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Liberalizing Telecommunication in Nigeria: Argument for a Democratic Model

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ABSTRACT In this discussion, we assess the liberalized telecommunication sector in Nigeria against the backdrop of the social and economic realities of a developing society such as ours. In doing so, we demonstrate that the contemporary telecommunication policy in Nigeria is based on a transmission model of communication, a situation which has several negative socio-economic implications, chief among which are economic disempowerment and social exclusion. In the alternative, we advocate a different model for telecommunication policy-making. Such recourse, we argue, can lead to greater democratization of telecommunication and satisfy the communal, cultural and ritual exigencies which Carey's model expects communication policy to satisfy. The model being proposed here is the community - cultural - ritual model of democratic telecommunications. Such an approach is also in keeping with the emancipatory theory of media. It is expected that a recourse to this model will safeguard the participation of all sectors of the society whether rich or poor, majority or minority.