. I need other people to share their own career success too…" So, all the blog contents generated by him are therefore not intertexts. As for *LIB*, sources generally refer to people who supply them with materials for blog posts and not texts in particular. This stance of the bloggers' is understandable, given the fact that not only are they not creative writers, they are also more closely related to media practitioners than literary people.

Although fundamentally a literary construct, intertextuality is meaningful in interpreting and understanding both literary and non-literary works. What makes the intertextual patterns noticeable in the blogs studied different is that they are free from "the fundamental contradictory impulse towards dependence and liberation" implicit in many literary works (Sanders, 2016: 8). While creative writers struggle to acknowledge the old hands noted in the canons and at the same time try to find their own voices, bloggers do not seem to be bothered by this. Bloggers are content to quote verbatim from another source for the entirety of a blog post—what matters is that the post appears on their platform, sometimes with a line or two added by the bloggers in the form of titles or comments after the posts. Whereas literary writers need to pay homage to their forbears in order to find their own voice, Linda Ikeji and Jarus thrived in the cacophony of voices that they presented on their blogs and therein lies their own voice. *Geek Blog* had the most original contents of the three blogs because external sources did not feature often in its posts. These three bloggers were confident in their use or non-use of other people's styles and ideas; they were not merely copying and pasting but only defining their styles.

Many of the blog readers were aware that the bloggers engaged in intertextuality and they sometimes even attempted to check out bloggers' sources to verify bloggers' claims and also have a better understanding of blog messages. These two activities of verifying bloggers' source claims in the blog posts and also understanding the messages contained in blog posts are ways by which intertextual reading brings pleasure to readers. However, as much as intertextual reading may be pleasurable, it may not be the ultimate factor that readers appreciate about the intertextual nature of a text. One major reason that blog readers gave for appreciating bloggers' intertextual efforts was that the practice made more information available to the blog reader. Be that as it may, bloggers' intertextual forays was not their major reason for liking the blogs as most of them reported liking the blogs

because they are popular. To be sure, the popularity of the blogs informed this researcher's decision to select them for this study. So, this is not at all surprising.

In the course of their intertextual forays, bloggers are prone to engage in acts of plagiarism, although "plagiarism" does not quite capture the dynamic nuances of textual interplay in blogging. The essence of plagiarism is to guide against the unethical use of another person's intellectual work while the essence of blogging is to gather materials from various sources (in the case of the filter blog), discuss topical issues (in the case of topic blogs) and generally ensure the reading pleasure of readers. While plagiarism is intent on originality, blogging is intent on originality but also an adaptation of, and play on, originality as the case may be. Thus, textual interaction in blogs often defies explanations in terms of plagiarism and identified literary intertextual strategies. Sometimes though, textual interactions in the blogs have plagiarism as well as intertextual explanations. Nonetheless, intertextuality subsumes plagiarism since every occasion of textual interaction is a manifestation of intertextuality but not necessarily plagiarism (although every instance of writing is a probable instance of plagiarism, according to Share (2006)).

Intertextuality ensures the hybrid nature of the blogs in terms of the mass and the popular by causing the embeddedness of texts in one another. It also facilitates the popularity of the blogs by perpetuating the posting of various, interrelated topics. The copy and paste syndrome thus finds a purpose in bloggers' practices where it is used to reinforce cultural messages and information that make the rounds in the sphere of mass culture, popular culture, and folklore. Nonetheless, the copy and paste label does not also capture all that bloggers do when they copy and paste, especially when they give their verdict on the copied and pasted text either in the introductory or the concluding section of the requisite blog post. As cultural artefacts therefore, the three blogs showcase folkloric expressions telling of the way of life of the folk groups that make use of them. Basically, they contain folklore that describes prevalent cultural preoccupations per time. The contents from other social media platforms displayed on *LIB* give an idea of cultural trends at the time they are posted, so also do the posts on *Jarus Hub* and *Geek Blog* tell of contemporary lores with regard to career, employability, gadget, software and information technology in general.

5.2   Conclusion

As much as literary intertextual patterns available in the literature have been identified in the blog posts, there is still need to generate labels for virtual intertextualities, e.g. intralooping and copy-paste verdict. Literary intertextual patterns have provided a starting point for this foray which needs to be taken further to reflect the peculiarities of textual interaction in the online environment of the postmodern world. Similarly, the fact that blog readers go in search of bloggers' sources is a testament to the fact that they (readers) are able to read intertextually and actually do so actively. Nonetheless, some blog readers do not identify intertextuality in blog posts and this shows that with text readers at least, intertextuality is not always constant.

Blogs are sites of hegemony and resistance where intertextual property takes precedence over authorial ownership and intellectual property (IP). This is evident in the fact that despite bloggers relating better with the concepts of plagiarism and copyright infringement than the practice of intertextuality, intertextuality better explains their blogging practices. However, here we see a reflection of an inherent hegemony of literacy (i.e. individualism explained in terms of plagiarism and IP) over orality (i.e. communality explained in terms of intertextuality) and, by extension, social interaction, on a platform which manifests both orality and literacy. Be that as it may, even though bloggers have an understanding of plagiarism and copyright infringement and so actively try to avoid both, their blogging practices show their resistance. The possible instances of plagiarism highlighted in the study as well as bloggers' self-report indicate that bloggers are redefining plagiarism and copyright infringement as only occasions when the original owner of a text/work is not acknowledged. These demonstrate intertextuality as a primal nature of texts, and authorial ownership as an addendum that is not always present and so often overlooked in the virtual environment of secondary orality.

The subcategories of plagiarism described by Turnitin cannot be applied in a blanket format to every kind of text. In the case of blogs, plagiarism is relative, considering that readers have content creation expectations of bloggers and bloggers (at least going by the three blogs studied) also do not presume to be the only content providers for their blogs. By the same token, it is natural for blogs to contain materials from many sources, which is

why posts of varied topics appear simultaneously on blogs and each of the posts is a summation of many other texts. In the course of their intertextual forays therefore, bloggers are prone to engage in acts of plagiarism. Nonetheless, plagiarism is not a very apt term for the textual borrowing that goes into blogging practices because blogging, a highly mimetic activity, does not operate by the same standards as scholarly writing.

It is sometimes difficult to establish the occurrence of plagiarism, even in the academia. This is the position of Munkacsi (2010) and Moore (2013) who also note the different slippery and murky cases that are identified as instances of plagiarism. For instance, how does an examiner know that a student has copied an assignment from another student with or without the latter's knowledge? Such an examiner may come across the works of the two or more students involved in plagiarism, but he may also not come across all the affected works, in which case he will have no inkling whatsoever about the occurrence of plagiarism. As such plagiarism can only be said to have occurred when it can be proven even though every instance of writing is a possible instance of plagiarism (Share, 2006). Students' works are examined and graded; scholars' works are peer-reviewed; journalists' works are subjected to rigorous editorial review; while bloggers' contents are generally read for information and/or entertainment.

The question then is who is really interested in/ affected by bloggers' plagiarism tendencies, and to what end? Is it the readers who actually appreciate bloggers' intertextual efforts? Are the readers to grade the bloggers and award them points/marks? For students and scholars, plagiarism is a crime because they are primarily in the business of research and knowledge generation. However, bloggers are really not in the same business; rather, a lot of bloggers are in the business of cultural propagation where texts are supposed to be interwoven with no author attached to any text. Granted, some cultural unit may have an identifiable origin and an identifiable originator, but once such unit enters the mainstream cultural milieu it becomes communal property, except it is copyrighted. Perhaps, a functional bloggers' professional group should be constituted where the ethics of the trade can then be properly formulated and spelt out.

The concept of plagiarism more or less advocates that words and texts can and should be used in new combinations every time they are employed in the creation of a new text;

intertextuality on the other hand recognises that texts primarily mimic one another. When Turnitin describes a situation of photocopy whereby a writer is said to copy large chunks of text from a cited source, how is the "chunkiness" (i.e. size) of the text determined? Is it determined in relation to the totality of the source text or that of the destination text? Being a filter blog, *LIB* notably imports chunks of text, but this practice is as natural to filter blogs as licence is natural to copyright. But then, plagiarism is a question of ethics, while copyright is a question of legality. This is why students, academics and media practitioners accused of plagiarism are not handed over to the law but sanctioned by their institutions or professional bodies which are the custodians of their professional ethics. Bloggers in Nigeria, however, are yet to subscribe to an organised body that spells out the ethics that should guide their trade. Until there is such a body, one major factor to rather look into in blogging practices then is the infringement of copyright. It is necessary to determine if bloggers are flouting any rule as stipulated by the copyright act. Since plagiarism appears to be a moot point with regard to blogging, then copyright laws should be the tool for checking bloggers' transgressive intertextual forays.

Thus, the question of copyright is more applicable to bloggers. However, there are pitfalls in this too. Given the frequency with which bloggers post content and the fact that the viability of blogs is dependent on this, how often and for how many contents should bloggers acquire copyright permission? How feasible or realistic would this be, given that a lot of the things that bloggers post are timely and so posting them should ideally not be delayed? Considering time factor then, are bloggers to wait to secure permission and then risk posting obsolete content or are they to just go ahead and post all the same without the consent of the copyright holder? One way to tackle this is for content creators and intellectual property owners to get Creative Commons licences and for bloggers to take note of the license that applies for each text they consult. This saves time and energy and also promotes the right to participate in cultural life, because a Creative Commons licence

> …differs from copyright in the sense that the hallmark of
> copyright law is to provide economic advantage to the author
> of a work while Creative Commons license is to make works

of authors accessible to those in need as long as they maintain the conditions of the license.[89]

Furthermore, going by the fact that many of the sources explored by the bloggers, particularly *LIB*, are profiles on social network sites (SNSs) where content is user-generated and not copyrighted, then the issue of copyright infringement is minimal. In the same vein, since most of the SNSs excerpts and other texts on the blogs are referenced and embedded, plagiarism cannot be used to define blogging practices. Such lack of authorial ownership which reinforces communal ownership of works/texts is indicative of a quasi-pristine orality where the communal subsumes the individual. The viability of blogs as cultural artefacts is dependent on continued human interaction and the ready availability of contents as obtained in the pristine oral society. Such ready availability of contents is also fundamental to the technorality (Adejunmobi, 2008) or digital orality (Soffer, 2010) which obtains in the postmodern era of literacy, print and new media. This gives further interpretation to the United Nations' 1976 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) that every individual has the right to take part in cultural life which consists in technology among others. Nigeria is a party to the Covenant, having ratified it in July 1993.

The internet is a global public space where, to a large extent, people can do and say what they want. The virtual environment is not secondarily oral merely because of its oral/aural nature, but also because texts are readily available there and can be easily appropriated. While Olorunyomi (2006) notes that the emergent hypertext of the electronic media reaches back to the earliest state of human consciousness (the state of orality) in the process of grappling with how to infuse the text with the senses (olfactory, tactile, feel and mood), this current research submits that the hypertextual nature of texts of the electronic media also creates a reminiscence of the pristine oral phase in the way that it discourages fixed authorship and encourages shared authorship. Electronic media of communication like the blog are therefore secondarily oral because they foster a sense of the communal in the manner in which much of their contents are generated. The question of intellectual property and copyright ownership is murky in this environment just as it was practically non-existent in the pristine oral society.

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[89] Barrister Ohwaguono, Key Informant Interview, 30 May, 2018 (e-mail)

Texts are constantly being copied, parodied, appropriated, alluded to etc. and this gives the community its essence, hence the importance of the Covenant on the Right to Cultural Life, particularly in this context. The right to take part in cultural life entails producing, sharing, propagating and promoting cultural artefacts. For bloggers, they produce, share, propagate and promote these artefacts by combining and organising ideas from various sources for the consumption of their readers. Filter blogs like *LIB* are more eclectic, more dynamic and so more memetic than most other blog types. As a result, they offer readers a better opportunity to take part in cultural life because they combine posts that can feature all the other blog types. More and more of cultural life will take place virtually as computers and the electronic media occupy a more central place in the lives of individuals and communities. Just as it is difficult to accuse a person of parodying or appropriating another's speech, in much the same way it will become increasingly difficult to accuse netizens of plagiarising others' works, especially when they are not copyrighted. In perpetuation of Derrida's death of the author then, the author on the internet is put to death not only because the text reader negotiates the meaning of the text without recourse to the author, but also because the text is not firmly anchored to any author and everybody shares it at will, recreating and mutating it. What the discursive practices in the blog posts "do in the world" therefore is to tone down the narrative of individual ownership of texts (Grossberg, 1997:75).

By their own reports, the bloggers considered in this study have literate and semi-literate parents and illiterate grandparents. Conclusively, literacy is still rather recent in their generation and so they are just approaching the high technology state that Ong (2002) talks about. In high technology cultures, writing and its attendant rules and norms (such as plagiarism) have been so much internalised that literacy is somewhat naturalised. It is understandable that people who are just approaching this state of being still grapple with the rules and laws of writing such as plagiarism. Our bloggers thus fall back on that which comes most naturally to them—orality and non-authorial ownership of texts—even while they write.

From this study then, filter blogs like *LIB* are adjudged the most viable because they are not likely to run out of sources for creating blog entries. So long as there are social

network sites (SNSs) and other platforms online and offline where users generate content, there will always be contents for filter blogs. As for techie blogs like *Geek Blog*, the continued existence of technology and its resultant products which affect people and their ways of life will ensure their viability. Topic blogs like *Jarus Hub* have to constantly reinvent themselves to incorporate new knowledge into their area of interest in order to remain viable and relevant. By featuring such timely and relevant contents, the blogs ensure their continued usefulness to their readers. The bloggers and their readers make use of the blogs to meet their need for social interaction and cultural propagation and this ensures the viability of the blogs as cultural artefacts.

In essence, for the blogs to remain relevant as cultural artefacts, they have to constantly engage in intertextuality because cultural artefacts are products of folk communities and so no individual, bloggers inclusive, can solely create them. A blog can exhibit folk processes (particularly when its readers are active), but finding full meaningful interpretation for the folklore and the memes generated by its community has to be done the intertextual, inter-authorial way. It is important to note, therefore, that the three blogs are in a continuum between the open access vernacular and the self-contained institutional. The blogs help us to understand that increasingly, blogging is no longer a lone man activity because all the three blogs are kept alive by groups of writers who defer to the "blogger" (the brain behind the blog) as a kind of editor-in-chief. They present qualities characteristic of both the vernacular and the institutional in their contents. However, their degrees of conformity to either the vernacular or the institutional vary.

Blogs may favour orality, particularly with regard to the question of authorial ownership of texts, but their scriptocentric nature is not in doubt. The kind of adaptation we have noted on the three blogs shows the tendency of the blogs to freeze expression. Audio visual recordings thrive on motion just like speech does but the blog often freezes these recordings in the forms of transcriptions and still shots. It is a testament to the fact that while orality promotes motion in thought even during reflection, literacy first of all arrests thought in order to reflect over it. These manifestations on blogs helps to further appreciate the link as well as struggle and tension between orality and literacy.

By nature, blogs will always be encountered in situ, at their original locations without the fear of them losing their content. Unlike traditional artefacts therefore, blogs are likely to always retain their history, making it easy to understand their significance for the society/social group that creates them and makes use of them, not having been "divorced from their archaeological context" (Sweetman and Hadfield, 2018:47). Whereas there is a sense of the old and ancient attached to traditional artefacts due in part to their decontextualization, blogs naturally carry not only their markings (i.e. blog posts) with them, but also their heritage (their location on the internet; the art of blogging; the chronicling of blog posts) and in essence their history.

5.3   Recommendations

- As much as it has been possible to interpret intertextual patterns in blog posts based on identified literary intertextual strategies, it is still necessary to come up with intertextual categories that will speak better to the online environment. Literary works, though now available in electronic format, have a long and rich history of writing and print which informs their intertextual categorisations. For blogs whose history does not exceed the internet, we should develop a more appropriate way of appreciating their intertextual nature.

- In the same spirit, although traditional literary genres do not cater for the blog, other genre categories can be developed to describe them. Similarly, the blog and the generality of the online environment can be used to work out the tension between and the interrelatedness of genre theory and intertextuality. Studies with this focus will further develop both theories by testing them and building them simultaneously.

- With the bloggers studied having implied that they do not see blogging as a literary endeavour, it will be research worthy to find out bloggers' motivation. (For literary artists, the creative force propels them.) This will have implications for cultural and media studies, especially considering that many of the blogs are now run by teams who have to be guided by a policy. In the past, bloggers were lone wolves who did all their work alone; but these days we have blogs that operate like organisations. Perhaps there are still many lone bloggers in other parts of the world, particularly

considering the proliferation of personal blogs globally, but Nigeria which does not parade many personal bloggers needs for the editorial policies of its filter and topic blogs to be studied. Similarly, the lack of personal blogs in Nigeria might be due to blogging motivation. Where bloggers in other climes have reported blogging out of compulsion and not necessarily for profit making purposes (Pedersen and Macafee, 2007), our bloggers might have a different set of reasons for blogging. The political economy of blogging and blogging practices in Nigeria should therefore be looked into and considered, beyond what bloggers say of themselves and their blogs on the blogs.

- Intertextuality is text-centered, writer-centered and reader-centered but readers are not always conscious of its presence. The theory of intertextuality needs to be reconsidered to cater for this excess. Although it has been identified that a reader does not have to be aware of other texts in order to read intertextually (Fiske, 1987), it is also necessary to look into the cases of those readers who are not even aware of the possibility of occurrence of these other texts and also the occasions when this occurs, and the implications of this for textual interpretation and meaning making. For instance, cultural and media theorists may start with the question of whether it is possible for a reader not to relate a text to their field of experience in order to unravel it.

- Blog posts often contain links to external sources, but this does not prevent bloggers from using the personal pronouns, either the singular form *I/me* or the plural forms *we/us* and engaging in intralooping. It will thus be interesting to find out the extent to which the blogger seems dead to the blog reader in intertextual reading. Ascribing texts and ideas to other authors in the forms of outright referencing and posting of links encourages readers to go beyond the blog post to locate their meaning, thereby decentring the blogger. However the occurrence of the personal pronouns and intraloops at intervals in the text jolts the reader back to the realisation that the blogger is still very much present in the narrative. This becomes even more important when a reader chooses not to explore the external links contained in the text (and so read/create an extended hypertext), but remains in the blog narrative and so does a linear reading. A reader who visits other sources

in order to prove or disprove an author's claim of visiting them more or less centres his/her reading around the author's claims. To such a reader, the author is not dead. Those blog readers who try to validate a blogger's source are more concerned with meaning as created by the blogger and his/her source individually and as a team. These readers, though in the minority, are likely to be the ones most concerned about issues of copyright infringement and plagiarism. It will be interesting to probe this line of thought further and see if blog readers actually bother with such issues and also find out the implications that this might have for plagiarism and Intellectual Property (IP) ownership.

- Everyone has the right to take part in cultural life and blogging affords individuals the opportunity to do so. By studying blogs intertextually as avenues for taking part in cultural life, this research has given further interpretation to the United Nations' 1976 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) that every individual has the right to take part in cultural life. Other internet platforms identified in the covenant should also be studied to see how well this covenant applies to them.

- The blogs considered in this study are all written in English. Studies have established that students often engage in plagiarism when the language of instruction is a second language (Briggs, 2003; Ehrich, Howard, Mu and Bokosmaty, 2016). It is necessary to find out if the fact of English being a second language largely informs Nigerian bloggers' intertextual forays. To this end, blogs written in bloggers' mother tongues will be useful for such a study. This will help to know if the process of copy and paste in particular also represents an avenue for learning the art of blogging, like the students who learn their second language even in the process of using the language to get an education. In addition, research has demonstrated that students' attitude towards and actual engagement in plagiarism is culture-based (Hu and Lei, 2012; Ehrich, Howard, Mu and Bokosmaty, 2016). By extension, bloggers' attitude towards and actual engagement in intertextual forays may also be informed by culture, identifying bloggers as subalterns learning to speak.

- *LIB,* the oldest and most popular of the three blogs considered in this study, was started in 2006. In North America where blogging began in 1997 and where it is still most popular, it has been discovered that blogs now fare better with longer posts of an average of more than 2000 words. Unlike filter blogs like *LIB* which post "snackable contents", blogs in that region of the world feature lengthy posts with original thoughts and contents (Crestodina, 2019), much like *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* do. Perhaps, blogging in Nigeria will also follow this trend where blogs with longer, more original content will have higher rankings than filter blogs. It is therefore necessary to follow the trend of blogging in Nigeria to see if this might give us a better understanding of the state of literacy in the country. From such studies, we will be able to make tentative statements about whether we are approaching a high technology status which is indicative of a high degree of internalization of writing (Ong, 2002).

- Unlike *LIB* which is very obviously memetic, *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* have hidden memetic manifestations which have to be unravelled. Topic blogs like *Geek Blog* and *Jarus Hub* need to be studied very closely for the folk processes they exhibit. This will help cultural studies scholars and folklorists to identify the folklore of these communities and also help to understand such blogs as avenues for gathering folklore. While at this, we can also learn how "non-academic folklorists" such as bloggers curate and transcribe folklore that are generally created orally and offline into texts that can be studied (Ong, 2002; Barber, 2007; Olorunyomi, 2006, 2019).

5.4   Contributions to Knowledge

With the instrument of intertextuality, this study has shown that blog entries and whole blogs can, and indeed should, be treated as texts like Kristeva advises. It has thus pointed out other virtual intertextual patterns, different from the more popular literary ones. It has highlighted that as much as the text reader (in this case blog reader) is an integral fixture in the discourse of intertextuality, it is possible for a text reader not to be conscious of the presence of intertextuality in a text, just like some of the respondents in this study claimed.

The study thus brings to our realisation the fact that intertextual reading is not a given for all text readers.

Although scholars have noted the high mortality rate of bogs, not much has been said about how they can be made viable despite the fact that they are gaining prominence as cultural artefacts. This has been a main focus of this research which has considered blogging from the perspective of text creation. It has demonstrated that the intertextual forays of bloggers place them in two of the layers of intertextuality: that of text reader and text author. In order to write a text, they have to read other texts much like other literary artists. However, bloggers reading other texts and featuring them on their blogs is not "to lend prestige and authority" as noted of literary artists by Hutcheon (1986:235), but to ensure the continued existence of their blogs.

The study has therefore shown that the viability of blogs as cultural artefact is dependent on continued human interaction and the ready availability of contents as obtained in the pristine oral society. Such ready availability of contents is also fundamental to the technorality (Adejunmobi, 2008) or digital orality (Soffer, 2010) which obtains in the postmodern era of literacy, print and technology. The research has demonstrated through the study of blogs that beyond their emergent hypertext nature as noted by Olorunyomi (2006), the other attribute that links the electronic media to orality is their communal nature which promotes co-authorship of texts.

This research has indicated that plagiarism is better left in the academia and not applied to blogging practices, in spite of the irony that the "publish or perish" mantra in the academia applies more literally to bloggers than academics. The study has shown that the internet in general and the blogging space in particular are fertile grounds for the creation and sharing of memes. The blogs are not just memetic but also highly mimetic and so copying and pasting is an inherent part of the activities that go on there. Such copying and pasting should, therefore, not be judged by the standards of plagiarism and IP ownership where originality is fundamental. The digital oral society of the computer and the internet is bringing back a sense of the communal with user-generated content and readily available information. What bloggers thus need to improve their trade is not stringent measures for

stifling social interaction borne of variety, but ethics for guiding their trade, regardless of the blog type.

By extension, the study gives further interpretation to the United Nations' 1976 International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) that every individual has the right to take part in cultural life which consists in "methods of production or technology, natural and man-made environments, food, clothing and shelter and the arts, customs and traditions through which individuals, groups of individuals and communities express their humanity and the meaning they give to their existence, and build their world view representing their encounter with the external forces affecting their lives". Nigeria ratified the Covenant in July 1993.

By considering one filter blog, and two other topic blogs, this study bridges a major gap identified by Elega and Ozad (2017): the fact that most studies on blogging in Africa in general and Nigeria in particular focus on "political blogs, activism and news blogs" (p. 2249). From this study, filter blogs like *LIB* are adjudged the most viable because they are not likely to run out of sources for creating blog entries. So long as there are SNSs and users continue to generate content; and so long as there are people interacting either online or offline, there will always be contents for filter blogs. As for techie blogs like *Geek Blog*, the continued existence of technology and its resultant products which affect people and their ways of life will ensure their viability. Topic blogs like *Jarus Hub* have to constantly reinvent themselves, showcasing new knowledge in their area of interest in order to remain viable and relevant.

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APPENDICES

Appendix **1**
INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES (CULTURAL AND MEDIA STUDIES UNIT),
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEW GUIDE (FOR BLOGGERS)

This interview is for research purpose only. It intends to investigate the intertextual strategies employed by Nigerian bloggers. Intertextuality is the art of combining various texts (materials, sources etc.) to produce a new text. Your responses and personal information will be treated as confidential.

1. Why do you consult outside sources in creating content for your blog? (Probe for the degree of impossibility of intertextuality).
2. What inform(s) your choice of the sources you explore in creating content for your blog? (Probe for frequency of use of outside sources).
3. How do you use material from the sources? (Probe for whether they quote directly, paraphrase, trivialize, ridicule, embellish, appropriate etc.)
4. What informs how you use the materials from the various sources?
5. How often do you try to ascertain the ownership of the materials you use on your blog?
6. How often do you succeed in this?
7. How much of a literate (someone who is able to read and write in any language) would you say you are?
8. How much of literates would you say your parents and grandparents are?
9. To what extent are you aware of special licenses (unlike copyright) that allow for freer use of other people's works?
10. How often do you let readers know where the information you give on your blog comes from? (Probe for manner in which readers are informed of source of content).
11. If need be, how do you support your original ideas with materials from other sources? (Probe for whether or not attribution takes place)
12. In your estimation, how much of the contents on your blog are usually from outside sources?
13. In your estimation, what is/are the benefit(s) of consulting outside sources to create posts on your blog? (Probe for how this helps to sustain and keep blog relevant)

INSTITUTE OF AFRICAN STUDIES (CULTURAL AND MEDIA STUDIES UNIT),
UNIVERSITY OF IBADAN

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR BLOG READERS

This questionnaire is for research purpose only. It intends to investigate intertextuality in Nigerian blogs. Intertextuality is the art of combining various texts (materials, sources etc.) to produce a new text. Your responses and personal information will be treated as confidential.

SECTION A

PERSONAL DATA

1. Age
   13-19 years ☐   20-25 years ☐   26-35 years ☐   36-50 years ☐
   50 years and above ☐

2. Sex   Male ☐   Female ☐

3. Level of education

   Primary ☐   Secondary ☐   NCE ☐   OND ☐
   HND ☐   First Degree ☐   Postgraduate ☐

SECTION B
RESPONDENTS' AWARENESS OF INTERTEXTUAL CONTEXT

1. Name of blog
   Linda Ikeji ☐   *Geek Blog* ☐   *Jarus Hub* ☐
2. How often do you visit this blog?
   Always ☐   Often ☐   Seldom ☐   Rarely ☐
3. What do you like about this blog? Its popularity ☐   Originality of its ☐
   content   The fact that it treats different topics   The fact that ☐
   has interesting posts   The fact that it posts material ☐ from various sources
4. Do you think this blog posts contents or ideas from other sources? Yes ☐   ☐
   No ☐ Can't say
   If response here is "No" or "Can't Say", respondents should exit questionnaire.
5. In your estimation, how often does this blog post contents from other sources?
   Always ☐   Often ☐   Seldom ☐   Rarely ☐

6. Are you always aware of the sources where this blog gets some of its contents? Yes ☐
   ☐ No
7. How do you know these sources?
   From the blog ☐   From memory ☐   Others (please specify)
8. Do you attempt to access these sources?
   Yes ☐   No ☐
9. If you answered "Yes" above, why do you attempt to access the sources?

To better understand the posts on this blog ☐   To confirm or disprove where
the blog writer claims to have got the informat☐
10. Are the sources easy to access?
    Yes ☐   No ☐
11. Are the sources online or offline?
    Online ☐   Offline ☐   Both ☐

SECTION C
RESPONDENTS' REACTION TO INTERTEXTUAL CONTEXT

12. Do you appreciate the efforts made on this blog to get materials from different
    sour☐ Yes   ☐ No   Und☐ed
13. Why do you appreciate the efforts made on this blog to get materials from different
    sources?
    It makes the blog more interesting ☐
    It helps blog readers to access information they may not get otherwise ☐
    It makes the blogger work hard to satisfy his/her audience ☐
    Other

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KEY INFORMANT INTERVIEW GUIDE

This interview is for research purpose only. It intends to investigate the limits of intertextuality in relation to plagiarism in Nigerian blogs. Your responses and personal information will be treated as confidential.

1. How would you define plagiarism?
2. What does the law say about plagiarism? (Probe for the stand of the law on plagiarism in an online environment)
3. How does plagiarism in printed works differ from plagiarism in an online environment?
4. Can you describe instances of plagiarism in online environments, particularly blogs?
5. What are the peculiarities of plagiarism in a blog environment?
6. What do you think would make a blogger engage in plagiarism?
7. How can plagiarism be avoided on blogs?
8. What about works with special licenses (e.g. Creative Commons) for sharing? How does our law apply to them?

Appendix 4
Smile 4G Unlimited Lite Isn't Worth Your Money
Earlier this month, I read on Mobility Arena that Smile's affordable unlimited data plan was finally in Lagos. Well, for a very long time, my Smile modem had been gathering dust and I thought it was time to clean it up and put it to some good use. I thought I had nothing to lose since ntel gives me unlimited data as well for the same amount and I assumed I was going to get a much better speed with Smile 4G.

Without waiting for my ntel subscription to end, I went for Smile 4G UnlimitedLite and it was good at first.

It now feels like using GPRS

Honestly, the first few days was good and I was able to get things done. Though I was getting a much better speed on ntel, I still didn't mind. Around the third day, things took a turn for the worse. I read that speed gets throttled when you cross 30GB but I just passed 5GB and it has become unbearably slow. So far, I've only used 5,142MB according to the data shown when logged in to my Smile account:

Right now, I'm struggling to open pages. Xtreme Download Manager hardly manages to reach 20kb/s and it has been like this for about 5 days now.

I just wasted ₦10,000. If you've already been considering going for this UnlimitedLite plan, get ready to surf the web at the speed of GPRS.

You should go for for ntel's Unlimited Smartphone monthly instead. At least, you won't experience this kind of senseless throttling that's meant to kill your productivity. When this is over, I'm likely going to return the modem to where it was gathering dust before. What's unlimited about this data plan when I'm limited to using less that 1GB a day?

(*Geek Blog*, 08 December, 2016)

Appendix 5
Career Dilemma of an Accounting Graduate with Passion for Writing
Hello Jarus,

I'm an active follower of your posts both on Nairaland and on your blog and I must commend your work. Keep up the good work. I recently graduated with a 2.1 in Accounting from a private university in Benin Republic and I'm about to start my NYSC registration. I'm 21 and I'm a lady.

The truth is that at this stage of my life, I'm beginning to realize a lot of things. It's common knowledge that the best type of job/work is one you're most passionate about, one you enjoy doing. Well, personally I've always enjoyed reading novels, writing stories/poems and cooking(don't judge me). Back in secondary school, I was literally the best English and Literature student. At first I read English Language in a Nigerian University for a year, but I felt it wasn't "professional enough"(compared to Medicine, Accounting, Engineering, etc. that most of my friends were studying. I even wondered at some point if I was ever going to get a job with an English Language degree).

So when I changed to the new school in the new country, I decided to read Accounting. It wasn't easy as Mathematics wasn't exactly my favourite course/subject and basically I aced most of my exams by cramming formulas, etc(basically reading just to pass my exams, not necessarily for future purpose). As such right now, I can barely remember most of the things I studied in 1st/2nd year unless I revise them all over again(I don't know if this is normal). I'm even scared that when I get a job, I might not know what to do because of the "study-to-pass-an-exam habit".

Well, right now I'm done with school and I'm at a crossroad because I have no idea on what career path to take. I intend writing my ICAN next year (just for the sake of it and to brush up my CV). The truth is that while studying Accounting, I kind of developed an interest in Business and Management. I thought of studying either Human Resource Management or International Business for my Masters, as I would love to start up my own business in a few years time. And at the same time, I also thought about studying Innovation and Entrepreneurship or Business Administration.

I don't want to go for my Masters yet. I want to work for at least 1year and 6 months in Nigeria, figure out what exactly I want to study and then apply for my Masters. (That's the first plan).

At the same time also, I want to work in Dubai and after a while, apply for Masters there and read Hospitality and Tourism Management; as that's basically the centre of attraction there. (That's the second plan).

In the same vein, if I were to follow my passion and do what I love most, I don't really know what writing stories, poems or articles would do for me professionally especially here in Nigeria.

I know my plans may sound twisted or unserious but that's basically how it is in my head. Right now I don't know what to do. Though I'm hopeful that

before the end of my service(NYSC) next year, I would have made up my mind fully on what to focus on.

I've thought about it a lot and while going through your blog this morning, I decided to ask for your opinion. What do you think I should do? Thanks and God bless.

PS(1): Do you by chance know any blogs or platform that employs/need writers for stories, poems or articles? Would love to submit one or two stories/articles. Could really use a 'job' right now.

PS(2): Is your *JARUS HUB* NETWORKING SATURDAY still on? It would be a pity if it was no more. It sounded like fun when I read about it on your blog.

Thanks for the Career counseling and other services you render. Keep it up!

Maria

***

Dear Maria

Your dilemma is not strange. Many people face similar dilemma. I will try and respond in an outline.

1, I agree with you that by the time you finish your NYSC, you would have had a clearer picture of what you want to do. So take your time to ponder well. Yet, I will try and give my best advice below based on experience.

2, Let me tell my own story: I love writing (although my genre of writing – political essays, articles etc – is different from yours – stories) , right from primary school. But I never for once thought of making a career in writing. I wanted to be an economist/banker, hence I went to study economics in the university. I loved economics because I could relate with most of what was being taught there in everyday activity. Right from secondary school, I hated accounting, which I found abstract. The dislike continued throughout university.

During NYSC, I decided to write ICAN exams, not because I wanted to become an accountant, but just not to be study-rusty during my service year. By the time I completed my NYSC, I had passed the first stage of ICAN and was expecting result for the second stage. I put it on my CVand threw my CV around.

Guess what? The first test I was invited for shortly after my NYSC was an accounting job (because they saw ICAN student-membership on my CV). I got the job. I had no option than to like accounting – contrary to my lifetime plan. I ended up as an accountant and I have almost a decade experience in accounting jobs now. I never got opportunity to use the economics I studied in school, and ended up using accounting that I never thought I would even ever know anything about.

Still, my passion for writing never waned. I continued writing and contributing to discourses, publishing articles in newspapers (on subjects far from my profession of accounting and academic background of economics). I made use of social media (Nairaland, Facebook, blogs etc) to express myself on this extra-professional interest. To God be the glory, this website is a product of that passion.

3, So given the above, I will say, start ICAN as planned. You never can tell when it's going to be useful. You don't like it now, you may like it later. I now like accounting. It may even define your career.

4, Yet, don't ignore your passion for writing. Find every avenue to hone your writing skills. Whether you get accounting job or not, it does not stop you from using that writing skill. This website (and a startup built from it) doesn't have anything to do with my day job of accounting. It is as a result of passion.

5, There is absolutely no harm in loving cooking. Nothing to judge you for, here. In fact, it's a great skill. TY Bello studied economics in the university, but has passion for photography. Today, she's a world class photographer that gets photography jobs in the highest places, including presidential events.

6, Don't be scared of not being able to cope if you get accounting job. Don't be surprised that even the smartest inexperienced graduates entertain this fear. The truth is, almost any average graduate can cope in any job. Your employer will not expect you to know everything about accounting as an entry level intake. With your smartness in composing this email, I assure you that you will cope. For most entry level jobs, you just need to be smart. Even a first class accounting grad and multiple award winning chartered accountant still needs training when he gets the job. As at the time I got my first job – an accounting role – I hated accounting and knew nothing in practice other than some theory I read in textbook. In fact, I used to mix debit and credit up in journals! So, sister, don't be scared. No, just don't be shy to ask questions when you get an accounting job. Trust me, these things are not as hard as you think. People that are not half as smart as you cope.

7, If you eventually decide to get accounting job, I will advise you look out for opportunities in companies that value training – KPMG, PwC, Ernst & Young, Deloitte and other accounting firms.

8, On owning business, when you're ready, get a good MBA. But beyond classroom study, start reading about businesses now. Regular read websites like entrepreneur.com, forbes, inc.com, wall street journal etc. Read good books, too.

9, No harm in exploring career opportunities in other climes too – Dubai in particular.

10, Generally, just take your time during NYSC to think through all these. Read well. Just pick the route that interests you most and pursue it. Career path isn't always straightforward for anyone.

On your postscripts, I don't know websites that pay for articles. You can search through the internet. Our JNS is on hold for now. Follow (subscribe) to the website to get information on when we're having one.

I wish you all the best.

Jarus

(*Jarus Hub*, 05 October, 2016)

Appendix 6
Q & A ON STARTING AN INVESTMENT BANKING CAREER
Sira Jarus,

I've gotten quite helpful career advice from your posts on *Jarus Hub*, I pray for more wisdom for you, Sir.

I'm a 21 year old lady with 2:1 in Economics, I've always had my eye on investment banking, I've tried getting several internships but the distorted calendar of my school wouldn't let me. I intend taking some professional exams in Nigeria during NYSC which is the CIS (Chartered Insitute of Stockbrokers of Nigeria) and ICEN (Institute of Chartered Economists of Nigeria) before going international for the CFA which I've heard is quite hard.

Also, I plan to have my masters in Financial economics. I've taken time to read through several financial news through platforms like Business day, Wall Street Journal, Financial Times, etc and I'm also getting to know several investment terms and updates, just as I'm also getting myself acquainted with the Nigerian stock markets.

Sir, I'll love to know if CIS and ICEN are very lucrative as regards to my chosen path and if they're compatible and also if MSc. Financial economics will go along.

Thanks a lot Sir.

Mary

***

Dear Mary,

Good to know you find our website helpful.

CIS is fine to start with, but to be frank, I will not recommend ICEN.

Msc Financial Economics is fine too.

But most importantly, I will advise you try and get decent Investment Banking institutions to gain experience after your NYSC.

I wish you all the best.

Jarus

(*Jarus Hub*, 29 November, 2016)

Appendix 7
Blog reader needs advice on what to do
A LIB reader sent in this story and needs your help. Read his story below
I'm 40 years old. I came back from NY where I live for my traditional wedding in Imo state. I've been engaged to my girl for one year and everything is set for our wedding in 2 weeks. Through this one year, we've had time to prepare for everything. I've spent quite a bit of money as she demanded to make her happy.
My family has also completed all traditional rights - just traditional wedding remaining. I'm now stunned with a news from her that she has a 10 year old son.
Honestly. I'm not mad that she has a son, why hide it from me until now??? She blames her mom and sister...that they asked her to keep it from me until I'm really neck deep and cannot pull back.... Now, I've canceled everything in disappointment. Now they appear dangerous to me. PLEASE. TELL ME...AM I WRONG? ?? and WHAT WOULD YOU DO ? ??

(*LIB*, 05 December, 2016)

Appendix 8
Full Review: Infinix Note 3
We unboxed this device a couple of weeks ago, and Infinix Note 3 is one of the phones with a battery life that gives you peace of mind. Although it doesn't come with all the bells and whistles design-wise, the raw power it packs greatly makes up for this.

Infinix Note 3 is the third smartphone in Infinix Mobility's product line of budget mid-range phablets. Does the Note 3 differ from its predecessors? Yes, in more ways than one.

Design and display

Infinix has upped it's design game with the introduction of the Hot S, and this trend continues with the Note 3. Although it doesn't look very ground-breaking, Infinix Note 3 looks better than the first two phablets in its product line. The slight curve around the edges and the shiny metal frame looks good. The front panel doesn't tell much: The earpiece at the top has the camera and light sensor on the left, and the LED flash and notification light on its right.

 A 5MP camera is at the front, aided by a flash for low-light selfies.

The 6-inch display comes with 1080p resolution and of course, it has a screen worthy of a mid-range phablet. You shouldn't expect crappy displays on smartphones these days unless you're buying a budget device with an ultra-low resolution on a wide screen.

 The navigation keys are placed on-screen but unfortunately, there's no way to hide them like some devices allow and you can can hide them from view when they get in the way like most devices allow. This has to be activated from the display settings.

 The Note 3 has the navigation keys on-screen

At the bottom is the micro-USB port with the speaker grill on its right and the microphone orifice on the left.

 The device has all the buttons placed on the right side, with the SIM tray just above them.

The right side holds the volume keys and volume button. With the space between the volume down button and power key just a few millimeters apart, a volume rocker here would've been a better option. Above these is the micro-SD slot. The right side holds the tray that houses two micro-SIM cards.

 At the top of the phone is a 3.5mm audio jack.

 The dual-LED flash at the back stays between the 13MP camera and fingerprint sensor.

The back holds the 13MP camera with a dual-LED flash just below it. Aligned underneath this is the fingerprint sensor that's on par with what we saw on the Hot S.

Battery

Talking about the battery, it's one of the most interesting things about this device. Infinix Hot 3 comes with a non-removable 4500mAh battery that performs greatly. It's the sort of battery that makes owning a power bank

rather redundant. With regular use, this should last for two days, but then, we have different definitions of regular use.

In a video loop test carried out with the battery at 100%, volume at 50%, brightness at 50% and 3G turned on, the battery lasted for exactly 11 hours and seven minutes till the battery dropped down to 1%.

The phone charges pretty fast too. Here is the result of our charging test:

- 8:24 AM – battery starts charging from 0%
- 8:38 AM – battery charges to 24%
- 9:00 AM – battery charges to 52%
- 9:39 AM – battery charges to 94%
- 9:56 AM – battery charges to 99%
- 9: 58 AM – battery charges to 100%

The battery took about 15 minutes to hit 25% and it took approximately 1 hour and 30 minutes to fully charge.

Performance, software & storage

Infinix Note 3 is powered by an octa-core Helio X10 processor clocked at 1.3GHz. There's a 2GB RAM on-board and performance is good. At least, it processes whatever you throw at it. A 2GB RAM too is expected to handle multitasking to a very reasonable extent.

The benchmark scores are moderate with the device hitting 39176 on Antutu, 598 in Geekbench 4 single-core processing and 2587 in multi-core processing.

XOS, the rebranded XUI hasn't changed since when we saw it on the Hot S. The custom skin has only one shortcoming: the default alphabetical arrangement of the app drawer you are not allowed to change.

The device comes with a 16GB storage out of which a user is left with just about 9GB. However, you can expand this with an SD card.

Sensors

Unlike some devices being sold into the Nigerian market with just basic sensors, Infinix Mobility managed to pack a few other sensors into this device. Apart from the regular accelerometer, proximity sensor and light sensor, CPU-Z shows that the device has a software gyroscope which lets you watch 360 degree videos and run VR apps and games.

There's also a linear acceleration sensor, a gravity sensor, a rotation vector sensor, a magnetometer and an orientation sensor.

Camera

As a rule of thumb, I try as much not to expect stellar performance from the camera on a mid-range device. However, Infinix Note 3 still delivers decent pictures. As with most of its smartphones, Infinix Note 3 doesn't come with a barebone camera app.

The settings puts full control in your hands and the professional mode even lets you get the best out of the 13MP rear shooter. Here are a few sample shots (click to enlarge):

Low-light photography is aided with a dual-LED flash and of course, there's a night mode. This shot was taken around 7:30PM:

Using the night mode greatly enhanced the picture taken:

Connectivity

If you're keen on getting a device that supports 4G connectivity, the variant used for this review may not be the right device for you. There's a "Pro" version said to support 4G/LTE but this is nowhere to be found in the market for now.

Verdict

Devices in the Note product line have always been pretty solid when it comes to battery and this device further proves that fact. Infinix Note 3 will have to compete with popular devices in the same price range like Tecno Camon C9, Lenovo Vibe P1, Gionee M5 Lite and more.

Except for the lack of 4G/LTE support, it seems the Note 3 has what it takes to win hearts. It's presently available on Jumia for N62,000.

(*Geek Blog* 06 October, 2016)

Appendix 9
Tecno Camon CX: Unboxing, First Impressions And Quick Review
Tecno Camon CX was eventually launched at an event in Kenya yesterday. After weeks of teasers, speculations and rumors, we finally have the device and unboxed it already. Nah, it doesn't exactly look like the renders and concepts we previously saw online, though there are still some similarities.

Right there on the box, there's a sticker telling you that you are entitled to a free screen replacement if you crack the screen within the first three months of purchase. Now that's a bonus considering how easy it is to smash these things.

Specifications overview
Before seeing what the device looks like, here's a quick look at the technical specifications:
• Display: 5.5-inch FHD (IPS)
• Processor: 1.5GHz octa-core (MT6750T)
• Operating System: Android 7.0 Nougat / HiOS
• Storage: 2GB RAM / 16GB Storage / External storage up to 128GB
• Camera: 16MP rear Camera with quad-flash / 16MP front Camera with dual-flash
• Network: 2G, 3G, 4G LTE (up to 150Mbps)
• Fingerprint Sensor: Yes (Rear)
• Battery: 3200mAh with Fast Charging

Box Content
Apart from the device itself, here are other stuffs you should find in the box:
• 1 ejector pin
• 1 flip cover
• 1 charger head
• 1 USB cable
• 1 pair of earphones
• User manual
• Warranty badge

First Impressions
With a 16MP camera slapped on both sides of the phone with interesting flash setups, Tecno seems to be reminding us that the Camon is strictly for taking pictures. While unboxing, a quick look at the camera produced some strikingly detailed images. More of this when we finally get to put up the full review of the device.

The centered selfie camera stares right back at you with the accompanying dual LED flash. Though I'm yet to try this out, it leaves the impression that you can take really bright selfies even in the dark.

The phone drops the design language known with the Camon product line and adopts a much better look. It's not the same plastic camera phone of last year, the new Camon CX sports a metallic unibody design like the last Phantom we reviewed.

Talk about how it feels in the hand, Tecno Camon CX steals the classy feel of the Phantom 6. It doesn't feel heavy in the hand. Though the build

doesn't allow for too much slipperiness, I would still advise you enclose it in the provided free flip cover. Tecno Camon CX is the first Camon to come with a fingerprint sensor; this comfortably sits at the back.

If you hate having to choose between a second SIM slot and an SD card, you should like the separate SD card slot on the right side of the phone just above the volume and power buttons. The right side takes the dual SIM slot. The bottom has a microUSB port flanked on both sides by the tiny microphone opening and speaker grill.

Overall, I consider the design great. The 16MP cameras at the front and back of the phone coupled with ultra-bright flash makes a deep statement. Here are more pictures from the unboxing; you may click to enlarge.

In no way is this a full review, we're only unboxing and taking a quick look at this device. If you need to know how great the camera is and how it performs when benchmarked, you need to wait till next week when we push out the full review.

(*Geek Blog*, 24 March 2017)

Appendix 10

SpotCam HD Eva: Bringing Ease of Use, Advanced Features & Affordability Together!

Does your surveillance cam allow you to speak to the other side? No doubt most cams do allow listening to the feed on the other side, but you can't think of one that does it both way. Does your cam have night-vision? Does it have infrared LEDs? Does your security cam support 720HD recording? Does your cam allow 24-hour recording over the cloud? If you are thinking whether or not all these technologies can be integrated into a single cam, there is an answer to this it – the SpotCam HD Eva!

Real-Time Alerts

What's a security system that doesn't alert you? You can't keep monitoring the screens 24×7. Can you? This cam can detect audio events and motion and alert you in 2 ways – on the app or in your email inbox.

The Cloud Advantage

So how does the cloud come into the picture? As already mentioned, SpotCam HD Eva can do continuous recording. Most homeowners don't need their recording to last for more than a few days or weeks. If there are no incidents why keep the records? But many businesses and will require recordings, not only to maintain the records for the sake of it but for compliance purposes too. This is why the cloud-aspect of this cam proves so beneficial. You don't have to maintain a space-consuming, expensive server to store all the videos. Simply store it on the cloud!

Geek Blog, 04 October, 2016)

Appendix 11
Giveaway: Get a Free WinX DVD Copy Pro Licence
It's a known fact that DVDs are not meant to last forever. To say the least, they are unreliable and some are rendered useless as soon as few scratches appear on the surface. This is why a powerful DVD tool is needed to preserve your content and avoid data loss. WinX DVD Copy Pro by Digiarty Software is one of such programs that lets *you* manage your DVDs like a pro.

 Whether all *you* want to do is to copy DVD contents to your PC or *you* need to make copies of existing discs for backup, WinX DVD Copy Pro handles it all with ease.

A simplified and intuitive UI that's straight to the point makes it fun to use. WinX DVD Copy Pro is a must-have especially if *you* deal with DVDs a lot as it comes with several useful features. With every operation, there are options to remove DVD region code, CSS encryption and UOPs.

Clone a DVD to another DVD
This is especially useful if *you* need to make a duplicate of your DVD for someone else or just as backup. It's as easy as slotting in the DVD to be copied, selecting this option, and then slotting in the blank DVD to be written when asked to.

One thing I've noticed is that this program doesn't put too much load on the CPU unlike similar programs performing the same function.

Copy DVD to ISO
One of the best ways to preserve your DVD content is copying to an ISO image. This even makes it easy to transfer to another DVD in future. WinX DVD Copy Pro does this, and it takes only a few clicks to get the ISO image saved to your PC.

Extract DVD chapters
If *you* have a DVD with several movies on just that single disc, WinX DVD Copy Pro lets *you* extract only the chapters (or movies) *you* need from the DVD. *You* can extract only needed chapters to MPEG-2 files.

Other useful features
•   Copy DVD to Video_TS folder
•   Copy whole DVD to a single MPEG2 file
•   Extract only video content
•   Extract only audio content
•   Burn DVD
•   Mount ISO to selected drive

Giveaway: Get WinX DVD Copy Pro for free
For a very limited time, *you* can get this program for free, fully activated. Digiarty is giving away WinX DVD Copy Pro in celebration of Halloween. All *you* have to do is just visit the giveaway page and download. The ZIP file contains the software and an activation code.

The only drawback with this giveaway version is that *you* won't be able to upgrade to a newer version unless *you* upgrade. Also, the license must be activated on or before Nov.13, 2016.

It's exactly the same program as the $19.95 full version. Take advantage of the 100% off discount and download now.

(*Geek Blog*, 25 October, 2016)

Another feather added to Chimamanda Adichie's cap as she gets elected into the American Academy of Arts and Letters

Award winning Nigerian author, Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie, has been elected into the American Academy of Arts and Letters as a foreign honorary member and will be inducted at the annual induction in May. Chimamanda will be the second Nigerian to be inducted into the academy. Wole Soyinka was the first and he got inducted in 1986.

The academy revealed in a press release posted on its website that 14 other people will be inducted alongside the author.

"When the American Academy of Arts and Letters holds its annual induction and award ceremony in mid-May, Calvin Trillin, secretary, will induct fourteen members into the 250-person organisation and Yehudi Wyner, president will induct three foreign honorary members", the press release read.

The American Academy of Arts and Letters is a honour society which aims to "foster, assist, and sustain excellence" in American literature, music, and art. It is currently a 250-person organization, but with the induction of Chimamanda and the others the number will increase.

Election is done only once a year as vacancies occur and Chimamanda made it in this year!

What a great woman!

(*LIB*, 06 March, 2017)

Appendix 13
I Re-Installed Pokémon Go Just to Cheat The Game
One of the greatest fads of 2016 is Pokémon Go and I was one of the early adopters. For a game that broke records in a very short time, it's really surprising seeing it fade away so soon. Sure, there are still lots of people playing this game but the craze isn't what it used to be. After playing the game for some weeks, it got boring and I uninstalled it without remorse.
There are workarounds to get the game working in unsupported countries on Android and iOS. Image Don Caprio / Geek NG
Well, I re-installed it two weeks ago and I did for just one reason– to cheat and risk a ban. Using a certain Cydia tweak, I teleported to the US to see what it feels like playing the game outside Nigeria.
Pokémon Go in Nigeria is boring
Trust me when I say this, but playing Pokémon Go in Nigeria is very boring. The game isn't yet officially supported in Nigeria and this is why it's so hard to find Poké Stops and Gyms; finding Pokémons in certain parts of Lagos isn't even easy.
Here is a comparison of the how the game looks like in Lagos compared to New York:
Pokemon Go in Lagos vs New York
I'm not really sure I need to spell it out that that the map on the left is for Lagos, and the one on the right with Poké Stops in almost every corner is New York.
Poke Go++ is a Cydia Tweak that lets you cheat the game
If you've restrained yourself from upgrading to iOS 10 and still have a jailbroken iPhone on iOS 9, Poke Go ++ for Pokemon Go! is a Cydia tweak that gives you all the tools needed to cheat the game. You can as well sit in your house and tour the whole of Lagos without leaving your couch, looking for Pokémons. A virtual joystick lets you walk around the city while lying on your bed.
Here is the thing, Pokèmon Go automatically detects jailbreak and will fail to run on jailbroken devices. If your game crashes, simply install Poke Patch for Pokemon Go to make it work.
About teleporting, you should install LocationFaker from Cydia to set your location to a supported country. You can find all these three tweaks in HackYouriPhone repo.

(*Geek Blog*, 16 November, 2016)

Appendix 14
How to Safely Let Your Kid Use Your iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch
Whether you like it or not, one of your kids is going to pick up your phone and toy around with it. If they are grown and understand that a locked phone is inaccessible, you're lucky. Having a toddler messing with your phone will often give you a disabled iPhone. To get a child to stay calm, engaging with an educational app on the iPad or a family video goes a long way.

 Image: Don Caprio / Geek NG

However, a child's inquisitive mind will often make them click the home button, navigating away from the engaging app. There's a way to lock your iPad or iPhone to just an app and it resides in the settings. There's no need to install a third party app and once activated, it becomes accessible in every application installed on the iOS device.

1. Go to Settings > General > Accessibility > Guided Access. Flip on the switch and you're almost done.
2. Also turn on to Accessibilty shortcut to enable triple-clicking the home button for easy access within an app.
3. You can also enable Touch ID here under Passcode Settings if your device supports it.
4. Return to any app and tripple-click the home button to start Guided Access.

 Photo credit: Don Caprio / Geek NG

5. This should display available options. From here, you can totally disable touch inputs or specify areas where you want to disable. You can also disable hardware buttons.

To return the phone back to normal, you need to triple-click the home button again to disable Guided Access.

(*Geek Blog*, 07 December, 2016)

Busting the PMP Myth: Is It worth Getting a PMP Certification?
HASIBUDDIN AHMED

Is it worth getting a PMP Certification? This is the question that arises in the mind of most project managers or those who are looking forward to be in a project management field. It is a valid question too, as getting a PMP certification does not come easy and cheap. Going through the process takes a lot of time, it is complicated and of course comes at a fair bit of price.

When you are good in your technical field, whatever that may be and, obviously, which you are, you need to ask yourself another question. Does it take nothing to move into a role which is more associated with managing than just being involved in a project? If you are already in such a position you may understand that there is more than it seems. From planning to managing a project, there are various other areas which one has to focus on. Here are some of the reasons why you need a PMP certification if you are planning to go for project management:

Always better to know better

You might be an excellent IT professional who have good technical skills, but what about the way you manage projects? Knowing how to plan, monitor and manage the project while at the same time motivating your team members need more than just your technical skills. A professional certification course in project management can help you to have an effective relationship with your team members and also provide you with some organisational skills.

Looks good on a resume

Every little addition related to your job profile that you can make to your resume will improve the value of your resume. Nothings better to pump up some attractiveness into your resume with a certification. If you are going to be in project management in the future, it will be like a crown jewel on your resume, sparkling brightest.

A PMP certification on your resume can also boost up your chances of receiving an interview call. Hiring managers receive a lot of response for any job positions they post. The best thing that they can do is shortlist some of the potential candidates for interview. This is where your resume plays an important part. A PMP certified candidate gets highlighted among the rest; even out of other more experienced people with no certification.

It shows your project management credibility

A certificate is like a face of someone's credibility of skills and knowledge on a subject or field. One does not get PMP certified easily as he/she has to go through a lot of training and a battery of tests to prove his/her credibility. Nobody can question the credibility of your skills and knowledge when you have a certification that clearly displays them.

Gives an edge over non-certified candidates

A PMP certification offers an edge when you go for interviews. The competition is very high in the job market nowadays; however, if you are armed with a certification, you can be always one step ahead of those who

are non-certified. Interviewers prefer to hire candidates who already have a good idea of the profile they are hiring for and with a certification; your resume clearly says that you can perform well in the position.

Certification proves you are interested in the field

A person will not go to such a length, wasting precious time and money, to get certified if he/she is not interested in the profession. The management feels that you are committed to the profession and you are ready to give the same amount of importance to the projects every time.

It Matters!

From the above points one can see that a certification in PMP matters. Apart from the only two cons, resources and time, there are huge benefits of getting a PMP certification.

Hasib is a professional writer associated with learning.naukri.com. He has written a number of articles related to technology, marketing, and career on various blogs and websites. Acting as an amateur career coach, he likes to help students make the right career decisions. He is also an avid reader and passionate about the beautiful game of football. Follow him @ LinkedIn

(*Jarus Hub*, 16 January, 2017)

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Appendix 16
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5 Tips to Run a Business While Still Employed

It is never easy to start a business especially in this economic situation in Nigeria. It is even more demanding and difficult for those who are working and also running a side business. But you have no choice than to have a side business. If not for anything but to diversify your sources of income. So, you should know that you can successfully run your business while being employed. You don't have to leave your job. Jumia Travel shares tips on how to pull this off.

1. Ensure they don't clash

No matter how demanding and exerting your 9 to 5 job or your side hustle is, you should ensure that they don't clash or separate. If you need to attend meetings, you should schedule it in such a way that you won't be questioned afterward. Remember that you need both jobs to keep body and soul together.

2. No need to keep your side business secret

Depending on your position at work, you should let people know that you have a side business. You don't need to keep it hidden. This is easier for persons in the line managers as they can inform the managing Directors without any fear. For others, you can inform your friends. And depending on your relationship with your line manager, you can inform them.

3. Manage your time

If you are able to keep your day job and side business separate, you should do same with time. The way you manage your time will make running two jobs less cumbersome and frustrating.

4. Check your lifestyle

Your lifestyle can also go a long way in determining how well you run both jobs. If you party every weekend, it may be time to reduce the time spent partying. This will get you to get more done and you can also sleep more.

5. Get help

If you cannot run your business smoothly without it affecting your daily job, you should consider getting help. This will reduce the stress and burden on you. You don't get help from just anyone but someone who is reliable and trustworthy.

For more discussions on education and careers, join our forum, HOTPROFORUM

(*Jarus Hub*, 1 March, 2017)

Appendix 17
5 Ways Your Smartphone Can Enhance Your Productivity
Smartphones are an essential feature of our lives in today's digital world. However, many people deploy it to social media and simply checking their emails. But there is more you can do with your smartphone when it comes to making you more productive than ever. Want to know how you can do this? Jumia Travel urges you to read on!

You can work from anywhere

One of the best things your smartphone can do for you is that you can work from anywhere. As far as you have data on your phone, you have access to any file you want. You can use programs or software like Google Drive, Evernote, and Dropbox to perform your duties.

You can simplify what you're carrying

You can lighten what you are carrying by using your phone. Rather than writing down the information you need to remember, you can take a picture. You don't even need a notebook or a pen anymore.

You can plan your whole day on your phone

With smartphones, you can plan your day on your phone. You can use calendar app with timed notifications and GPS directions to plan and get to all your meetings. You can also book hotels in Lagos, buy airline tickets and order for a taxi on your mobile phone.

You can stay in the loop

With your smartphone, you have access to the whole world. You can browse the latest information, it also allows you send text messages, calls, Instant Messages and email. Hence, you don't need to miss anything anymore because you are always in the loop and online.

You can get things done faster

Your smartphone can significantly reduce the time you spend on doing anything. You can get email notifications, you can dictate and record notes. This is because there are now apps that make this possible.

(JarusHub, 24 November, 2016)

Appendix 18

Has the NYSC outlived its purpose?

The compulsory youth service scheme was established by then head of state, Yakubu Gowon in the aftermath of the civil war in a bid to foster unity and patriotism. Since 1973, graduates have been required to take part in the National Youth Service Corps program for one year. In present day Nigeria however, the 43yr old scheme seems more like a very expensive albatross that has outlived its purpose.

In addition to the vast sums of money it gulps, it does not inspire patriotic fervour in the nation's youth. After a year of enduring adverse conditions and abusive officials all in the name of 'service to motherland', the youth which constitute the bulk of the nation's population get a first-hand look at what it is really like "to serve our fatherland".

Add to that the death toll, three already this year and the service year is not halfway yet. Corpers find themselves in the eye of political and religious conflicts and some don't live to tell the tale. The political elite conveniently couch these deaths in the shell of martyrdom but these young people didn't sign up to die. Corpers in Rivers state have taken matters into their hands and opted out of election duties, many more will opt out of the programme altogether if they could.

Maybe it's time to wave this khaki comrade goodbye.

What do you say?

(*LIB*, 07 December, 2016).

Appendix 19
Wondershare Filmora Video Editor Review
One of the basic features of a great video editor is ease of use. Even with all necessary features packed into the program, they become useless if the video editor program doesn't offer an easy way to make use of these tools. Over the past couple of days, I've had the chance to play around with Wondershare Filmora Video Editor and I've been greatly impressed.

From a feature rich user interface that's so easy to use to the array of tools placed in a user's hands, Filmora video editor is definitely one of the best video editors one could have right now.

Contents

What makes this video editor special?

Whether you're a professional who needs a complex program or you are just someone who needs a few basic features to edit your videos before uploading to social media, Filmora video editor still gives you exactly what you the need the way you want it.

Starting the program should present you two options, you either go for the easy mode meant for beginners or the full feature mode that has all the tools a professional (or an enthusiast) would need.

If all you want to do is basic editing that involves choosing from one of the preset themes and adding music, the easy mode is just for you. This saves one the trouble of rummaging through all the features in the full feature mode to get an easy task done. The full feature mode on the hand is where the real deal is. In this mode, you can do almost anything with your video.

What's new in this new version?

Wondershare recently released a version 7.8.0 which adds some exciting features to an already great video editing program.

Advanced Color Editing

Instead of simply choosing preset color settings, this new feature lets you fully customize how your video appears. In this mode, you can change the color temperature and tint. You can as well tweak the saturation, contrast, brightness, exposure, highlights, shadows and every other aspect of color composition.

Pan & Zoom

Apart from simply cropping your video, the new pan and zoom feature too comes in handy when you need to animate still images in style.

Saving customized text

Instead of writing the same thing all the time, Filmora now lets you save your customized text for re-use. You can simply pickup any of the preset

and edit as desired. Hitting the "Save as preset" button lets you reuse this text the next time you launch the program.

New transition tools

The latest version comes loaded with even more transition tools. Normally, transition might affect the original duration of videos but the new version of Filmora lets you control this.

Ripple edit/delete

This feature lets a single edit or delete ripple through the whole project. Delete a clip in the project won't should affect synchronization of existing effects as long as you have Ripple turned on.

Other great features

As with most video editors, Filmora lets you change video play speed, set video to play in reverse, add different transitions, perform audio separation and more.

As for basic editing, you can trim videos and crop as you wish. Videos shot in wrong orientation can be correctly rotated to look good. Wondershare Filmora video editor also lets you change aspect ratio, merge multiple videos and also tweak every aspect of color composition.

Apart from being a great video editor, the program also lets you record your PC screen. Other advanced effects include PIP, green screen, video stabilization, tilt shift, scene detection and more.

It also supports a wide range of video formats when exporting a completed project. Exporting to directly to mobile devices and DVD is supported as well as direct sharing on social media

Pricing

Before purchasing the program, you can try it out for free. Wondershare Filmora video editor only costs $29.99 if you're okay with a 1-year license. However, a better deal is the lifetime licence that costs only $59.99.

(*Geek Blog*, 25 October, 2016)

Appendix 20

"UK-Used" Phones vs Chinese Android Phones: Making The Right Choice

With the way everyone loosely uses the terms "UK used phone" and "London used phone", you would assume all the used phones imported into the country are from the United Kingdom. Just to set the record straight, these phones are not only from the UK, a lot of them come in from the US and other countries too. If you are buying a smartphone in Nigeria, you're always faced with three choices– a new Chinese Android phone, a UK-used phone or a Nigerian-used phone.

Thanks to Olx, Jiji and other classified ads websites, connecting with sellers isn't as hard as it used to be. Even dealers in Computer Village have learned to use these platforms as well as individuals who want to sell their personal items. Getting a used phone now is just a call away.

Now here is the question: should you get one of these cheap Android phones from Chinese manufacturers or a top-of-the-line UK-Used smartphone? If you're looking for a short, direct answer, this is the wrong place to look. This blog post is just to let you see the pros and cons and help you in making the right decision.

Why you should (not) get a UK-used phone

Seriously, who wouldn't want to own a Samsung Galaxy S7 Edge or an iPhone 7 Plus? Most Nigerians can't afford these devices but still love to use them anyway. They are premium, classy, packed with features and possess everything you would ever need in a mobile phone. When you ask people in the know what their dream smartphone is, it's likely to be the latest flagship from Apple, Samsung, LG, HTC, Huawei or some other globally recognized brand.

Besides, when you talk about status symbol, these devices come to mind. Since most people can't afford to buy them brand new, they look for used ones. If you've ever bought a used device, you should know that they work great (if you're lucky).

A lot of those Symbian phone I used in the past were bought used. My first, second and third iPhones were bought used. My first Samsung phone was bought used.

You may even get to use them for years without issues. Buying a "London-used" phone is a great way to use a premium device without breaking the bank. This doesn't mean they don't come with issues though.

If you're unlucky, you may be buying a problematic refurbished phone. With a used phone, you need to forget about warrantee and support, you are at the mercy of unauthorized engineers. As a mater of fact, you're on your

own. It's always a risk. Whether your seller is trusted or not, the risk factor is always there and you have no one to hold responsible if the phone is faulty.

Have you tried changing the screen on one of these devices lately? I'm sure you know the prices are not always recession-friendly.

Why you should (not) buy a new Chinese Android phone

You see them everywhere, in every hand. Whether you like this cold, hard truth or not, the Chinese helped a lot putting smartphones into everyone's hand. Although they started small, brands like Tecno and Infinix now rule the Nigerian mobile market with devices catering for every one in every price category. As these guys have already gone into the premium segment, the price of a used Samsung Galaxy S6 Edge might get you a brand new Tecno Phantom 6 Plus.

For some, this is is a tough decision. Some would rather go for a used, bruised and battered Samsung phone with a cracked screen than buy a brand new Tecno or Infinix product with the same amount of money. All because of the brand name.

I've reviewed a number of these Android smartphones on this blog and I can say that they are not as bad as people assume. Brand perception is changing for quite a lot of them as they recognize old mistakes and churn out better devices.

You get warranty, support and yes, you have people to yell at if your phone suddenly dies the next day. You also get the peace of mind that comes with buying a new gadget. Gone are the days when these Chinese OEMs don't give a damn about software updates, they've started listening to complaints and changing their ways. Talk about hardware, they've upped their game and you know it. Devices like Infinix Zero 4 Plus and Tecno Phantom 6 Plus come with metallic unibody design, sufficient storage, powerful processor and enough RAM.

Over to you

If you're going for a "UK-used" phone, I'm sure you know the cons already. They are great, you get to save money and still use a premium device, but the "wahala" factor mentioned earlier can't be eliminated. You might be lucky, as a matter of fact, a greater percentage of buyers are always lucky. As for Chinese Android phones, they are also a good choice, unless you have a problem with their brand names.

If you've made your choice already or have a different view, I would like to hear it.

(*Geek Blog*, 10 Janunary, 2017)

Whither Twitter?

On my Facebook wall a couple of years ago, I echoed the popular opinion – fact, actually – on how Twitter was outpacing Facebook as the preferred social media platform, especially among the upper end of the social class and passed the verdict that Facebook may lose its top spot in relevance ladder to twitter at the rate twitter was going.

I was wrong with my verdict.

One of the biggest news in American/British business media last week was the Twitter downsizing.

They are laying off 9% of their workforce to keep their costs low. They are also cutting their marketing budget which, as a percentage of Revenue, was far lower than those of Facebook and Instagram.

Not done, the papers reported that Twitter made a loss in the last accounting year.

Still on it, their subscriber base has plateaued as the number of new users they got in 2016, was only very little higher than that of 2015.

They are even no longer close to Facebook in subscriber base, as they are now in distant #4 behind Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat (what's that?).

Not only those, Google and Salesforce wanted to buy Twitter recently but "ran" away.

So bad that their founder-CEO that had quit to focus on some other things thinking the company had matured, had to come back.

No much difference.

One for the road: they're also slashing their advert prices in desperation for revenue.

One business pundit with a British paper described Twitter management as being in stage 3 of crisis: Denial – that state when you refuse to accept there is serious problem and keep saying all is well, the stage just before acceptance.

If someone told me 2 years ago to guess which company will experience such crisis, I would have said Facebook, because Facebook was the platform that was becoming boring 2, 3 years ago. But the guys at Facebook kept innovating and bringing up new features that will enhance user experience.

Few years back, conventional media (CNN, BBC, local and international papers etc) were wont to use tweets for news. E.g CNN will quote someone's tweets, or ask readers to give them feedback through twitter. Facebook was seen then as probably not deep enough. Now, respected

media now reliably use Facebook posts for serious reports and medium of feedback.

So I ask, where is twitter going? Golgotha?

Twitter's Layoff Memo to Staff as published by Business Insider

From: Jack   Dorsey

To: All   Employees

Date: October   13,   2015

Subject: A more focused Twitter

Team,

We are moving forward with a restructuring of our workforce so we can put our company on a stronger path to grow. Emails like this are usually riddled with corporate speak so I'm going to give it to you straight.

The team has been working around the clock to produce streamlined roadmap for Twitter, Vine, and Periscope and they are shaping up to be strong. The roadmap is focused on the experiences which will have the greatest impact. We launched the first of these experiences last week with Moments, a great beginning, and a bold peek into the future of how people will see what's going on in the world.

The roadmap is also a plan to change how we work, and what we need to do that work. Product and Engineering are going to make the most significant structural changes to reflect our plan ahead. We feel strongly that Engineering will move much faster with a smaller and nimbler team, while remaining the biggest percentage of our workforce. And the rest of the organization will be streamlined in parallel.

So we have made an extremely tough decision: we plan to part ways with up to 336 people from across the company. We are doing this with the utmost respect for each and every person. Twitter will go to great lengths to take care of each individual by providing generous exit packages and help finding a new job. Let's take this time to express our gratitude to all of those who are leaving us. We will honor them by doing our best to serve all the people that use Twitter. We do so with a more purpose-built team, which we'll continue to build strength into over time, as we are now enabled to reinvest in our most impactful priorities.

Thank you all for your trust and understanding here. This isn't easy. But it is right. The world needs a strong Twitter, and this is another step to get there. As always, please reach out to me directly with any ideas or questions.

Jack

(*Jarus Hub*, 06 November, 2016)