THE PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER

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Exclusive Interview

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ACCESS, SERVICE & JUSTICE

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Editorial Team

From the
Editor's Desk

The relevance of e-governance to access to information goes beyond mere computerization of public institutions. The primary aim is to eliminate bureaucratic bottle neck and improve the quality of governance. No news that government work has not kept pace with the rapid expansion of AI in the private sector. Nigeria still suffer poor archive system and dearth of digitized system. AI can drastically improve citizens' access to real-time answers and could even be used to fill out documents like Assets Declaration Forms.

Currently, near-autonomous defensive systems have been deployed by several countries to intercept incoming attacks. The US has put AI at the Centre of its quest to maintain its military dominance. A substantial portion of this amount has been allocated for robotics, autonomous systems, human-machine collaboration, and cyber and electronic warfare. This edition made a case for a technologically operated military theatre in Nigeria.

Digital tools such as social media have empowered people through widespread access to information and global connections. On the other hand, governments are using technology to be more transparent, accountable and inclusive yet, these same technologies can represent real risks to democracies as unaccountable institutions are leveraging technology to pursue the opposite. This edition advised citizens to use these tools to hold governments to account and exercise their rights

This Edition has the interview with the Chief Judge of Edo State. The Chief of Edo State admitted that there is partial financial autonomy of less than fifty percent in the state's judiciary. According to the Chief Judge "We still apply to the governor for our needs. But I must confess that the Governor has been quite forthcoming and of great assistance to the Edo State Judiciary under my leadership".

This edition has revealed how Artificial Intelligence can be beneficial for access, service, delivery and measurement. This edition dedicated some articles for lawyers because AI can be beneficial and cost effective for growing law firms. This edition spotted the limit of AI in our court. Being a lawyer is not just about having knowledge of the law but license. So delivering legal services with liecense has a long way to question the use of AI in court rooms.

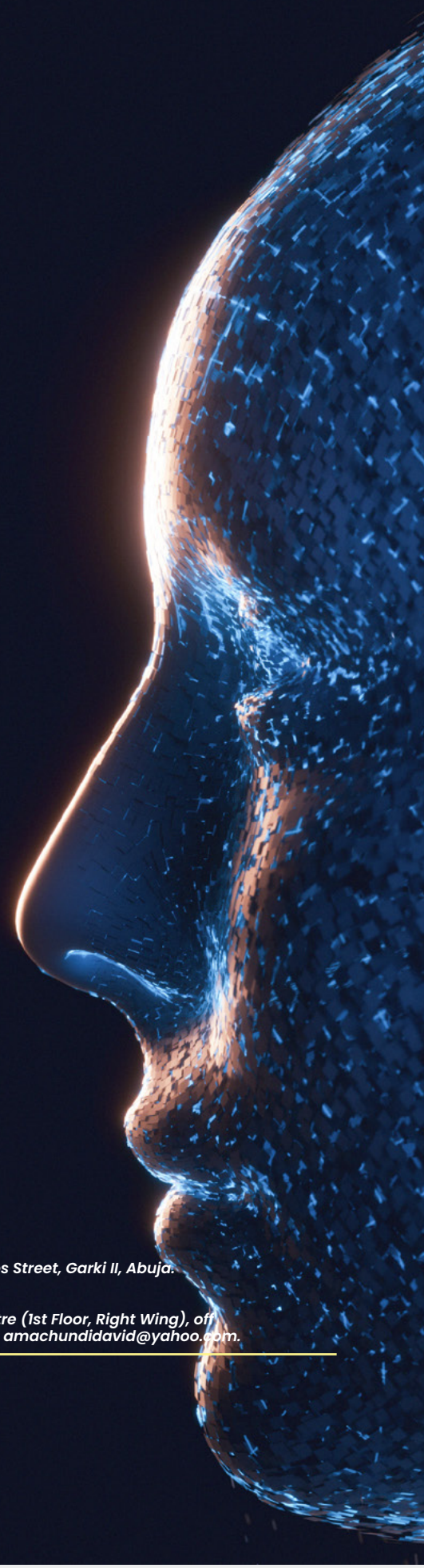
There is a general consensus that a successful legal practice in the nearest future will be that which has adjusted itself to changes in AI as well as delivers parts of legal services machines cannot provide. Therefore, practitioners must develop skills in data analysis, software development and design. There are competitive times ahead more than ever, lawyers in Nigeria must prepare and support the use of AI both for their client's sake, to meet international standards and for overall sustainability

President Aigbokhan, LLM

Editor –in – Chief

What is Artificial Intelligence

ABDURRAHMAN, Abdullahi Esq, & DAVID, Amachundi Adi Esq.



Artificial Intelligence is not a myth. The Oxford Dictionary defines Artificial Intelligence as a computer system able to perform tasks normally requiring human intelligence. Similarly, it is an area of study concerned with making computers copy intelligent human behaviour. (Oxford, 2019)[1]. This is why artificial intelligence has emerged in every area and subject which was considered exclusive to human intelligence. We humans refer to ourselves as *Homo sapiens* due to our mental capacities. We have tried to understand how we think; that is, how a mere handful of cells and organs can perceive, understand, predict, and manipulate a world far larger and more complex than itself. The field of artificial intelligence, or AI**,** goes further still as it attempts to go beyond merely understanding to building intelligent entities(S. Russell and P. Norvig)[2]. The term Artificial Intelligence was coined by McCarthy in the mid-1950s and refers to the simulated intelligence in machines that enables them to replicate, mimic and act like humans. It is any device that can perceive its environment and take actions that maximize its chances of successfully achieving its goals. AI like humans has the ability to perceive and interpret information from its environment in the form of data and act on it.

Artificial Intelligence encompasses a variety of subfields which range from general purpose areas i.e. learning specific tasks such as playing chess, proving mathematical theorems, diagnosing diseases and writing of poetry. Artificial Intelligence methodically automates intellectual tasks which makes it relevant in any intellectual human activity. It is noteworthy that artificial intelligence has been defined from the practical perspective by some authors. In this vein, the definitions have emphasised on systems which think like humans, think rationally, act like humans and act rationally. According to Haugeland, artificial intelligence is 'the exciting new effort to make computers think . . . *machines with minds,* in the full and literal sense.' (J. Haugeland, 1985)[3]. Further, it entails the automation of activities that we associate with human thinking, activities such as decision-making, problem solving, and learning according to Bellman. (R. Bellman, 1978)[4]. These definitions of artificial intelligence emphasised on systems that think like humans.

Subsequently, authors like Winston and Charniak and McDermott defined artificial intelligence emphasising on systems that think rationally. (E. Charniak and D. McDermott, 1985)[5]. In this regard, artificial intelligence

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1. *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary (7th Edn, Oxford University Press, 2005) p. 70.*
2. *S. Russell and P. Norvig, Artificial Intelligence a Morden Approach (2nd Edn., Pearson Education, Inc. 2003).*
3. *J. Haugeland, Artificial Intelligence: The Very Idea (MIT Press, Cambridge, MA, 1985)*
4. *R. Bellman, An Introduction to Artificial Intelligence: Can Computers Think? (Boyd & Fraser Publishing Company, 1978).*
5. *E. Charniak and D. McDermott, Introduction to Artificial Intelligence (Addison-Wesley, 1985).*
6. *P.H Winston, Artificial Intelligence. (3rd Edn., Addison-Wesley 1992).*
7. *E. Rich and K. Knight, Artificial Intelligence (2nd Edn., McGraw Hill, 1991), p. 3.*
8. *R. Kurzweil, The Age of Intelligent Machines (MIT Press 1990).*
9. *Poole, The Independent Choice Logic and Beyond (1998).*

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Designing Sustainable Law Practice with Artificial Intelligence

Mussa Ohomorihiomayi Alexandra

is 'the study of mental faculties through the use of computational models' and further 'the study of the computations that make it possible to perceive, reason, and act.' (P.H. Winston, 1992)[6]. Further, in defining artificial intelligence with emphasis on systems that act like humans, Rich and Knight (Rich and K. Knight, 1991)[7] stated that it is 'the study of how to make computers do things at which, at the moment, people are better' while Kurzweil defined the concept as 'the art of creating machines that perform functions that require intelligence when performed by people. (R. Kurzweil, 1990)[8].

Finally, with emphasis on systems that act rationally, Poole *et al* (D. Poole, 1998)[9] viewed artificial intelligence/computational intelligence as the study of the design of intelligent agents while according to Nilsson, artificial intelligence is concerned with intelligent behaviour in artifacts. Based on the foregoing definitions, it can be gleaned that artificial intelligence is aimed at problem solving, decision making, facilitating learning, research and the performance of given tasks among others. This is achieved by adopting the model of human intellect which will require practical knowledge of neuro-science, biology, information technology among others.

The typical image of a lawyer in the 20th century brings up the image of a person sitting at a desk from 9am to 5pm surrounded by paper files, documents to be faxed, dictating correspondence, and recording time on paper sheets. This is far-flung from the modern day lawyer, plugged into their smartphones, using their laptop or phone for research, video conferencing with colleagues and clients all over the world, recording time on excel sheets all the while moving from one place to the other – some ease of technology on law practice.

The Nigerian law practice remains profoundly under digitized, tradition-bound and slow to adopt new technologies and tools, yet technological changes abound, more so, artificial intelligence. The nature of AI systems is set to disrupt economies, and law practice and its practitioners are not exempted. It is capable of significantly transforming how the business of law is carried out and what it means to be a lawyer and it behooves on law firms and lawyers to adopt AI into their practice or risk the consequences of competitiveness and a fall in the economy of law practice domestically and internationally.

Artificial intelligence plays a pivotal role in innovating legal services, ensuring the future competitiveness of the sector and the long-term sustainability of law practice. Its true benefit in the legal profession may be realized only once lawyers completely rethink the provision of legal services. One of the most recognized benefit of AI in law practice is that it improves efficiency in the practice of law. As a result, clients expect speed in service delivery and response. AI can play a role in creating a sustainable legal practice, which is one that brings value to the clients it serves and profits to the law firms that provide the services in each case.

Artificial intelligence can help law practice to be more client-centric, data driven, and tech-enabled. It has been identified that creating true client loyalty is one of the most powerful and reliable ways to build a strategic, sustainable law practice and this can be done through improved business processes and technological solutions like the type AI offers. This means that AI plays a role in creating a law practice that remains competitive and financially lucrative.

In creating something sustainable, the Nigerian law practice must leverage on the opportunities that Artificial Intelligence has to offer, by adopting AI in these areas: One, in reviewing document and conducting due diligence, Nigerian lawyers can employ Artificial Intelligence to use specific search words and set parameters. The

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advantage of AI here is that it reduces the volume of irrelevant documents attorneys must wade through. As a result, lawyers spend less than 5% of their time on basic document review. It produces statistically valid results, improves performance, increases efficiency and reduces the time taken to perform previously labour-intensive activities. AI is expected to allow lawyers to do more in the same amount of time, thereby enabling them to broaden rather than narrow their areas of specialization. For example, LawGeex's software validates contracts and the AI provides suggestions for editing and approval. It does this by combining machine learning, text analytics, statistical benchmarks and legal knowledge by lawyers according to the company.

Secondly, when analyzing contracts, which is a lawyers' every day task, AI can be used in identifying risks in the contract, advising clients on such contracts and of course helping them to negotiate better terms. For example, AI system called COIN has been used since June 2017 at JP Morgan to interpret commercial loan agreements; a task that previously took 360,000 lawyer-hours can now be done in seconds. Also, because traditional billing systems are not able to ensure that invoices are compliant with calculation of professional fees under the rules, AI is able to solve this problem, flag anomalies and deal with rejected bills less frequently. For example, the Uniformed Task-Based Management System (UTBMS) is a legal billing methodology that uses codes to organize and classify legal work and any expenses. It is often used with the Legal Electronic Data Exchange Standard (LEDES). Here, invoices in the system provide an easy way to analyze legal bills using the UTBMS. Artificial Intelligence billing applications can drastically increase law firm's profits, improve billing efficiency, accuracy and allow a practice to focus on core billable work.

The UTBMS billing codes allows for more extensive data analysis, providing attorneys, law firms, and clients with the ability to more precisely course-correct to improve efficiency and productivity. For clients, it provides a detailed account of exactly for what they are paying. It also allows them to seamlessly compare the billing efficiencies of one law firm to the next.

Thirdly, AI can hasten the pace of legal research. Nigeria's Lawpavilion is setting the pace for AI and automated legal services in Africa in the aspect of legal research. The electronic law report and research software is used by judges, magistrates and lawyers. It makes conducting legal research easier and puts at your fingertips in seconds what might have otherwise taken days or weeks via traditional search. Also, the Lawpavilion product 'TIMI' an AI chatbot makes accessible civil procedures rules in most states, assists with precedent forms and agreement templates and provide a step by step guide on how to file Court processes. Similarly, Ross Intelligence was used to find a case in an instant what it took a lawyer to find in 10 hours. According to the company, lawyers can ask Ross questions in plain English such as "what is the Freedom of Information Act?" and the software will respond with references and citations.

Lastly, although lawyers often after years of experience become good at predicting the outcome of cases, there is a limit to the lawyers' ability to do so. AI can access and handle large pools of relevant data and predict the outcomes of legal disputes and proceedings. For example, an AI system trained and fed with all the records of the Court of Appeal in Nigeria and the Supreme Court can be better at predicting the outcomes of future disputes coming before these Courts. Ravel Law, an AI tool is said to be able to identify outcomes based on relevant case law, judge rulings and referenced language from more than 400 courts. The product's Judge Dashboard feature contains cases, citations, circuits and decisions of a specific judge that is said to aid lawyers in understanding how judge is likely to rule on a case.

Conclusively, AI offers lawyers the opportunity to carve a niche and to focus on areas of 'lawyering' where they are indispensable and are irreplaceable by machines. A successful legal practice in the nearest future will be that which has adjusted itself to changes in AI as well as delivers the parts of legal services machines cannot provide. According to Deloitte, about 100,000 legal sector jobs are likely to be automated in the next twenty years and Global Institute estimates that 23% of a lawyer's job could be automated. As such, its practitioners must develop skills in data analysis, become legal software experts, legal engineers and learn how to design and write algorithms, etc. In many ways, AI provides sustainable ways for law practice especially in decision making process and can be beneficial and cost effective for growing law firms, improving transparency, efficiency in dispute resolution and improved access to justice. These are competitive times ahead and a lawyer's time will soon become a competitive business, aimed at saving client's money and preventing risks as much as possible. More than ever, lawyers in Nigeria must prepare and support the use of AI for their client's sake, to meet international standards and for overall sustainability.

News Report

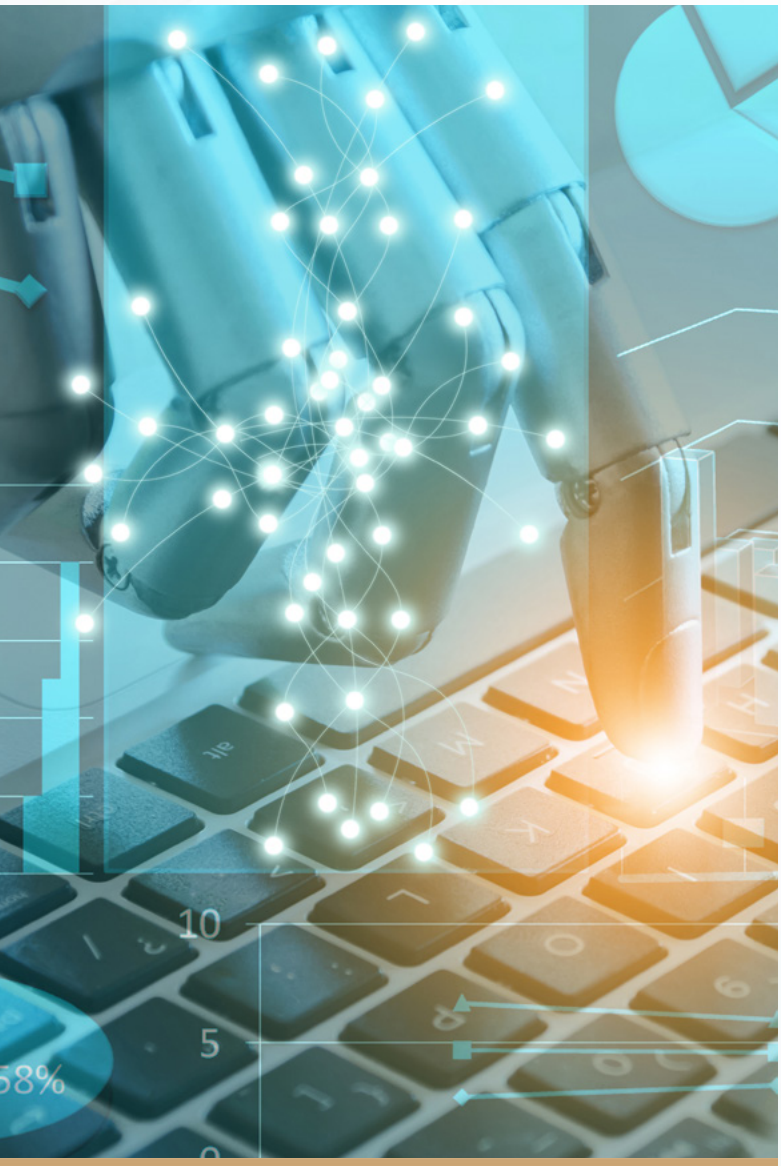
The Future is here: How I used Chat GPT Artificial Intelligence to write A Legal Brief.

Opatola Victor

Artificial Intelligence is here, and the legal Industry needs to be prepared on how AI will affect the legal space. Technology have a way of sneaking up on you, gradually; then suddenly. Recently, I used Artificial Intelligence to draft a legal brief on complex tort law and law of contract issues, in order to test the efficacy and adaptability of Artificial Intelligence to writing Court briefs in Nigeria; especially to see how well it can cite Nigerian case laws and authorities. I imputed the following command: "With Nigeria case laws, write a court brief on airline denying passenger boarding." It responded with the following answer "In this court brief, we will address the legal effect of an airline denying a passenger boarding the airline, with reference to Nigeria case law".

In the Nigerian court case of Abolaji v. Arik Air Limited, the court held that an airline's refusal to allow a passenger to board a flight was unjustified and in violation of the terms of the passenger's contract, and awarded damages to the passenger for the losses and inconvenience suffered as a result of the denied boarding. In the case of Alakija v. Virgin Atlantic Airways, the court upheld the passenger's right to be transported by the airline they had contracted with, and ruled that the airline was liable for damages for failing to fulfill its obligations under the contract. The court also awarded damages to the passenger for the mental distress and inconvenience caused by the denied boarding.

Furthermore, in the case of Oluwadamilola v. Air France, the court held that an airline's denial of boarding to a passenger without justification or in violation of the terms of the passenger's contract was a breach of the contract, and awarded damages to the passenger for the losses and inconvenience suffered as a result. These cases establish that in Nigeria, passengers who are denied boarding by an airline without justification or in violation of their contract may be entitled to seek damages for any losses or inconvenience suffered as a result. Airlines have a legal obligation to transport passengers in accordance with the terms of the contract, and any denial of boarding without justification or in violation of the contract may give rise to liability for damages." Apart from the above question command and the brief the AI wrote, I asked it some other complicated questions in areas of tort law and law of contract;



and it analyzed the issues in IRAC format giving its conclusion based on the issues raised and cited case laws.

In the usage of the technology, it has been criticized for its response is still not quite detailed enough in addressing legal issues comprehensively. The technology finds it difficult to cite sections and case laws. Also, it fairly analyzed complicated issue based scenarios in line with decided authorities.

Although this particular AI cannot review legal documents but there are other AI which can do so. AI cannot interview clients, except it is in written format. While different AI applications might give varied responses, it is still for the human to fine tune it and choose the best fitted for his argument and this is in addition to popular Ai bias.

This can occur because AI survives and lives on accumulated data fed into it or gathered, chances of a biased AI exists; based on intentional or unintentional biased or wrong information. For instance, if the data continuously fed to an AI is that yellow is better than green, then the result the AI will give is always that Yellow is better than green. If the legal sector relies totally on AI, it may be subject to likely hacks and control from the operators, company and programmers of these AI especially in high stake court cases or contract analysis. I used Chat GPT. Chat GPT is a natural language processing (NLP) tool that uses a

powerful machine learning model to generate human-like responses to input text. There are other ones such as Westlaw Edge's Quick Check, Lexis+ Brief Analysis, IBM Watson etc notwithstanding the capabilities of these Artificial Intelligence, legal practitioners need to adapt not fear for their jobs (at least not yet)

Recommendation

The Legal industry needs to be prepared, with necessary education and policy documents. For instance, the Nigeria Law School and other law faculties need to start thinking of inculcate the inevitable use of AI into their curriculums. The Judiciary needs to look into best use of AI to de-clog its overburden dockets and backlogs, in other to be more efficient. The Nigeria Bar Association needs to create a system and policy document on the ethical use of AI by lawyers, its scope and limitations. The Legal Practitioners Disciplinary Body must review the use of Artificial Intelligence to determine what will constitute professional misconduct and malpractice. Lawyers and Law firms should understand how best AI can aid practice without leading to disclosure of client information. The whole justice sector must be ready and make best use of AI, cautiously towards the course of justice.

Stakeholders adopt Benin City Declaration on Access to Information at Sub-nationals

President Aigbokhan

In a one day colloquium organized by Rural Development, Information and Legal Advocacy Centre (RUDILAC) in collaboration with Edo State Ministry of Communication held on 29th day of September 2022 at John Odigie Oyegun Public Service Training Centre, Benin City to mark the International Day for Universal Access to Information (IDUAI) 2022 with the theme "Artificial Intelligence, e-Government and Access to Information". Stakeholders adopted the Benin City Declaration on Access to Information at the Sub nationals.

The declaration is to promote anti-corruption, human right protection, good office practice and participatory governance at various states. It was agreed that Government's obligation to honour access to information commitment is inalienable and basic democratic good governance practice. It was emphasized that various state commitment to inform the public on covid19 precaution during the pandemic was proactive disclosure in default that must be sustained post pandemic.

Stakeholders who gathered in Benin City emphasized that open government commitment does not require a legislation. It was reiterated that decision of the Court of Appeal, Benin City in Osakue v EDOSACA where it held that State government must pass access to information law before Freedom of Information Act of 2011 can be enforced in the state should not be pampered in vacuum as some states have extant open government legislation that fills the gap. It was also emphasized that Article 9 (1) & (2) of the African Charter which Nigeria is a signatory guarantees right to information and sub nationals require no further legislation or direction to comply. Edo State government was requested to forward Access to Information Bill as an Executive Bill to the House of Assembly for passage.

The declaration is to ensure that sub national government bodies respect the principle of transparency, accountability and public access to information in their operation and to provide for comprehensive legal guarantees for the right to access information held by all public bodies and requiring them to publish key categories of information. The declaration also calls for protection of digitized records and information by complying with extant privacy regulation and also passing a privacy legislation.

The organization who endorsed the declaration include Mr. Leo Atakpu of Africa Network for Environment & Economic Justice (ANEEJ), Uyi Ojo Executive Director of Environmental Rights Action (ERA), Com. Austin Osakue of Foundation for Good Governance & Social Change (FFGGSC), Prof A.D Badaiki, SAN of Rural Development, Information & Legal Advocacy Centre (RUDILAC), President Aigbokhan of RUDILAC, Bishop. Dr. O.A. Ochei of Peoples' Defenders Advocate, Com. Abiola Igaga of Conference of NGOS (COMGOS), Com. Agho Omobude of Edo Civil Society Organization (EDOCSO, VGN, Com. Ngozi Ibeh of Freedom Ambassadors, Mr. Ayodele Otuakhena of FOI Counsel, Mr. Johngoodluck Nweze of Connected Advocacy, Com. Idiogbe Solomon of Youth Empowerment Advocates, Mr. Odion Polycarp of Nigeria Police Force, Mr. Solomon Imohiosu of Ministry of Communication & orientation, Okonjo Oyniyechukwu of Uromi JDPC, Uzioruna Aliu of Vanguard Newspaper, Tony Osaugo of The Sun Newsppaer, Francis Onoiribholo of Daily Independent Newspaper, Patrick Ochoga of Leadership Newspaper and individuals present.

Harnessing e- Governance through Open Government Partnership (OGP)

Kelvin Odemero

Overview

The concept of digital governance represents a fundamental shift in the way governments around the world are embracing their mission. From setting measurable administrative goals to improving public service delivery, making data-driven decisions, enacting evidence-based policies, ensuring greater accountability and transparency within government and building greater public trust. Digital tools such as social media have empowered people through widespread access to information and global connections.

Citizens are therefore advised to use these tools to hold governments to account and to exercise their civic rights. These digital tools include websites, mobile sites, social media outlets, the internet, and programmes and events that are promoted on the internet. On the other hand, governments are using technology to be more transparent, accountable and inclusive. They are also innovating solutions to pressing issues, including delivering services better, establishing cutting edge systems of procurement, advancing fiscal openness and fighting fraud and abuse. Yet, these same technologies can represent real risks to democracies as unaccountable institutions are leveraging technology to pursue their own interests in and across markets with little to no – or conflicting – jurisdiction and accountability. And public institutions are dealing with the unintended consequences of fast-moving technologies that often outpace legal safeguards and government oversight.

Under OGP, governments work with civil society to create action plans with concrete reforms. This model helps ensure citizens play a role in shaping and overseeing government. OGP members address issues, such as justice, gender, health, education, digital governance, right to information, civic space, natural resources, corruption and more. Seventy-eight countries and a growing number of local governments—representing more than two billion people—and thousands of civil society organizations are members of OGP of which Nigeria is a part of.

In May 2016, when the President attended the international Anti-Corruption Summit organized by

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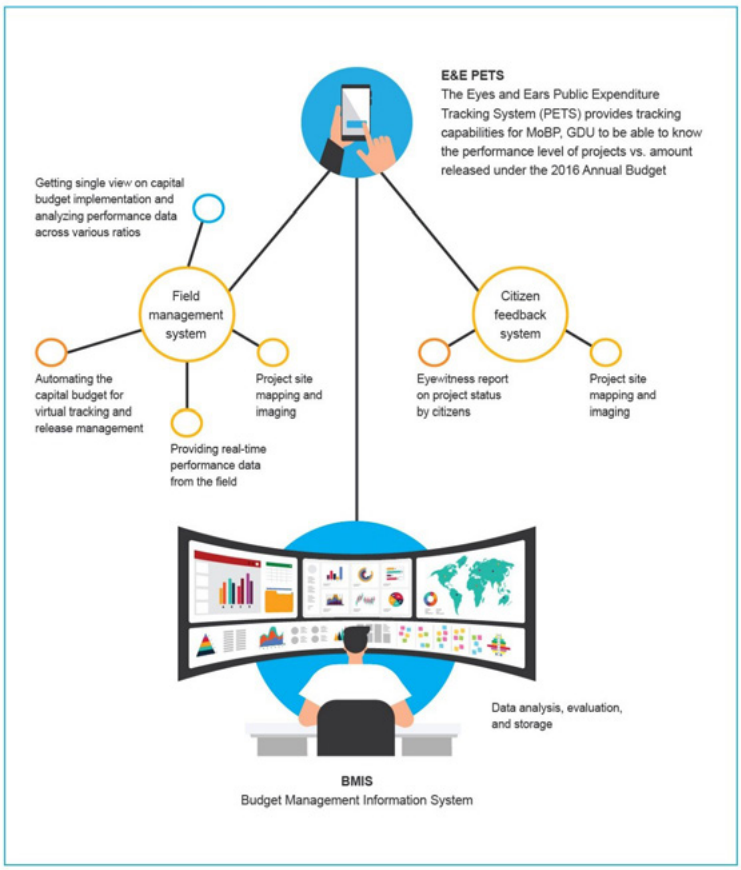
FIGURE - 1 **Eyes and Ears Public Expenditure System**

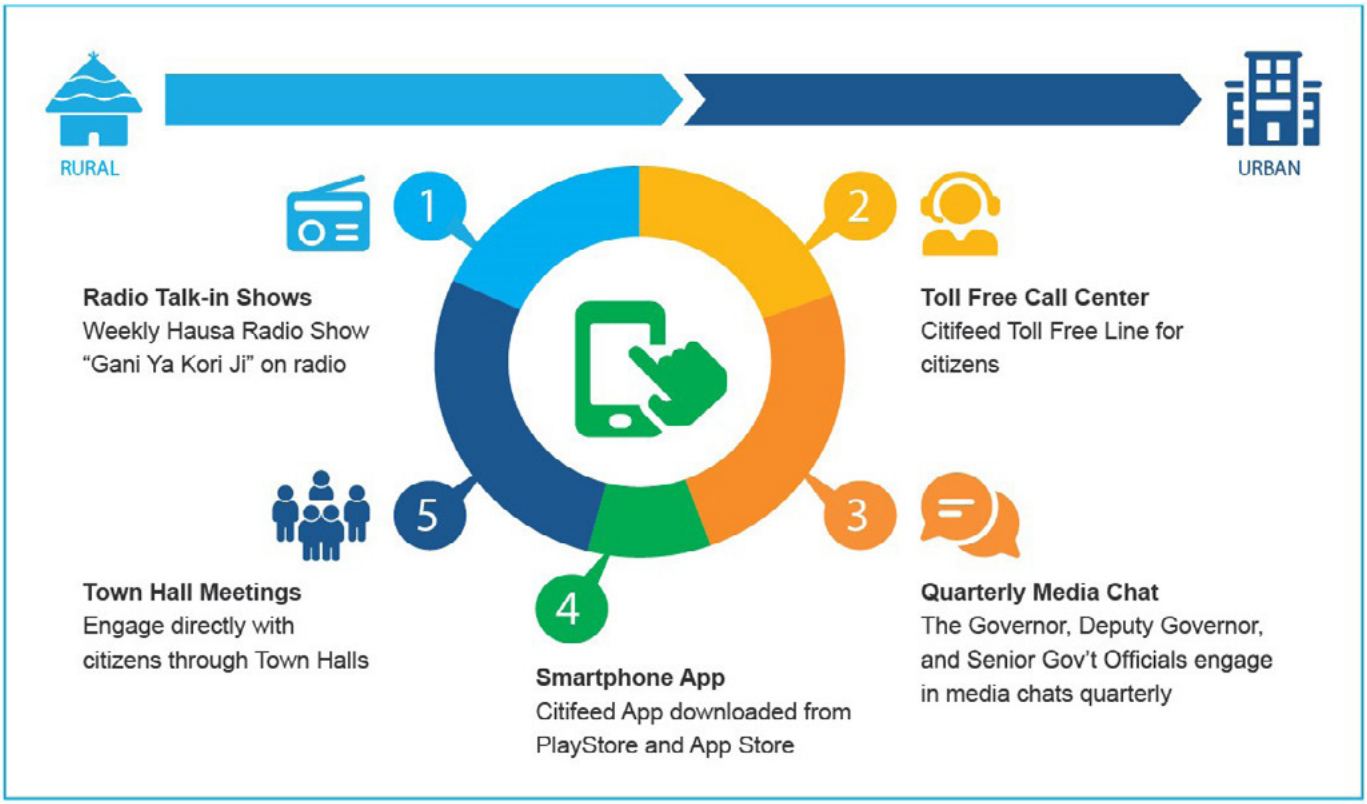


Source: Kaduna State Planning and Budget Commission.

the government of the United Kingdom. It was on this global stage that he reaffirmed his commitment to strengthening anti-corruption reforms through implementing programs aimed at 'exposing corruption; punishing the corrupt and providing support to the victims of corruption; and, driving out the culture of corruption'. Flowing from these commitments, the Federal Government sought to deepen institutional and policy reforms, and this led to Nigeria joining the Open Government Partnership (OGP) in July 2016 as the 70th country. Four thematic areas namely fiscal transparency, anti-corruption, access to information and citizens' engagement.

To strengthen the social contract, bolster government performance, and Open Government Partnership, Kaduna undertook a World Bank-supported GovTech transformation built civic engagement. An early

FIGURE 2 - **Participatory Mechanisms**



Source: Kaduna State Planning and Budget Commission.

step was to create a mobile app intended as a government-to-government project monitoring tool. The Planning and Budget Commission would send procurement-level details to field officers, who would verify the current status of capital projects such as schools, roads, and health clinics. Soon it became clear that it was logistically impossible for the small number of government field staff to track the roughly 3,000 projects underway. In response, a new mobile app, CitiFeed, was extended to citizens as part of what became known as the Eyes and Ears2 public expenditure tracking system (Figure 1). CitiFeed allows users to identify a nearby public infrastructure project via GPS coordinates, and upload photos and comments related to the project's rollout. With their smartphones, users can provide feedback on service availability – project status; service quality – for example, feedback on hospitals, schools, and community services; and perceptions – citizens' views on investment priorities. Citizens do not need to pay to download or use the app, but normal data rates apply. Other participatory mechanisms, such as town halls, radio talk shows, and a toll free call center, were later adopted to complement the app and maximize participation through addressing the lack of mobile internet coverage (Figure 2).

UNESCO is the UN custodian agency for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) Indicator 16.10.2 and continues to report on progress on both the adoption and implementation of access to information guarantees worldwide. The General Assembly of the United Nations appointed UNESCO in September 2015 as custodian UN agency for global monitoring of SDG Indicator 16/10.2 which encapsulate number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and or policy guarantees for public access to information. Another scenario would be routine processes that a machine can automate while improving over time. While more research needs to be done to improve the capabilities of AI and explore its role in citizen services. There are areas where AI could be immediately beneficial. AI can help with reducing pandemics, improving food security and distribution, sustainable agriculture and public safety. It can also eliminate linguistic barrier and help to foster the knowledge of Bini language in schools and communities. There is nothing wrong for Ministry of Culture to test the use of AI to prepare Bini delicacies. There is no end to what AI can do for us. One scenario in which machine learning could become valuable in a government context is when there is a mass of data but not enough people to manage it or experts to analyze it.

Challenges of employing AI for e-Governance

The challenges in the current development of Internet-of-things and Artificial Intelligence applications and services must be overcome if such applications

and services are to enhance public governance and people's livelihoods.

1. Interoperability

The framework of the Internet-of-things AI applications are made up of many core components, including sensor systems or surveillance systems that collect information from people, entities, and the surroundings, communications networks and systems, and toolkits or devices for storing and processing data, all of which use various technologies. Furthermore, the system could be interoperable with many other governmental apps. Moreover, the number of technologies may cause issues with maintenance services and sustainability.

2. Data security and privacy

The Internet is used for information gathering and analysis in Internet - of - things AI applications. As a result, many IoT applications, like regular web services, are subject to cyber risk. Data security issues, such as the intrusion of private information in IoT devices, might also jeopardize data privacy. Furthermore, data privacy is linked to information authorization. People's data may be collected without permission by gadgets or sensors such as CCTV camera on the streets. In other words, users may be unaware that their information is being gathered. Furthermore, they might lack a good understanding of what type of data is gathered, how it will be kept and managed, and who benefits from it. Personal liberty and trustworthiness may be jeopardized as a result of this uncertainty in data gathering and usage. In this regard, there may be considerable difficulties between various parties responsible for datasets, administration, and analysis. To alleviate such conflicts, it is critical to establish ownership rights and the advantages created by IoT-enabled AI applications.

3. Environmental sustainability

The IoT-enabled Artificial Intelligence systems may increase energy management efficiency by improving energy production and delivery. On the other hand, because IoT-enabled AI systems must gather, store, and examine massive quantities of data. It also examines the power consumption and energy required. However, the Internet has been estimated to cause 5% of overall global energy consumption, a figure rising as internet traffic, cloud services, and now IoT has increased. To tackle these issues, the previous section highlights three IoT-related concepts for smart government systems and applications: interoperability, sustainability, privacy, and security.

4. Ethical challenges

Once data is collected via IoT devices, smart government AI systems that use this data confront several ethical problems. Autonomous vehicles, for example, are becoming capable of recognizing the ambiances and traversing without human involvement. However, the ease and promise of mobility automation may create ethical quandaries. For example, when confronted with many possibilities, like lowering the mortality rates or protecting the driver or passengers' lives, the AI program are designed to minimize harm.

5. Accountability issues

Another concern with AI applications, such as medical robots, have been proven to jeopardize the safety of the patients and pose responsibility problems. Should a machine still carry out a directive that might hurt a person, such as an older adult begging the robot to destroy themselves or a doctor directing an incorrect medical procedure? Such scenarios raise concerns about responsibility for the negative effects of robot judgments and acts, posing a considerable hurdle for such applications.

Recommendation

Make digital citizen engagement inclusive by ensuring that internet access is inclusive and addresses barriers to affordability and accessibility for underrepresented communities and geographically isolated regions. Additionally, understand gender-specific challenges of online engagement by analyzing disaggregated registration data by age, gender, and relevant demographic data, taking into account privacy of individuals, and assessing existing data on online harassment via consultation and research.

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E-Gov as a Driver for Access to Information in Nigeria

Robinson Otuakhena

The relevance of e-governance to access to information goes beyond mere computerization of public institutions, it fundamentally means changing the way government operates and implies a new set of responsibilities for civil servants, business and the public as online services will give an average citizens access to information with faster response at more convenient hours. The aim of e-governance is to eliminate bureaucratic bottle neck associated with the right to access to information. The aim of e-governance facilitates and improves the quality of governance and ensure people's participation in the governing process through electronic means like email, websites, sms connectivity and others. E-governance is not all about government and citizens' effective relationship. It is about the use of ICT for steering the citizens and promoting the public service.

Corruption is among the serious contextual constraints that face e- Gov success in both developed and developing nations. Although corruption exists in all countries, its intensity differs from country to country. Regrettably, it is most common in third world nations. Similarly. Andersen and Rand (2006)20 argued that ICT could be effective in the fight against corruption. Ran Kim (2012) 21 reported that setting up the right institutions presents a major challenge for many countries. Institutional arrangements profoundly influence technology and its application in government. Heeks (2001) contends that countries faced several challenges. First, the strategic challenge of ICT infrastructure: the pre-conditions for e-Governance and secondly, the tactical challenge of closing design—reality gaps: adopting best practice in e-Governance projects to avoid failure and to achieve success. Heeks (2001) supra further documented that surveys of e-Governance initiatives in developing countries are incredibly rare and it needs to be addressed coupled with sustainability failure—an initiative that succeeds initially but then fails after a year or so. Most of the scholarly research conducted on e-Gov failures concludes that one of the major reasons why most e-Gov project failed in developing countries is because of the wide gap between the ICT design and the reality of the system. There are managerial deficiency and poor structures, staffing, and less-serious gaps around some of the e-Gov system components. (See, Lessa et. al 201222 Heeks 2002; Dada 2006).

Types of E Governance

E-Governance can be considered as the social inclusive policy for development of transparency and accountability of both people in society and administration. This policy involves providing the services to the people with collection of information through the institutional and communicational development. It provides quality services in several ways. Those ways are also called as types of e-governance. These are G2C (Government to Citizen), G2G (Government to Government), G2B (Government to Business) and G2E (Government to Employee).

1.G2C (Government to Citizen)

As people are the key concept of politics and government as well as governance, the government is compelled to connect with citizens through the transparent and accountable order. In this connection the government is responsible for promoting the social opportunities and public services in areas like registration of motor vehicles, issue of driving licenses etc.). This also include linking of various hospitals in different parts of the country to ensures better medical services to citizens, availability of the e-learning modules to the citizens, right to education, online job portal and various customer services. It also cover services such as issue of certificates, passport, payments of bills and filing the taxes from the door step through e-governance platform. The main objectives of the G2C services are to ensure equitable distribution of information for all, acceptance of citizen's feedback, and improving welfare services.

2.G2G (Government to Government)

G2G has been referring to raising the quality of the government process by cost cutting, managing performance, and making strategic connections within government. It enables government institutions to be more efficient and more effective by the use of IT tools such as live fingerprints scanning and verification and electronic entry of reports and paperwork etc. The major key areas in this type of e-governance are E-Secretariat (all the valuable information regarding the function of the government are interlinking throughout the various departments), E-Police (police personnel records, criminal records etc), and E-Court (creating a database of all the previous cases, pending and ongoing cases) and Statewide Networks (Kumar: 2011).10

3.G2B (Government to Business)

G2B is mainly concerned with E-taxation, getting a license from the government etc. It has included the policy of government with business. According to S.P Kumar, 'the essentials for achievement of G2B services for secure and authentic transactions include: Standards for electronic transactions, a secure payment mechanism and Public key infrastructure' (Kumar: 2011).

4.G2E (Government to Employee)

The G2E model refers to providing information and services from government to employee and employee to government as well. It involves training through e-learning methods, Consolidating the employee and share of knowledge among the employees. It has also facilitated the employee to access information regarding pay and benefit policies and manage their profits through online.

Current Status and Future Expectation of E-Government

In the contemporary world, you are either in e-Gov or out of government. Electronic government is a global phenomenon that has increasingly attract the attention of governments and policymakers amongst others. (Azab et al. 2009) 23. e-Gov is a necessity for world governments that are soliciting for better governance and economic development. The present reality of slow diffusion of e-Gov within Africa coupled with inadequate

e-readiness (Heeks, 2002 supra) and diverse social and cultural barriers are to be blamed for the high rate of e-Gov project failures. Heeks (2002) argues that e-Gov projects failed in Africa because of the huge digital divide among communities and to address these tactical challenges, stakeholders must sensitize the public. The digital divide and poor state of e-readiness in developing countries is still a major hindrance to e-Gov projects.

UNESCO is the UN custodian agency for Sustainable Development Goals (SDG)

Indicator 16.10.2 and continues to report on progress on both the adoption and implementation of access to information guarantees worldwide. The General Assembly of the United Nations appointed UNESCO in September 2015 as custodian UN agency for global monitoring of SDG Indicator 16/10.2 which encapsulate number of countries that adopt and implement constitutional, statutory and or policy guarantees for public access to information. Another scenario would be routine processes that a machine can automate while improving over time. While more research needs to be done to improve the capabilities of AI and explore its role in citizen services. There are areas where AI could be immediately beneficial. AI can help with reducing pandemics, improving food security and distribution, sustainable agriculture and public safety. It can also eliminate linguistic barrier and help to foster the knowledge of Bini language in schools and communities. There is nothing wrong for Ministry of Culture to test the use of AI to prepare Bini delicacies. There is no end to what AI can do for us. One scenario in which machine learning could become valuable in a government context is when there is a mass of data but not enough people to manage it or experts to analyze it.

AI can help recognize and categorize data in documents and then markup that data to create a structured document Coldewey (2021). While big data and analytics can be used to complete some of the same tasks as AI, including automation, AI is not synonymous with these terms. AI becomes powerful with machine learning, where the computer learns from supervised training and inputs over time to improve response. AI will also have more efficiently deliver citizen services while potentially reducing costs and increasing citizen satisfaction and engagement. The government of Singapore worked with Microsoft to create Chabot's for select citizen service. These Chabot's are intended to function as digital representatives.

Current research on e-Gov development is not well documented and lacks theoretical underpinning. Much research is based on theory building or theory testing. However, developing countries

has all it takes to developed e-Gov in the future despite their current challenges. The desire for better opportunities and good governance will assert pressure on government to go digital or out of government. The citizen should be viewed as customers and the government and various stakeholders must readily provide internet connection at a cheaper rate. Unless the internet is cheap and affordable, the gap in the digital divide will be worsened in societies.

Conclusion

Nigeria has the potential to develop their e-Gov services and they just need to learn from the experiences of developed countries and their failures. It is important to note that model borrowing from developed countries to developing nations is good only if it factor or considers social, economic, cultural, and institutional settings of developing countries. We might have recommended a holistic and integrated policy approach. e-Gov policies must be based on a citizen-centric approach and these policies must be guided with a comprehensive master plan guide. Regular and periodic evaluation of e-Gov projects is a necessary condition for success. Nigeria needs to improve and update rregularly the websites of its agencies. The paper also recommends greater political and bureaucratic support for the development of the e-Gov project in developing countries. This will not only boost citizen's trust but also for transparency and accountability of the government.

Health Tips

KEEP WALKING

Both the legs together have 50% of the nerves of the human body, 50% of the blood vessels and 50% of the blood is flowing through them. It is the largest circulatory network that connects the body. So walk daily!

Only when the feet are healthy then the convention current of blood flows , smoothly, so people who have strong leg muscles will definitely have a strong heart. Walk!

Aging starts from the feet upwards. Walk

As a person gets older, the accuracy & speed of transmission of instructions between the brain and the legs decreases, unlike when a person is young. Please Walk!

In addition, the so-called Bone Fertilizer Calcium will sooner or later be lost with the passage of time, making the elderly more prone to bone fractures. Walk!

Bone fractures in the elderly can easily trigger a series of complications, especially fatal diseases such as brain thrombosis. Walk!

Do you know that 15% of elderly patients generally, will die maximum within a year of a thigh-bone fracture!! Walk daily without fail

Exercising the legs, is never too late, even after the age of 60 years. Walk

Although our feet/legs will gradually age with time, exercising your feet/ legs is a life-long task. Walk 10,000 steps!

Only by regular strengthening the legs, one can prevent or reduce further aging. Walk 365 days

Please walk for at least 30-40 minutes daily to ensure that your legs receive sufficient exercise and to ensure that your leg muscles remain healthy. Keep walking!

Excerpt from an exclusive Interview with

Hon Justice Joe Acha

The Chief Judge of Edo State

Q: lets us start on a personal note to know what the past-time of your lordship is.

A. these days I don't know if I still have past time because the work is so demanding, sometimes I don't leave the office till about 7 pm at weekends you have so many engagements both official and social demanding my attention because of the position. so I don't know if I can say for now that I have any

Q: Before this your new role what was your pass time like, what do you do for leisure?

A: Leisure! I watch football.

Q: Considering the hectic nature of being a judge and also coupled with the role of being a Chief Judge, how do you combine that with being a father or maybe being a grandfather?

A: Well luckily for me most of the children are grown up now, just two little ones that are still in school and they are even on the verge of leaving school. And my wife is there to play the role of taking care of the home and the children. So I think I am free enough to go to work and carry out my responsibility. But, before being the chief judge it was easier because after work you go back home, stay with the kids, you play with them and do what you have to do. Essentially too you just take care of the kids; you provide for their needs and allow the woman to do the domestic work.

Q: **We want to know what is the level of digitalization at the High Court of Edo State, and what are the reforms currently on the ground.**

A: I think we are currently carrying out reforms in all areas. But, digitalization because of the stance of the Governor, the judiciary is deeply involved in what the Governor is doing, trying to digitalize the entire system, the entire work system in the state. So we are training our personnel and trying to acquire some equipment that will help us in that direction. We just recruited over 10 reporters for the courts, they have just resumed and some of the machines have been acquired, we are still acquiring more. We have our ICT department but I want to make them the hub of our ICT where every person will be involved in ICT. Very soon the court will also be fully digitalized in terms of reporting, and recording also and the Governor is quite passionate about it so we are moving along with him. If we are allowed to say what we need and money is appropriated by the legislature for the purpose, we will catch up with the ICT revolution in the justice sector

Q: That brings us to the next question, audio recording of court proceedings. What is your take on it?

A: We are in the process right now we are even far behind time, it is something that every court should embrace, every judiciary should embrace. Other

judiciaries practically at the federal level are already into it so, am pretty sure that very soon Edo State will acquire the equipment and we will get on track also.

Q: What is the link with the Federal Government/ NJI on information technology infrastructure?

A: We are talking with the Committee in charge and we are working out our own contribution as part of the counterpart contribution to setting up a fully technology built judicial system. Very soon the committee will visit the state to access our readiness for a digitized judiciary

Q: Is Edo State High Court open to private partnership?

For now we are only open to internatonal organizations so as to curb the notion of conflict of interests

Q: The NBA has criticized the National Assembly for investing so much power in the Federal High court for pre-election matters. What is your take?

A. If you ask in terms of proximity, the state court is within these areas of disputation, they ought to be part of the system but by and large and because of our kind of society I think we are now almost insulated from politics because if has it backlash if you get the court to be too involved in political disputation the consequences may be too grave, but I think on the long run the advantages are more that they removed that burden from the state high court and taking them to the federal high court. We are all judges, we have our oath of office and then we have our conscience to follow. So there is nothing esoteric about the Federal High Court hearing these cases. We are all Nigerians, but probably it will get to a time they will realize that it's a mistake to move all these cases, there is no way they will be able to handle them. And it's not just now, gradually they have been eroding into the jurisdiction and powers of the State Court. If you remember the Federal High Court Started as a revenue court and then it began to develop, plucking as it were areas that the state high court was handling. If you remember the 1970 or 71 constitutions that vest unlimited jurisdiction on the State High Court but it is no longer so, but they will soon realize that whereas the State is expanding, the federal high court is trying to expand but I don't have how much they will be able to get to in this aspiration

Q. Coming back home to Edo State, what is the percentage of Judicial autonomy?

A. For Edo State, I will say financial autonomy is about 20 to 30 percent. We still apply to the governor for our needs. But I must confess that the governor has been quite forthcoming and of great assistance to the Edo state judiciary under my leadership. Most requests we make to them they always oblige. But we don't usually decide on what is done, like in budgetary formulation and breakdown we don't have a say.

Q. As a judge what do you expect from court users and general citizens in 2023?

A. Well, we expect them to be decorous and maintain good conduct when they come to court and court premises and allow the court to take decisions. They have brought their dispute to court, the judges particularly are honourable men and women of conscience. I assure them that they will get justice in the pure sense undiluted of Edo State court. So they should be rest assured that justice will be delivered to them as long as they will allow the presiding officer, when I say presiding officers I mean at all levels, High Court, Magistrate Court, and Customary Court at all levels. They are all under our watch, I can say for now we will do our best

Q. My Lord has been in the Judiciary for more than two decades and you have seen all crops of young lawyers appear before you. And being an Alumni of OAU, what have you observed as the gap in our tertiary curriculum?

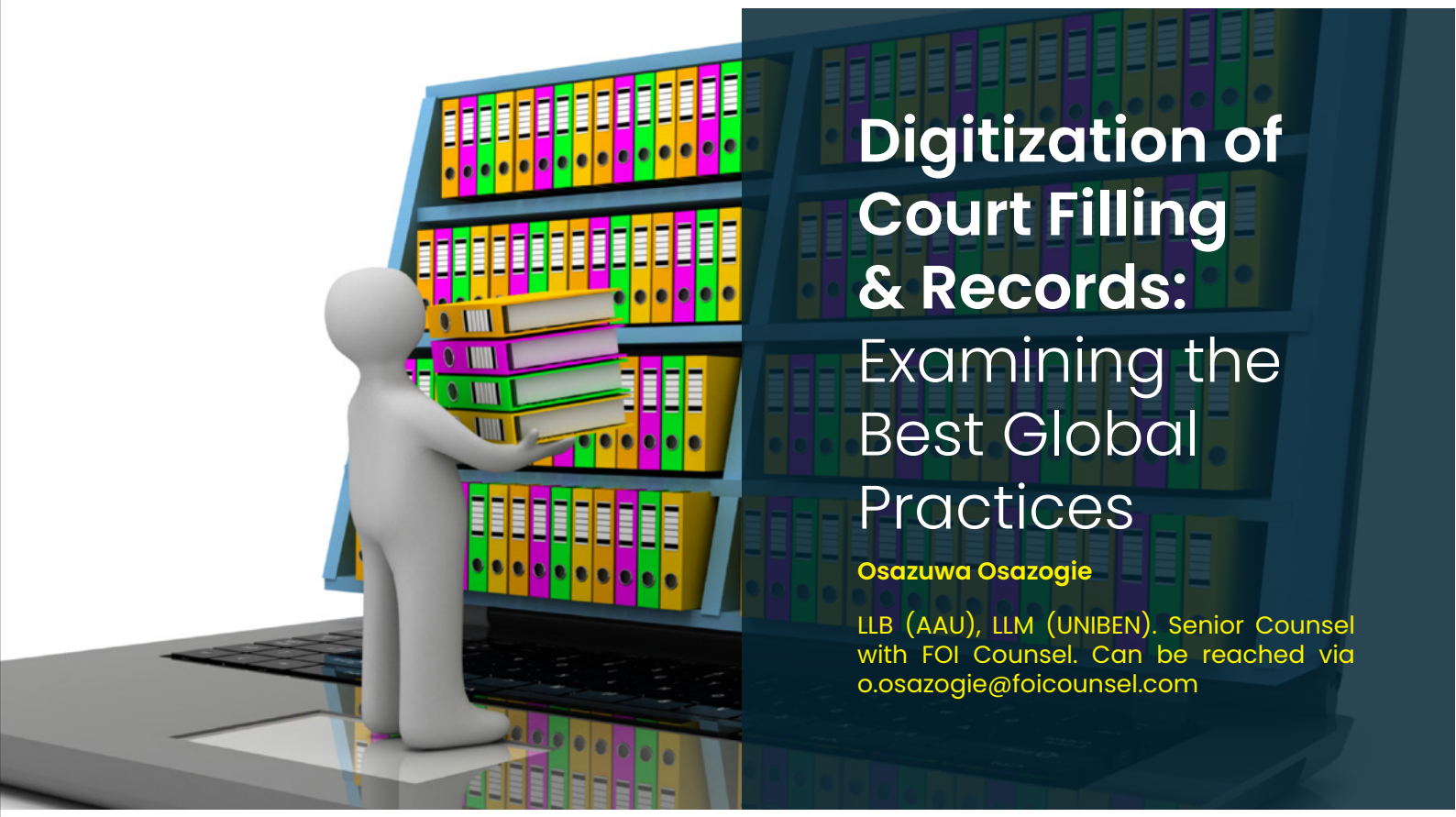
A. I think in terms of character a lot needs to be done. Also, lawyers should find a way to polish their English language. Advocacy is key in legal practice, particularly for those who come to court; we are not getting the best of it. When you hear lawyers the way they speak now sometimes you get embarrassed and you don't want to point it out to them because their clients are also there. But I think the system from the primary and secondary school level should do something about English language for those who want to practice law because the English language is our tool. So advocacy is something a lawyer should have in abundance but we are not seeing much of it among the young lawyers

Q. your lordship, you will be bowing out next year, what do you want the High court of Edo State to remember you for?

A. I want to be remembered for massive development of the judiciary tool box for the 21st century justice and legal reforms.

Q. Some persons have accused the judiciary of colluding with corrupt politicians in perpetuating impunity in Nigeria

A. If you interview a litigant who wins in court, he/she will say the judiciairy is the best and those who lose will tell you that the judiciary is corrupt but the thing is where is the evidence?. Litigants are fond of jumping to the media, they have social media now and legal practitioners help them to propagate all sorts of allegations that cannot be substantiated. It is not true that judges or the judiciary are colluding with corrupt politicians, it's most unkind



Digitization of Court Filling & Records: Examining the Best Global Practices

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Good governance involves good record keeping as it assist in proficiency and responsibility through establishment, administration and maintenance of accurate data. It is essential to note that good governance is persistent when the government manages public institutions in a competent, translucent and approachable manner[1]. However, the transparency and responsibility in a democratic society are eventually accomplished by giving the public the right to access information through records management. Accordingly, several governments, both in the developed and developing nations have engaged the benefit of using new technologies to conduct large quantities of their businesses electronically[2]. This approach has frequently caused in greater involvement of citizens in the democratic organizations of a country and has expedited the use of technologies such as word processing requests, intranets, email, Electronic Data Interchange (EDI), e-commerce and data imaging to support paperless transactions. However, modern records management practices necessitate that organizations and courts digitize their records and have same administered, stored, transmitted and recovered electronically.

The era of digital records has progressively required the distribution of diverse document management systems, either open source or otherwise[3]. The digitization of the court processes is progressing; however, attaining quality in digitalized court processes in African require scrutinizing numerous serious conditions which includes users experience, funding and how the interruption will aid access to justice.

Just like several government organizations with restricted resources, judicial authorities are relentlessly stressed to do more with less, as burdens on court systems increase but resources often lag behind. This delinquent is commonly compounded by an overdependence on legacy hard copy systems. The outcome is growing backlogs and court authorities sinking in paper[4]. As courts in specific jurisdictions have detected, digital transformation and digitization can help challenge these difficulties. Digital transformation, leveraging several different applications and digital tools accessible, enables courts to modernize and enhance legacy processes. By converging on the effects technology can assist they achieve; they can drive proficiencies and advance services for users. Notwithstanding the potential to appreciate clear remunerations in terms of

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2. Ngulube, P., "The Nature and Accessibility of E-Government in Sub Saharan Africa" (2007) https://doi.org/10.29173/iriel7 accessed 7 December 2022
3. Nkiko, C., and Bolu, C., and Michael-Onuoha, H. C., "Digitization and Admissibility of Digital Records in Nigerian Courts: Strategies and Lessons for the Lis Profession" Tai Solarin University Education Press (2016) https://repositoryelizadeuniversity.edu.ng/bistream/20.500.12398/244/1/digitization-and-admissibility-of-digital-records-in-Nigeria-courts-strategies-and-lessons-for-the-Lis-profession.pdf accessed 7 December 2022
4. Finucan, L., and Sierra, E.B., and Rajesh, N.,"Smart Courts: Roadmap for Digital Transformation of Justice in Africa" (2018) https://pic.strathmore.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/PIC_WP_Smart_Courts_Roadmap.pdf accessed 16 December 2022

improved proficiency, availability, and transparency, digital transformation and digitization of courts and justice systems are often obstructed by a series of common institutional challenges. However, an organized roadmap to implement digital justice requests can help justice sector authorities to overcome these challenges[5]. The Digitization of court records refers to the use of technology-based solutions such as device learning, case organization systems, process computerization, online conflict resolution, and data visualization to build a more advanced justice system. The absence of schemes for digitizing court procedures exposed the African regional and sub-regional courts to new perils that are precise to digital environments and not present in the paper-based world[6].

Concept of Digitization of Court Records

The digitization of court processes generally includes transforming the manual processes of filing, keeping records, and management cases into electronic processes via information and communication technology[7]. The digitization of judicial systems offers, in numerous cases, an upturn in efficiency, transparency, access to justice, a decline of operation costs, and trial span[8]. This growth in competence shows that IT and e-justice systems contribute to the decrease of court case accumulations by enlightening efficiency and access to justice[9].

Digitization of court procedures usually involves the organizing of electronic systems for the management of justice with numerous perceptions, which comprises of one or more of the following components or features: Electronic Case Filing or E-Filling. Over the years, the manual processes of filing in courts have demonstrated numerous restrictions and risks such as human error, corruption, misplaced files, and transmission delays[10]. In courts, a distinctive case number is generally allotted to every proceeding. This is to say that every court creates a system of file organization so that, when filings in a case has been delivered to the precise court, accurately acknowledged, correctly filed and re-filed, one can tentatively locate any document of such filing at any time. Unfortunately, when files are kept in a variety of facilities and administered by different officials, appraised by different judicial officials, conveyed to several locations, and re-filed many times, it will not be unexpected that a precise "filed" document might not be located. With the implementation of e-filling, where filling and storing of information are made up of electronic bits and bytes, rather than paper, case filling and other processes are generally transmitted to the precise court electronically whereby there be creation, completion of forms made available online by the courts. Likewise delivery or services of such pleadings or court processes are electronic and the electronic versions of the information are received, stored, and maintained in an electronic system.

Electronic Case Management System (ECMS) refers to a policy that permits the handling of case processes firmly and thoroughly for the parties, court staff, officers, and judges. The tenacity of the ECMS is to certify the quick and effective management of cases. It also has the capacity to offer essential case connected information such as the figure and rank of pending cases, verdicts yet to be issued, the total number of completed or not completed hearings, statistical reports, and the position of completed cases and archives[11]. In addition, Electronic case management system (ECMS) are electronic podiums with records that comprises all the interleaved case particulars, which are thoroughly indexed and archived and at the same time providing numerous official operators the capacity to repossess, transmit and view the information deposited in the database.

An electronic filling (e-filling) system refers to technological solutions facilitating access to justice by establishing a digital channel that enables the interaction and exchange of data and e-documents

5. Ibid
6. Drabo, F., "The Digitization of Court Processes in African Regional and Sub-regional Judicial Institutions" Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies (2021) https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=11691&context=dissertations accessed 16 December 2022
7. Gomes, A. O., Alves, S. T., & Silva, J. T., "Effects of Investment in Information and Communication Technologies on the Productivity Of Courts in Brazil" Government Information Quarterly, (2018) Vol35/Issue 3, pp.480-490. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.giq.2018.06.002 accessed 16 December 2022
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9. Muscalu, E., and Hulpus, I. A. "The Computerization of Courts. Implications of Judicial Management in the Assessment of the Transparency and Accessibility of Legal Services" Revista Economică, (2016) pp.681. http://economice.ulbsibiu.ro/revista.economica/ accessed 20 December 2022
10. Mohamad, A. M., Hamin, Z., Law, F., 'and others'., "Organizational Implications of Technology Adoption at the Malaysian" Journal of Legal, Ethical and Regulatory Issues (2019) Vol 22/Issue 1, pp.1–5. https://

between courts and court users. [12]E-filling alters and provide other available, translucent, and effectual justice systems to communities[13] and government participants can commence the digitization of court processes and records to advance the efficiency, reliability, case flow, and quality of e-justice systems[14]. Nevertheless, one such contributor is the African Court on Human and Peoples' Rights (2015), which in the year 2015, recommended the improvement of schemes for digitizing court processes and records to advance the delivery of justice for the African Union member states. Nevertheless, in spite of the several efforts of the improvement of these schemes for digitizing court processes and records to produce or advance e-filling systems still remains a challenge in Nigeria and some other African Countries[15].

How Does e-Filing Work?

Firstly there must be an e-filing centre for all electronic filing and payment of filing fees for processes and documents relating to or connected with the matter before the court, also an office of the court must be designated as an Electronic Filing Manager (EFM). Also, the party desiring to file a process must sign up with the EFM, in order to e-file with the court and must provide a working email address. Furthermore, the process or documents to be e-filed must be an A4 paper in PDF format. Nevertheless, the counsel e-filling must confirm that the documents are compatible with the format before it is e-filed. However, as soon as the counsel e-file his process, an Authentication Registration Number (ARN) is generated automatically and is used by the same counsel in subsequent filling in respect of that particular matter in court. The process e-filed by the counsel with ARN will be sent to the Portal of the court and the EFM will forward it to the Registry of court. Thereafter, when the process is properly filed an acknowledgment receipt of the filing will be generated via email by the portal of court which will be sent automatically to the designated email address of the counsel and those to be served with a file stamped copy

Within the Malaysian context, there are several technological applications that have been put in place and being adopted by the judiciary. Presently, digitization has been adopted by administrative staff and the judges and this includes Electronic Filing System (EFS), the Case Management System (CMS), the Queue Management System (QMS), the Court Recording and Transcription (CRT), as well as the Audio and Video Conference System (AVCS)[16]. In Malaysia courts, with the use of electronic filing system and digitization of court processes, there had been an increased in efficiency and proficiency of the

court on the part of the judges, court administrative officers as well as lawyers. Over the years Malaysia courts, backlog of cases have been one of the major problems facing the judicial system but with the implementation of technological applications such as the EFS and the CMS, there had been a substantial decrease of backlog of cases since the application and implementation of digitization of cases in the Malaysia judiciary. Furthermore, with the implementation of electronic filing system and case management system, majority of aggrieved parties have testified that there had been a quicker system for the disposal of cases since implementing digitization of court processes[17].

However, in South Africa, they implemented Court Online and Case Lines as part of their digitalization of court processes and these are cloud-based partnership solutions that also include a Digital Case Management and Evidence Management system. It permits legal practitioners to file documents electronically online (E-filing) anywhere and anytime without being physically present at court[18]. With the implementation of digitization and e-filing, South Africa Courts made use of the recording equipment for court proceedings in the Magistrates Court,

www.abacademies.org/articles/Organizational-implications-of-technology-adoption-at-the-Malaysian-Civil-courts-1544-0044-22-1-283.pdf

11. Singh, M., Sahu, G. P., Dwivedi, Y., 'and others'., "Success Factors for E-Court Implementation at Allahabad High-Court Success Factors for E-Court Implementation at Allahabad High-Court" Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems (PACIS). (2018) https://aisel.aisnet.org/pacis/ accessed 16 December 2022
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13. Shah, K. P., and Gupta, M., "Role of Information Technology in Expediting the Process of Justice: An Assessment of Current Challenges and Future Goals" International Journal of Multidisciplinary Educational Research (2017) Vol 6/Issue 6; pp.162-177. http://www.ijmer.in accessed 16 November 2022
14. Ibid
15. Sousa, M. M., and Guimaraes, T. A., "The Adoption of Innovations in Brazilian Labor Courts from the Perspective of Judges and Court Managers" Revista De Administração (2017), Vol 52/Issue 1, pp.103-113.

High Courts, Supreme Courts and Constitutional Court, where courts began to conduct some court proceedings through video conferencing, especially during COVID-19 restrictions. Also the South Africa Judiciary has a strong and wide-ranging website that makes provision for important and recent information on forthcoming cases, judgments, filed documents and practice directions. E-filing guarantees that legal documents are accessible online for public consumption. But with the experience from the digitization of court process in South Africa, the judiciary experience more precise and comprehensive court process as well as reduction of backlogs of cases.

Challenges and Solution of Digitalization of Court Filling and Records

Some of the challenges of digitalization include financial and policy barriers. Most of these digital equipment are expensive and most state judiciary cannot afford it. They would have had the privilege of poetizing technology equipment in its budgetary appropriation where there is full-fledged autonomy. In an interview with the Chief Judge of Edo State Hon. Justice J.I. Acha, J on 20th day of December 2022, the chief judge rated the approval level of the state at 25% but noted that they would have fully embraced an automated judicial system if there was practical judicial autonomy in the state. According to the Chief Judge, "we follow the digitization process of the Edo State Governor and can get approval when we apply for items to approximately 25-30%". The autonomy of the judiciary will automate the judiciary. Similarly, administrative staffs frequently resist new digital tools as some staff see technology as intimidation to their jobs. Additionally, habits of some judges and staff that have been used to definite working approaches for years might be hard to break and so several individuals fail to see how new digital tools can aid them improved in their work and complement their working procedures. Certain administrative official who are excited about the implementation of digital tools are not able to make use of them. Nevertheless, younger generations growing through the legal positions tend to have higher digital knowledge and are gradually altering embedded behaviors in the legal profession. There will be need to recruit tech savvy staff into the judiciary and train existing staff and judicial officers on use of technology and maintenance. Lastly, there is low power supply and connectivity challenges in both urban and rural parts of the country. Constant electricity supply will boost the impediment of court's digitization

https://doi.org/10.1016/j.rausp.2016.09.008 accessed 16 December 2022

16. Ibid
17. Ibid
18. Africa Judges and Jurists Forum: A Policy Brief "Digital Transformation of Court Processes in Southern Africa: A Human Right Approach" https://africajurists.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/publications/21.06-Digital-Transformation-of-Court-Processes-in-Southern-Africa-AJJF-Final.pdf accessed 16 December 2022

A case for Technology Operated Military Theatre in Nigeria.

Merry Aramude

Advanced armies in the world are in a race to usher in Technology Operated Military Theatre (TOMIT). Technology is shaping the future of humanity across nearly every industry as it has invaded virtually every civilian business conceivable. It has equally transformed how individuals and companies operate and also fast becoming a crucial component of contemporary conflict. One of the elements that define how strong a nation is the strength of its Army. Thus, applications of technology in its operation theatre is indispensable. As recent conflicts in Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Syria and Ethiopia demonstrate, autonomous and semi-autonomous drones are becoming a cheap and easy tool for attacking conventional targets. Similarly, Artificial Intelligence (AI) has become a field of intense interest and high expectations within the defense community. AI technology hold great promise for facilitating military decisions, minimizing human causalities and enhancing the combat potential of forces, and in the process dramatically changing, if not revolutionizing, the design of military systems.

Artificial Intelligence in Military Operations: Global Perspective

A working delineation of AI posits that it is the capability of a computer system to perform tasks that normally require human intelligence, such as visual perception, speech recognition and decision-making. Functionally, AI enabled machines have the capability to learn, reason, judge, predict, infer and initiate action. In layman's terms, AI implies trying to emulate the brain. There are three main ingredients that are necessary for simulating intelligence: the brain, the body, and the mind. The brain consists of the software algorithms which work on available data, the body is the hardware and the mind is the computing power that runs the algorithms. Technological breakthroughs and convergence in these areas is enabling the AI field to rapidly evolve. Currently, near-autonomous defensive systems have been deployed by several countries to intercept incoming attacks. Offensive weapon systems, in contrast, would be those which may be deployed anywhere and actively seek out targets. However, the difference between offensive and defensive weapons is not watertight. The most well-known autonomous defensive weaponry are missile defense systems, such as the Iron Dome of Israel and the Phalanx Close-In Weapon System used by the US Navy. fire-and-forget systems, such as the Brimstone Missile System of the United Kingdom and the Harpy Air Defense Suppression System of Israel, are also near-autonomous. South Korea uses the SGR-A1, a sentry robot with an automatic mode, in the Demilitarized Zone with North Korea. One example of an offensive autonomous system likely to be deployed in the near future is Norway's Joint Strike Missile, which can hunt, recognize and detect a target ship or land-based object without human intervention.

US Department of Defense Perception and the Third Offset Strategy

The US has put AI at the Centre of its quest to maintain its military dominance. For instance, in November 2014, the Secretary of Defense announced a new Defense Innovation Initiative, also termed as the Third Offset Strategy. Secretary Hagel modelled his approach on the First Offset Strategy of the 1950s, in which the US countered the Soviet Union's conventional numerical superiority through the build-up of America's nuclear deterrent, and on the Second Offset Strategy of the 1970s, where it shepherded the development of precision-guided munitions, stealth, and intelligence, surveillance, and reconnaissance (ISR) systems to counter the numerical superiority and improving technical capability of Warsaw Pact forces. As a part of its Third-Offset Strategy, the Pentagon is reportedly dedicating $18 billion for its Future Years Defense Program. A substantial portion of this amount has been allocated for robotics, autonomous systems, human-machine collaboration, and cyber and electronic warfare.

Chinese Initiatives

China is also laying a huge focus to AI enabled autonomous systems. Sometimes last year, the state-run China Daily newspaper reported that the country had embarked on the development of a cruise missile system with a "high level" of AI. The announcement was thought to be a response to the "semi-autonomous" Long Range Anti-Ship Missile expected to be deployed by the US. Chinese military leaders and strategists believe that the nature of warfare is fundamentally changing due to unmanned platforms. High-level support for research and development in robotics and unmanned systems has led to a myriad of institutes within China's defense industry and universities conducting robotics research. China's leaders have labelled AI research as a national priority, and there appears to be a lot of co-ordination between civilian and military research in this field.

Nigerian Perspective and Deployment Scenarios

Perhaps as a result of being preoccupied with the huge challenges being faced on operational and logistic fronts including issues related to modernization, the AI/ robotics paradigm is yet to become a key driving force in the doctrinal thinking and perspective planning of the Nigeria Army. The above discussion dictates that this needs to change. The subsequent paragraphs shed some light on the relevance of AI in our context and what we need to do in order to keep pace with 21st Century warfare. The NA landscape is comprised of a wide variety of scenarios such as counter terrorism and counter insurgency CTCOIN operations in the North East and North West where autonomous systems (AS), and more specifically Lethal Autonomous Weapon System (LAWS) can be deployed to advantage. With the progressive development of AI technologies, examples of scenarios in increasing degree of complexity can be envisaged as follows:

(a) Anti-IED Operations. Autonomous systems designed to disarm IEDs are already in use in some form, although there is scope for further improvement. Such autonomous systems are "non-lethal" and "defensive" in nature.

(b) Swarm of Surveillance Drones. An AI-enabled swarm of surveillance drones (as against manually piloted Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) or Unmanned Undersea Vehicles (USVs)) could greatly boost our surveillance capabilities. Such a system would be "non-lethal", but could support both offensive and defensive operations.

(c) Robot Sentries. There is scope for deployment of Robot Sentries, duly tailored to our requirements, along the lines of SGR-A1 of South Korea. Such a deployment would be categorized as "lethal" and "defensive" in character.

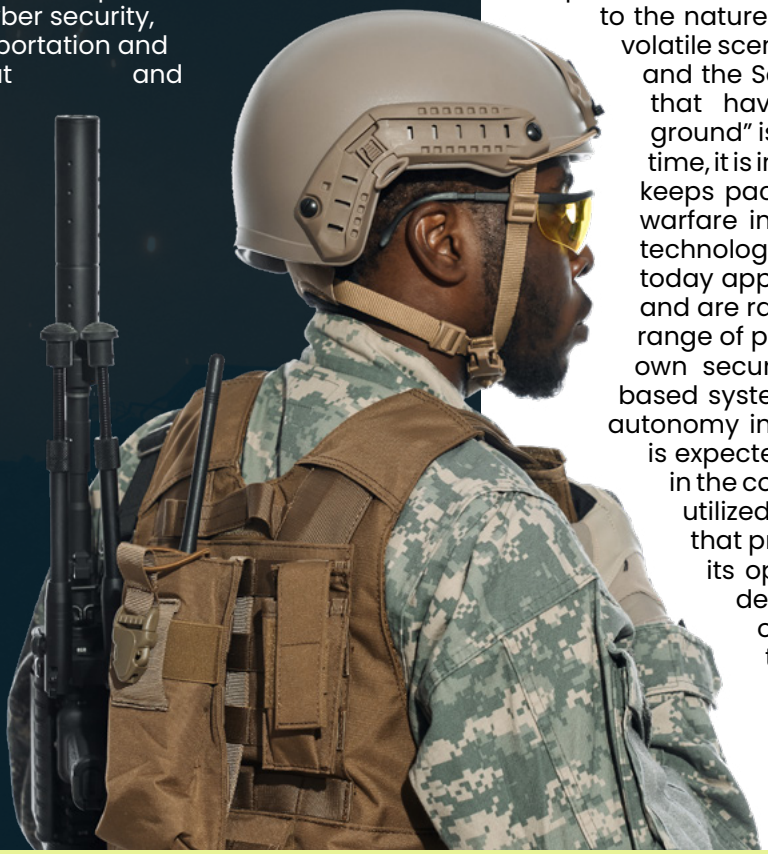
(d) Autonomous Armed UAVs/USVs. Nigeria Army currently acquire some UAV platforms. Thus future armed UAVs/USVs with increasing degrees of autonomy in navigate, search, detect, evaluation, track, engage and kill functions may be visualized. Such systems would be classified as "lethal" and "offensive".

(e) Land-Based Offensive Robot Soldiers. Offensive or 'Killer Robots' deployed in land-based conventional offensive operations would require a much higher technological sophistication to become a feasible proposition.

(f) Robot Soldiers in Counter-Insurgency (CI) Operations. If Robot Soldiers are to be successfully deployed in CI operations, a very high AI technology threshold would need to be breached. In addition to a more sophisticated "perceptual" ability to distinguish an adversary from amongst a friendly population, qualities such as "empathy" and "ethical values" similar to humans would need to be built into such systems. As per one school of thought, such capability can never be achieved, while others project reaching such a technological "singularity" within this century.

Impact of Technology Operated Military Theatre (TOMIT)

One of the most crucial sectors for the safety of any nation is the Military. The military has constantly engaged in upgrading its prowess by improving its technology for the weaponry and also the technology to draw out tactical war strategies. There are several avenues where the Nigeria Army can utilize technology like AI applications that can improve its prowess in combat operations in the area of cyber security, optimized transportation and logistics, combat and simulation training, threat monitoring and situational awareness, target recognition, autonomous weapons, autonomous vehicles, UAV drones, enhancement to danger detection and data processing.



In the same manner that aircraft, nuclear weapons, and computers have altered military technology, a renowned research institute predicted some time ago that AI would do the same. As a result, researchers and engineers' ability to find and develop new technologies and applications will directly reflect how it is transforming military technology. In the future, artificial intelligence will likely play a role in military applications. It may be used to increase productivity, decrease personnel workload, and operate quicker than humans in a number of ways.

Curiously, while AI is most commonly cited for image recognition, natural language processing and voice recognition, this is just an early manifestation of its full potential. The next step will be the ability to reason, and in fact reach a level where an AI system is functionally indistinguishable from a human. With such a capability, AI based systems would potentially have an infinite number of applications. AI can enhance productivity, decrease user workload and operate faster than humans.

Conclusion

Investigating on how military personnel reacts to challenging conditions in the theatre with the aid of technology should be a focus of military personnel studies and research. With regards to the nature of our porous borders and the volatile scenarios in North-West, North-East and the South East, it is well appreciated that having sufficient "boots on the ground" is an absolute must. At the same time, it is imperative that operation tactics keeps pace with the changing nature of warfare in the 21st Century. AI/ Robotics technologies, after decades of false starts, today appear to be at an inflection point, and are rapidly being incorporated into a range of products and services. Given our own security landscape, adoption of AI based systems with increasing degrees of autonomy in various operational scenarios is expected to yield tremendous benefits in the coming years. AI is currently being utilized to construct defensive systems that provide the military an edge over its opponents. To this extent, only a determined effort, with specialists on board and due impetus will the theatre be automated for impact

Merry Aramude is a Major of the Nigerian Army with the Directorate of Legal Services

Philantropic and Cerebral Lawyer Olayiwola Afolabi esq. with Oghechukwu EdafeKrire, esq at the Supreme Court Abuja.

Can we meet you?

I was called to Nigerian Bar in 1991 and since then I have been practicing law in Benin City. I came from a very poor family but so far I have given out over 300 wigs and gowns. Every year, when law school sends law students for court attachment I ensure that each of them gets a wig and gown. Over 300 lawyers have benefitted from this gesture.

I was at the Supreme Court for the first time with the support of Chief Ogbodu, SAN. He took me along to the hearing of one of his appeals. We went with his jeep and he booked a hotel for me even though I was not his junior. As a way to also encourage that practice, each time I go to the Supreme Court, I go with at least one young lawyer who is not from my law firm, I book the hotel accommodation, arrange the meals, book flight tickets and give a stipend to the lawyer. I always do this when the appeal is ripe for hearing. By so doing, the name of the young lawyer will be listed in the law report and also the young lawyer get emboldened for the tasks ahead.

You are a father and a lawyer; how do you combine these roles?

Well, you must read, a lawyer who doesn't read will play coupon. When you wake up in the morning, you read, spend time with your family, buy your law reports and read it. A lawyer who doesn't read like I said will play coupon, he will pelm and in law we don't pelm

What is your favorite pastime; how do you relax?

I relax with Christian musical instrumentals. I love it so much in fact each time I read I can't do without music instrumental playing beside me

What is one thing that makes Barr. Afolabi very unique?

I encourage young lawyers and also give to charity because life is about charity. I am also a 'lawyerist'

being a 'lawyerist' is more than just winning cases. You and I know that the great F.R.A. Williams won cases but Chief Gani Fawehinmi lives on. We are celebrating Gani why? The answer is charity. When you live for people, you don't die

As a lawyer what is your most memorable event?

The day I won a case in Supreme Court - I lost the case at the High Court, I lost also in the Court of Appeal but in Supreme Court, I won the case. It is a case where a woman was sentenced to death on the allegation that she killed her husband. According to the prosecutor, she killed her husband but I said the woman was not involved- it is like the story of David and Bathsheba, she was not aware that David was planning to kill her husband, so I canvassed the argument at the High Court the court overruled me, I canvassed at the Court of Appeal they overruled me then I zoomed to the Supreme Court and I won.

What will you identify as the key challenges you have encountered on your journey as a lawyer?

Too much reading. You must read between the lines, and don't just take anything for granted every important step matters so don't take anything for granted, read every page of your file – a page that you don't read may be your undoing

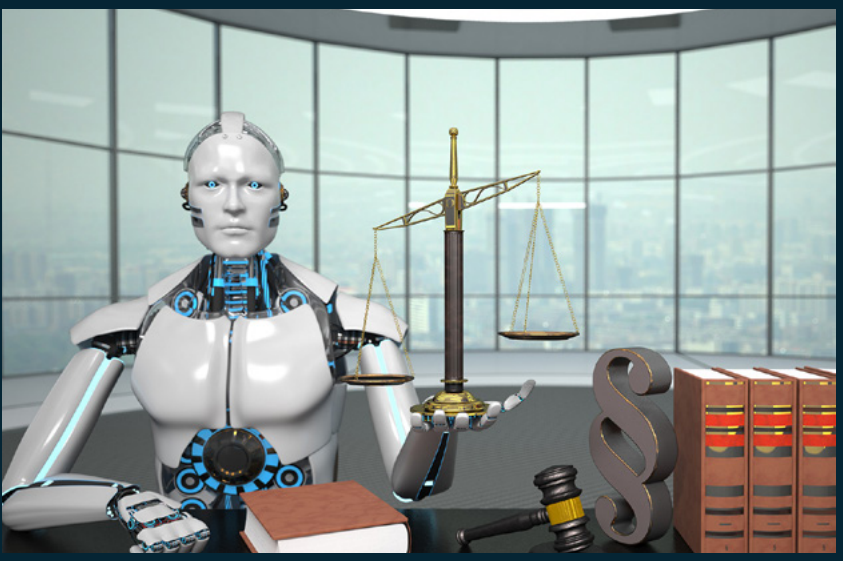
If you look back sir, do you have any regrets?

I don't have any regret career-wise. Anytime I lose a case, I have regret, it is normal. When you lose a case you will regret you will not be happy, no lawyer will want to lose a case. Having lost a case in the high court, appeal, and Supreme Court I was not happy but well it's part of it, you can't win all the cases.

You earlier mentioned your philanthropic gestures what is your major motivation in doing this?

When I gained admission to read law at Lagos State University I lost my father at the same time my brother gained admission to read medicine in the same University. Somebody who doesn't know us before took my brother to England, took him to his house and from there my brother went to England, free of charge so if somebody can do that I should also do the same to people

President Aigbokhan esq. with Olayiwola Afolabi esq.



Robot Lawyer Developer bows to pressure over criminal charge

Dorcas Ajibola Efunwole

DoNotPay Inc. CEO Joshua Browder is a researcher on intersection between human rights and technology. The "robot" lawyer powered by artificial intelligence was set to be the first of its kind to help a defendant fight a traffic ticket in court. It bills itself as the World's first robot lawyer and planned to take on two speeding ticket cases in court in February, with its AI instructing the defendants how to respond to their assigned judges. The Chabot was introduced in 2015 to provide legal advice to consumers by a US based Startup, DoNotPay. It has been operating since 2015, has released templates that help people appeal parking tickets or request refunds from airlines. It said it has also created a bot that can negotiate bills with companies like Comcast using ChatGPT, or Generative Pretrained Transformer technology from OpenAI.

Robot lawyers are a broad class of customer-facing legal AI application that are used to automate specific legal tasks such as document automation and legal research. Legal AI can perform tasks that are normally done by paralegals or young associates at law firms. Most people have seen the future that if legal practitioner did not cut down their fees or face a future led by robot. Just few legal practitioner has reacted to this update.

The first ever AI powered legal defense was set to take place in California in February 2023 but the technology is currently under investigation by multiple state bars on ground of practice ethics which can lead to withdrawal of practice license of the developer of promoter and possible criminal charge. The AI, which runs on a smartphone, after listening to court proceedings, will give instruction to the defendant on how to respond through an earpiece. Issues have been on the ethical ground and that which litigants will entrust his/her case to the hands of a machine. This is because being a lawyer is not just about having knowledge of the law but license. So delivering legal services with license has a long way to question the use of AI in court rooms.

In the US, for an individual to practice law, he/she must earn a Juris Doctor, pass law school approved by the jurisdiction, pass bar examination administered by the regulatory authority of that jurisdiction, pass a professional responsibility examination and character and fitness evaluation. AI in courtroom may be considered "unauthorized practice of law" or break rules on recording audio in a courtroom. Under the US law the "unauthorized practice of law" is a misdemeanor offence punishable with six month imprisonment. The threat of criminal charges in the US affected the sitting of the first robot lawyer but in African the lack of power and fear of theft is the greatest threat to the use of the robot in court.

No doubt some aspects of legal work are been done automated. It has been said that with the use of coding it has help a lot of lawyers to review large volumes of document by using algorithms to identify which ones are relevant. Documents are been labelled so has to teach the computer what to look for. Then it automatically review the other document with great speed. Coding makes it faster, cheaper, and more reliable than human document review. Countries like U.S, England, and Ireland have expressed approval with its use for discovery. Large number of people has stated that it might be difficult because an experience lawyer still need to "teach" computers what document to look for. At least the aspects of law that requires human interaction will remain immune from automation, at least for now. The creativity flexibility and emotional intelligence and successfully interviewing witnesses, negotiating with opposition and persuading judges and juries' machines cannot do this now.

Computers do what they are told to do because in other aspects its fails. Robot lawyers are a long way off, but robot enabled lawyers are capable of doing better work more efficiently. AI must be accepted to adjust practice rules for the sake of access to justice. This is the real future and the practice rules must accommodate it.

Digitization of Court: Tools and benefits

Dorcas Ajibola Efunwole

It is saddening that the embrace of digital technology and digitalization has a whole is not accepted in our society today. Digital technology has been grouped into two parts which are: pre-digital technology era and the post-digital technology era. The pre- digital technology era begins from the days of our forefathers were there was nothing called technology at all. In this era most things were done in the local way and in a stressful manner. Transportation then was done most by foot walking from one town to the other. The communication and information method was difficult back in the days of our fathers, only the rich and the elite has the opportunity to purchase the locally made intercom machine invented in that era. The post digital technology era emerged when the foreigners came to colonize us as a whole. Colonization brought about civilization and modernization in all shades of life. The post digital technology era introduced computer database systems. The computer database systems are storage devices built in a large capacity for input and output of information been make accessible to everyone. Examples are: Microsoft access, oracle database, amazon RDS, mongo DB, post gresQL, Informix, Sybase.

Digital Tools for Court

Microsoft Access

Microsoft access is a database management system [DBMS] Database Management System from Microsoft that combines the relational Microsoft jet database engine with a graphical user interface and software development tools. It is a member of the Microsoft office suite of applications, included in the professional and higher editions[1].

Oracle Database

Oracle database is a relational database management system created and run by the oracle corporation currently, it supports multiple data models like documents, relational and key-valve within the single database. The system is built around a relational database framework in which data objects may be directly accessed by the users.

Mongo DB

Mongo DB [Database] is one of the most popular source available and cross-platform document-oriented database management systems. It primary database model is the document store, while its secondary models are the spatial DBMS [Database Management System] and the search engine. This DBMS [Database Management System] is available as both a fully managed cloud service and deployment on self-managed infrastructure[2].

Postgre SQL [Structured Query Language]

Posttgre SQL [Structured Query Language] is a powerful, multi-model, and open-source, object-relational database model is the RDBMS [Relational Database Management System] and the document store and the spatial DBMS [Database Management System] are the secondary models. Postgre SQL RDBMS uses and extends the SQL language, combining it with many features to enable storing and scaling more complex data workloads.

Informix[3]

Informix is a product family within information management division that is centered on several relational database management system offering. The Informix product was originally developed by Informix Corporation, whose Informix software

1. http://thusharasamaveera.medium.com/ddatabase-management-system-dbms-e6a4if562bbb
2. https://vertabelo.com/blog/popular-DBMS
3. https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki//BM-informix

subsidiary was acquired in 2001.

Amazon RDS [Relational Database Service]

Amazon relational database service is a collection of managed service that makes it simple to set up, operate, and scale database in the cloud. Amazon relational database service is a distributed relational database service by Amazon Web Services. Amazon RDS is free to try and you pay for what you use with no minimum fees[4]. These are the most popular database management system. Further, if the DMS is included in digitalizing the court processes, filing and records these will enable easy access to court case, judgments, and even judicial precedent made by the judges of the Supreme Court.

Benefits of digitalization of Court

Digitalization reduces the number of frivolous cases that are filed in court most times. Database management system [DBMS] is basically used to manage the database. And also the data can be easily accessed, modified, updated, controlled and organized. The DBMS software additionally encompasses the core facilities provided to administer the database. The database management system will look at the case filed and also the jurisdiction. In most instances some case are not meant to be decided or tried in some court because the address of the defendants or the cause of action. The system direct the case to appropriate court without much.

Digital transformation ease stress and give space for research at a convenient time. A good example is the Law Pavilion, Nigeria Weekly Law Report and Google scholar. On this platform past and current judgments of court records can be accessed. Likewise, judicial precedent and digest written by some judges and scholars can be found.

Digitalization of court process has made more possible for there not to be unnecessary delay in court proceedings. Lawyers will have the opportunity to file and serve their court processes within a short time. With the implementation of digitation it has made it possible for there not to be laziness on the part of the counsels. [5]The outbreak of covid-19 in early 2020 shifted the court and other services online and post Covid19, they are back to their traditional roots.

The adoption of digital tools for court administration as much as litigation has far reaching impact.

Technology is in aid of the lawyer filling its case, the court in hearing the case and the litigant in locating the court where the case is heard with ease. Digitalized court holds the promise of a more accessible judicial system with better outcomes. In the United States, National judicial groups such as the Conferences of Chief Justice and the Conference of State Court Administrators (COSCA) had called on courts to use technology to improve the experience of litigants especially people who do not have lawyers[6] and persons leaving with disabilities[7].

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4. https://aws.amazon.com rds/prising
5. E. Scigliano, Zoom court is changing how justice is served, the Atlantic, April 13, 2021.
6. See JTC Resource Bulletin: Judicial Perspective on ODR and Other Virtual Court Processes. See https://ncsc.contentdm.oclc.org/digital/collection/tech/id/938/
7. Edward Baig, "How a wave of new tech products are making life easier for people with disabilities" https://www.usatoday.com/story/tech/columnist/baig/2018/09/10/technology-improves-people-disabilities-firms-respond-moral-legal-demands/835232002/

e-FOI Processing

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Many countries suffer poor archive system and dearth of digitized and AI enabled to systems to make sure documents are kept and easily retrievable. This is because mechanisms to document and retrieve documents are antiquated. Most times when citizens have questions, they are usually relegated to long hold times in person visits, or scouring websites and third parties for answers. AI can drastically improve citizen access to real-time answers, and could even be used to formulate and fill out documents, especially for routine tasks. No news that government work has not kept pace with the rapid expansion of AI in the private sector.

Many AI case studies in citizen services fall into five categories; answering questions, filling out and searching documents, routing requests, translation, and drafting documents. AI can reduce administrative burdens resolved resource allocation problems, and take on significantly complex task. Where there are excessive paperwork AI is the way to go. The potential future use of Artificial Intelligence in government is enormous. but rules must be followed as postulated by Hila Mehr (2017) to include citizen- centric program, get citizen input, build upon existing resources, be data-prepared, tread carefully with privacy, mitigate ethical risks and augment employments, do not replace them[1]. It can eve duplicate website. AI can effectively serve as citizens' service centre because citizens want a more digitally enabled services needless of physical attendant. For instance, Mysurrey app is used to address 65 percent of questions of resident in Surrey that already have answers on city website[2].

AI should not be implemented in government just because it is a new, exciting technology. It should be offered as one tool in a toolkit to solve a given problem. The question should not be "how will we use AI to solve a problem," but "what problem are we trying to solve' why, and how will we solve it?"[3] If AI is the best means to achieve that goal, then it can be applied, otherwise it should not be forced on the system. It is inexcusable that delay to respond to FOI request is occasioned by failure to process, disclose or transfer request rightly to the proper agency within the period allowed by law

Artificial Intelligence (AI) & Request Processing

In a 2014 study, Colorado Department of Human Service workers spent 37.5 percent of their time on documentation and administration, compared to just 9 percent on contact with children and families[4]. AI automation of some of their administrative tasks would free up time to build relationship and solve problems face-to-face with citizens[5]. Most MDAs are not be at the level of data market necessary for AI technology just as they lack the significant amount of mobile data needed

1. Hila Mehr "Artificial Intelligence for Citizen Services and Government" Ash Centre for Democratic Governance and Innovation August 2017 @ page 10
2. https://cagedether.com/watson-assists-cities-with-311-3d7d6898d132
3. Hila Mehr (Supra) @ page 11
4. Colorado Child Welfare County Workload Study, Colorado department of Human Services. August 2014. https://leg.colorado.gov/sites/default/files/1354s_highlights.pdf
5. Colorado (Ibid)

to watch YouTube. The elementary stage of AI for FOI processing is manual extraction of data from traditional electronic documents such as PDFs, Word files or HTML documents. Again, Castro 2021 opined that the challenge is not just extracting data from documents, but obtaining data and metadata from them to create meaning so that information can be understood in context thus using AI might help solve this problem. The use of XML is the most common methods in this regards. In XML, the creator of a document can use a schema that defines the elements in the document, the data types of those elements, and any defaults or attributes of those elements. Several government MDAs still have a herculean task of digitization of process but nonetheless, the potential of where technology is leading and the possibilities that AI inadvertently innovates government in practice can be a dilemma where unattended to

We are in the age of data velocity and AI platform can help government to keep pace with understanding what the citizen is doing or asking, and will prompt to take action on specific issues. AI has numerous other potential futures include citizen services beyond citizen inquiries and information, including providing emergency response, improving crime reporting, using prediction to target and preempt social services interventions, and informing proactive repairs of infrastructure, and anticipating cyber-attacks[7]. Offices improve their data collection and management, best practices about the type of data that will be used and collected will be critical for future use with AI. collecting and aggregating the right type of data is critical for its success.

Citizen input and support for AI implementations is essential. It is the citizens that create an agenda for AI[8]. There is need for conversation in public service about AI. the essence is to educate everyone from citizens to policymaker so that they truly understand how it works and its tradeoffs. When it comes to building and deploying AI platforms, user feedback is essential both from citizens and government employee users. Providing support and clear direction and create space for flexibility and experimentation. Securing ethical collection of, access to, and use of quality data. Ensure government organizations have access to adequate funding, capability, capacity, & infrastructure. Recognize the potentially significant shifts that AI might bring in the future.

Hughes (2017)[8] as state apparatuses are increasingly automated, mechanisms for collective action and democratic oversight also need to be automated. Algorithms and cyborg citizenry will enable a post human democracy. Democratically accountable algorithmic governance enabled by artificial intelligence and human enhancement can automate bottom-up citizen surveillance, inform debate, aggregate decision making, and ensure the efficient working of the state. As paid work disappears and post-election benefits bite harder. Accountability in governance takes the place of democratic planning. Citizen oversight powered by algorithmic governance can secure our future against accelerating threats from technological innovation.

AI could also be used for filling forms and analyzing requests. A free Chabot that helps public officers' to fill assets declaration forms will not only help to answer questions but also provide them with the route to the nearest office like High Court for signing. AI learns more what is valuable to the citizen in their government engagements, it does

6. Hila Mehr "Artificial Intelligence for Citizen Services and Government" Ash centre for Democratic Governance and Innovation August 2017 @ page 10
7. Hila Mehr "Artificial Intelligence for Citizen Services and Government" Ash Centre for Democratic Governance and Innovation August 2017 @ page 12
8. James Hughes; Algorithms and Posthuman Governance. Journal of Posthuman Studies 1 June 2017; 1 (2): 166–184. doi: https://doi.org/10.5325/jpoststud.1.2.0166

not only share information but also review the impact. For example, if a citizen uses AI to fill assets declaration form, a bot could follow up letting them know the number of public officers that have used the technology to fill the form while keeping all citizen information private. It may even follow up when there's news or updates about the government or future engagement options. Once any persons uses the technology, it is self-selected engaged citizen and no doubt the citizen will act to make Public Service better. For the Ministry of Communication & Orientation, drafting of documents can be done with Natural Language Generation (NLG), AI, is being used in dozens of newsrooms, including Bloomberg and the Associated Press, to mine data, create text for datasets, and write at a pace of 2,000 stories per second. In these scenarios, NGL can also help non-data science employees better and more efficiently understand the data with a team of human editors to verify for accuracy[9].

AI can search volume of records within minutes and using algorithm to translate government information into the main languages in the country. With the required information, the bot helps auto-populate the form and provides the application with instructions for next steps. AI can quickly categorize and search range of documents and images. The Mexican government piloted an initiative to use algorithms to classify citizen petitions and route them to the correct office[10]. This is one way government can use AI to help citizens' application under FOIA.

Conclusion/Recommendation

AI is susceptible to bias because of how it is programmed, so it should only be used for analysis and process improvement, not conclusive decision handling. It should not tasked with making critical government decisions. It is recommended strongly for government to partner private tech companies to improve its machine learning and to prevent or correct bias with dependent management and by community and institution. As a way of combatting disinformation, while government will establish effective communication and information provision practices with citizens, Federal Ministry of Justice and Federal Ministry of Information, Technology and Justice must collaborate and standardize the processes. The ministries must build institutional capacities and institute platforms for effective monitoring of government technologies and application

A threat to technology for civil servants is job loss. It is a legitimate concern but AI works best with humans. Any effort to incorporate AI into this government should plug it to augment existing flesh and body assignment. But it is essential that government update its labor practices in terms of women and persons with disability statutory employment quota with multidisciplinary background as we prepare for disruptive AI workplaces changes. When there is communication at the grassroots level, it ease tension and foster trade as the citizens cooperate to engage government on their needs. Consulting citizens through online polls and surveys facilities direct feedback that could raise the quality of decision making and help promote partnership. AI will help to simplify processes and makes access to government information easier to access and cost-effective to release.

9. Hila Mehr "Artificial Intelligence for Citizen Services and Government" Ash Center for Democratic Governance and Innovation August 2017 @ page 8
10. Ibid

Bayelsa State Judiciary launches Electronic Court filling System

Bayelsa State in Nigeria made history on Wednesday January 11th, 2023 by launching its electronic court filing system, aimed at improving the speed and efficiency of the legal process and administration of justice in the state. Governor Douye Diri unveiled the new system during the inauguration of the newly remodeled State High Court complex in Onopa, Yenagoa. The complex has been named after the late pioneer Chief Judge of the state, Justice Koripamo David Ungbuku.

Governor Diri congratulated the retiring Chief Judge, Justice Kate Abiri, for her role in the construction and completion of the project in a short period of time. He acknowledged that electronic filing of documents and work-based access to court materials have become a norm in many developed countries around the world. He also commended the Chief Judge of Borno State, Justice Kashim Zana, for his assistance in helping the Bayelsa judiciary achieve this milestone in enhancing the speedy administration of justice.

Governor Diri stated that the impressive new structure with its modern design is a testament to the progress of the state judiciary under Justice Abiri's leadership. He also noted that naming the remodeled court complex after Justice Ungbuku is a fitting tribute to the late jurist who served the state with distinction. The governor emphasized the importance of the judiciary as a vital pillar of democracy and the administration's commitment to supporting all branches of government.

"I like to commend Justice Abiri for working with the executive arm of government to deliver good governance. Our Prosperity Administration views the judiciary as an important pillar of our democracy. And that is why we have continued to give other arms of government their dues without hindrance. What we see today is the outcome of that cordial working relationship.

"This edifice is named after late Justice Ungbuku. I see this as an act of remembrance and honour to those who have served our state. Justice Ungbuku is actually one of our heroes past in the judiciary of Bayelsa State."

During the inauguration of the newly remodeled State High Court complex in Onopa, Yenagoa, Governor Douye Diri also commended the local contractor, Engr. Iniebi Warikoru, for delivering an outstanding job and recommended him to the state Ministries of Works and Housing and Urban Development. The chief judge, Justice Kate Abiri expressed her gratitude to the governor for his administration's support, especially the timely release of funds for capital projects in the judiciary.

Justice Abiri highlighted the numerous benefits of the electronic filing process and noted that members of the Bar and Bench were ready to embrace the technology as training was already ongoing. She also mentioned that the remodeling of the complex, which originally had two court halls and 24 offices, was completed within six months and now includes an additional two new court halls and 12 offices.

The Borno State Chief Judge, Justice Kashim Zana, also spoke at the event and said that with the electronic filing technology in place, lawyers can file their cases from anywhere in the world, as long as there is internet connectivity, to aid the quick dispensation of justice. He also announced that the first lawyer to utilize it will win the National Judicial Council prize.

The first son of the late Justice Ungbuku, Owendu Ungbuku, expressed his appreciation to the governor and Abiri for the honor done to his father, who he noted served the state judiciary for six years after being the Rivers State Chief Judge for four years. Goodwill messages were also delivered by the State Chairman, Nigeria Bar Association, Mr. Okunbiriowei Saiyo, Mr. Larry Selekeowei (SAN) and Thompson Okpoko (SAN).

Artificial Intelligence: Balancing Technology and Human Rights

Christopher Yange Atsen

The world is fast changing; technology has taken a more sophisticated dimension with machines and robots having mutual and closer relationship with humans. With Artificial Intelligence (AI) it becomes easy to predict and monitor human actions and movement, thereby affecting certain fundamental rights and freedoms. The enormous benefits of Artificial Intelligence in various sectors of human life are replete and cannot be overemphasized. However, AI can impede a wide range of fundamental human rights as enshrined in the constitution Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As Amended) especially when there are no legal safeguards to checkmate their modus operandi from time to time.

Right to privacy and family life

The right to privacy and family life is guaranteed under S.37 of the Nigerian constitution. Artificial Intelligence works with large amount of personal data and images to predict individuals and their preferences. They can also be used in tracking and monitoring individuals without their notice. These may pose a challenge to the right to privacy and family life. There is also the risk of extracting large amount of personal data without consent and sharing with third parties without consent. This may affect the right to data privacy.

Right to freedom of assembly, expression and association.

39 and 40 of the Nigerian constitution provides for the right to freedom of assembly, expression and association. With technology, the right to association, expression and assembly is exercised online via the internet and various social media platforms. A lot of meetings, discussions, call for campaigns and deliberations are done online. Artificial Intelligence could be used by state and non state actors to predict, track, monitor and prevent online assembly and expression, leading to the profiling of certain activist and certain groups. It may even be used to prevent any attempt to call for peaceful protest or demonstrations, which will violate the right to freedom of assembly and association. According to Amnesty international, AI technologies like facial recognition scanners, are a form of mass surveillance and threaten the rights to freedom of peaceful assembly, association and expression. (Global citizen.org)

Right to freedom from discrimination.

Artificial intelligence functions base on how it was programmed. It is possible it could be programmed knowingly or unknowingly to act in a particular way towards certain race, tribe, gender, culture or people impeding its ability to be objective in all ramifications, leading to bias and discrimination. According to Sahajveer & Swapnil, in 2015, Google AI software categorized a photo of two black people as a picture of gorillas.

Right to fair hearing

Artificial Intelligence can be used in the judicial application of the law to support judges in court rooms or even replace human judges and decide cases in our courts. They can predict and prepare judicial decisions as fast than a human capacity judge can imagine. When referring to the right to fair hearing and its judicial application, section 36 of the Constitution Federal Republic of Nigeria 1999 (As Amended) comes to mind. Which says everyone shall be entitled to fair hearing within a reasonable time by a court constituted in such a manner as to secure its independence and impartiality.

An AI algorithm could be influenced by its creators to give ruling in a particular way, in a particular case and against a particular group of people thereby affecting the content of the ruling by interfering with the system algorithm. Such ability to interfere with the AI system brings to question the independence of the court as well as the right to fair hearing. Although Artificial Intelligence and its implication on individuals and the society at large is still at its nascent stage and there may be other human rights concerns that may arise from time to time, it is not out of place for the National Human Rights Commission, NGOs, Government, legal experts and relevant stakeholders to kick start the process of understanding AI, its human rights consequences on the Nigerian society and how the human rights concerns could be addressed.

Artificial intelligence will help in improving the development of human life in various sectors. However, it will also have an adverse effect on the fundamental rights of the people, hence the need to set human rights standards for the operation of AI technology. The National Human Rights Commission, Government, NGOs, private and public sector must put heads together to come up with strategies of balancing the scale between AI technology and fundamental human rights in Nigeria.

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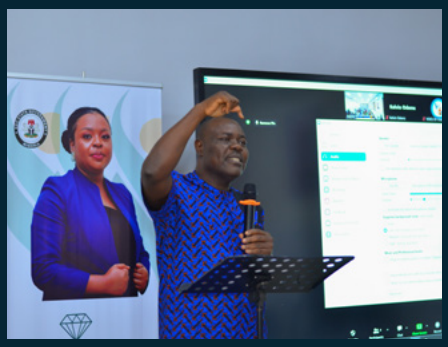
A PICTURE GALLERY OF OUR LAST EVENT

IDUAI 2022

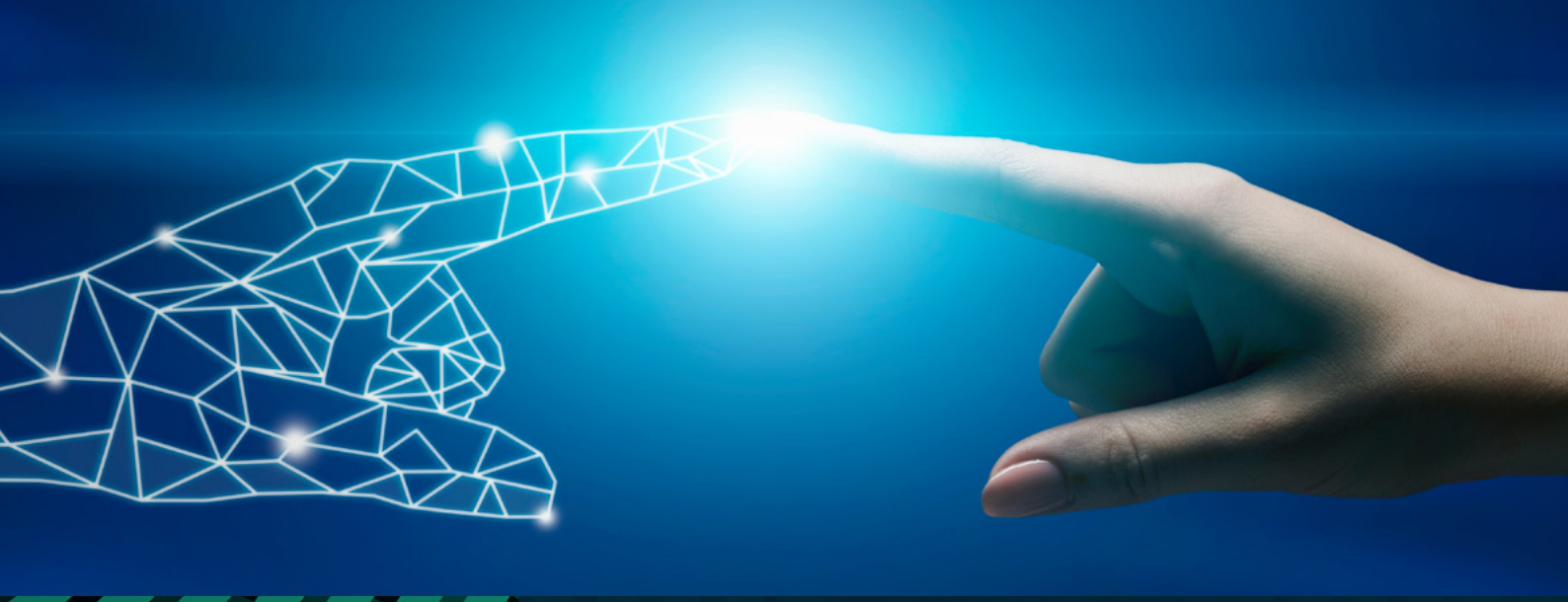
WEDNESDAY 28TH SEPTEMBER 2022



President Aigbokhan Esq with Hon. Justice Binta Nyako of Federal High Court at an event in Abuja

"There is a connection between human rights and technology but they both complement each other. A key prerequisite for safeguarding human rights is the presence of strong, ethical, resilient, independent and inclusive technology".

President Aigbokhan



About Us

FOI Counsel is a law clinic established primarily to provide legal assistance to NGOs and media seeking for information under the Freedom of Information Act 2011. FOI Counsel is the first Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) litigation-specialized firm in Africa.

As the demand for our services increased, we billowed out into four thematic areas of work and these are FOI Litigation, human rights litigation, land reforms and rural development, human rights and criminal defence.

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THE PRESIDENT'S NEWSLETTER