

Nonverbal and Subliminal Communications in Media Convergence: A Perspective

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Abstract: The assumption of this paper is that media convergence has blurred the hitherto existing line between the mass media and interpersonal communications, and has nonverbal cues as its strength. Rather than the evolutionary technique, the paper adapted the descriptive approach in the discussion of facts. It, therefore, suggests a renewed attention to development scholarship in non-verbal and subliminal communications by reviewing its implication for effective communication, particularly in the prevailing era of media convergence. To achieve this, the paper reviewed some literature relating to communication, non-verbal and subliminal communications and media convergence, and buttressed the significance of nonverbal and subliminal communications in media convergence. Recommendations were made including the reinforcement of non-verbal and subliminal communications in digital media productions for greater communication service delivery.

Key Words: Communication, Nonverbal Communication, Subliminal Communication, Media Convergence

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I. INTRODUCTION

The thematic preoccupation of every communication effort is sharing of meanings, ideas, opinions, messages, experiences, feelings, etc especially with the aid of organic and inorganic signs and symbols. Nonverbal communication is the hallmark of interpersonal and electronically mediated communication of media convergence. Besides understanding it as face-to-face and face-to-computer/cell phone interactions, interpersonal communication involves the way people use nonverbal cues categorize social phenomena so that they could understand and ideally improve their communication with others. Arguably, our observations, as human beings, are often influenced by such nonverbal cues as our frame of reference including nuances, mental state, past experiences, biases and others, while our frame of reference in turn influences the messages we select, send and receive within our environment. For instance, media professionals frame their communication messages in tandem with their knowledge of society, their own anticipated communication goals and sense of self and their assumptions of the common frame of reference between the audience and them. Thus, the frame of reference of an individual determines his ability to communicate effectively.

Nonverbal communication is powerful. It strengthens, weakens or entirely contradicts verbal messages. It is an indispensable part of interpersonal psychology, and perhaps more essential in human communication than it is generally recognized. Goleman (2006) informs that human brains subliminally read the emotional aspect of what we perceive, for instance, elation in someone's tone of voice, a hint of anger around the eyes and a posture of glum defeat, and process the derived information, beneath the reach of conscious awareness. He goes on to reveal that the reflexive, unconscious awareness signals that emotion by priming the same feeling or a reaction to it (p.16). It follows that there is a connection between nonverbal through interpersonal communication and subliminal communications.

In spite of their enormous importance, the subtle nonverbal and subliminal messages are often overlooked in development scholarship. Fowles (1977) observes that whereas the British mean far more than they say, the Americans say far more than they do mean; people appreciate work well done in the nonverbal mode. He goes on to inform that people who are competent at reading others' nonverbal messages are termed to be "intuitive", while those who send more verbal messages are categorized "expressive". Sometimes, it is possible to use nonverbal communication such as a complex dance of eye contact, head movement, preliminary gesturing, vocalized-throat clearing, etc to initiate verbal interactions. Thus, it is apposite to infer that the development and maintenance of intimate relationships needed to believe shared information among individuals are dependent on their shared nonverbal cues.

Today, available literature indicates that there are much more invocations of the general concept of communication than the analyses of the basic principles of communication as a concept. Hesmondhalgh and Toynbee (2008), while suggesting a better social theory for media studies, note that it is problematic to

mobilize only a single aspect or an over generalized aspect of media theories rather than broader underlying fundamental principles of such frameworks especially for the purpose of development communication. In the perception of this paper, this is the case with the scholarly recognition of nonverbal and subliminal communication in general communication discourse. In fact, it is correct to assert that whenever the pivotal roles of communication in society are reviewed, it has always been done with a one-eyed and discriminatory reflection that favors only traditional mainstream and new mass media. Other forms of communication like non-verbal and subliminal communications are therefore relegated to the background as though they are ineffective in human communication. This hostile rebuff has endured over some years of communication impact assessments despite the indispensable contributions of nonverbal and subliminal cues to the overall delivery of the communication needs of society. Accordingly, in response to the charge for media scholars to study basic principles of communication, this paper attempts a descriptive overview of the rather complex motif of nonverbal and subliminal communications as an aspect of the mosaic of communications.

Media convergence, which is made possible by the convergence of telecommunications, print and electronic media has evolved with a basic feature of affording content senders and receivers the opportunity to use nonverbal, subliminal and even interpersonal principles on the telephone and internet in blurring the gap between interpersonal and mass communication. Mass communication began to take a new look since it became possible for individuals to create a social networking, blog and website pages, watch television and use the internet to find information on available favorite shows, text message and chat on line with friends watching the same program and upload music and other content to file-sharing sites. Arguably, this development helped to allay the fears of some communication experts who have since faulted the impacts of the traditional mass media as being far from uniform in society. Egwu (2001), referring to the effects of traditional mainstream mass media of television and radio, observes that the world today is in the main a whole split into parts because of the asymmetrical media impacts on society. In his view, it is therefore erroneous to describe the world as a global village, which represents a view of the world as parts of a whole.

The trajectory of human communication on the platform of media convergence therefore calls for special emphasis on nonverbal and subliminal communications as evidenced in interactive media of convergence. There lies the emblematic dimension of this paper, especially in exploring the manifest roles of nonverbal and subliminal communications as pivotal in any interpersonal communication and the production, distribution and consumption of the multimodal content of the convergent-digital media but first there is the need to explain the semantic coordinates that form the caption of the paper.

II. COMMUNICATION

Communication, the level or setting notwithstanding, purveys messages meant to result in healthy exchange of ideas, knowledge, feelings, experiences and other information. However, many scholars have defined communication in many and varied ways. According to Ojobor (2002), Gode (1959) defines communication as a process that makes common to two or several what was the monopoly of one or some. Schramm (1971) defines it as the sharing of orientation towards a set of informal signs. Others, according to him, are Hoveland et al (1953) who define communication as the process by which an individual (the communicator) transmits stimuli (usually verbal) to modify the behavior of other individuals (the audience). Again, Baran (1990) defines communication as the transformation of a message from a source to a receiver (p.4). Soola (1998) in his elaboration explains communication as a dynamic, integrative, on-going and recursive process of transmitting thoughts; of sharing and importing information; of conveying and receiving ideas, facts, data, attitudes and feeling, adding that it is a two way and not a linear unidirectional flow of information from source to receiver. From this explication, it is understandable that communication is a two-way interactive process, which involves the sharing of ideas and experiences. It is a driving force, which propels the wheel of human interactions whether at intrapersonal, interpersonal or mass level.

Man as a social being lives in communication that ranges from verbal, through nonverbal to extramundane modes. Thus, because man is involved in this communication continuum, his preferred option is to make judicious use of communication to achieve positive change.

III. NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication is any communication that takes place without the use or application of oral or written words. It is takes place without word but communicates information on human feelings more effectively and accurately than verbal communication. While tracing the origin of communication, UNESCO (1981) reveals that nonverbal communication, as a broad term, embraces the simplest vocal and gestural signals rooted in their physical structure like music and dance, drum messages, signals, fires, drawings and other forms of graphic symbols, etc which human beings developed for conveying messages. This implies that rather than using text or audio codes, nonverbal communication functions through the instrumentality of nonverbal cues as colors, symbols, signs, charts, feelings, attitudes and physical movements.

Although no word is used in non-verbal communication, it can effectively communicate many human feelings more accurately than verbal methods of communication. According to Trenholm and Jensen (1996), a narrow definition of nonverbal communication would be to stipulate that it is a nonverbal behavior that must be perceived consciously by either the sender or the receiver, intended as a message by the sender or interpreted as a message by the receiver (p.54). Some common nonverbal communication cues include eye contact, facial expressions, gestures, posture and body orientation, body language, space and distance, proximity, paralinguistic and humor as well as silence, especially when used to attribute any message value. Nonverbal communication can be spontaneous or symbolic.

Nonverbal communication is spontaneous when it has to do with a sender's involuntary display of inner emotional signs to an extent that the receiver is directly and immediately aware of those signs. As signs, spontaneous communication must be unplanned, unintentional and visible indications of the sender's inner states such as gestures and facial expressions, which are within the consciousness of the receiver. On the other hand, symbolic nonverbal communication is the use of socially defined arbitrary symbols that are meant to send distinct messages to the receiver. Therefore, symbolic communication is intended such as smiling to show approval, sagging to demonstrate sympathy, turning up the nose to demonstrate disapproval, etc.

IV. THE COMMUNICATIVE POWER OF NONVERBAL COMMUNICATION

Nonverbal communication sends powerful messages to target receivers. Although spontaneous nonverbal communication is unintentional, its symbolic communication variant suggests that it is possible for human beings to exercise control over their nonverbal codes. To do this, there should be a concerted effort on the side of the sender to match the capacity of the nonverbal codes with the reality of the moment in line with the sender's self-identity and relational objectives within the context. This understanding, however, is only possible with a prior consciousness of what makes nonverbal messages so powerful on the side of the sender. Trenholm and Jensen (Ibid) summarize the power of nonverbal communication as revolving on the following reasons:

Nonverbal messages are often given more credence and are more believable than verbal forms of communication. This is true because right from the point of birth through the first 18 months or thereabouts, a person, as a child, strictly depends on nonverbal communication in all his relational activities. Nonverbal signals reveal the state of our emotions than the verbal ones. It is therefore easier to use nonverbal messages to express our emotions than to use language to do so. Again, nonverbal messages express more universal meaning than verbal ones. This fact is buttressed by such nonverbal codes as smiling or wrinkling of faces in disgust. Thus, in the face of cultural difference, nonverbal communication communicates immediately with its universal codes. Furthermore, nonverbal codes like gestures and body movements are intricately interwoven to the extent that there are barely visible beginnings and endings, and appear to be continuous and natural when compared to verbal messages. Finally, because nonverbal messages exist in clusters, they operate simultaneously yet conveying a composite meaning that intensifies the impact on the receiver. For instance, the combined forces of touch and tone, facial expressions, body positioning and movement are just a few of the nonverbal codes, which an individual can combine symbolically to heighten the impact of a message he sends.

Nonverbal communication has so many functions. We shall limit our discussion to the archetypal functions. One of them is that nonverbal communication is used to express meaning. This occurs when people use nonverbal codes to express their feelings about other people and their understanding of their relationship with them. Mehrabian (1972) suggests three dimensions of feeling expression in nonverbal communication to include liking, status and responsiveness. For instance, to smile at somebody means to like while to turn up the nose at a person implies dislike to the receiver. Similarly, on status, there are nonverbal cues that indicate a person's influential and important status in relation to another person. For example, staring at a junior worker communicates dominance, snobbishness or superiority. Responsiveness refers to a person's commitment to another person like bursting into tears or laughing at the sight of a significant other.

There are some verbal messages that function to add meaning to verbal messages. They do this by either complementing, accenting or substituting verbal messages. Nonverbal communication equally regulates the flow of conversations. Through this function, nonverbal codes regulate the act of talking in turns by interlocutors, avoiding long pauses, changing topics, etc.

V. SUBLIMINAL COMMUNICATION

Subliminal communication takes place at the subconscious level. The messages, which could be audio or visual or both are presented below the normal limits of the receiver's auditory or visual perception on the assumption that the human mind seems to accept things without judgment. The subliminal message also takes the form of auditory or visual affirmation or signal that is not audible or visible to the conscious mind but is audible or visible to the unconscious mind i.e. the deeper mind. In summary, subliminal communication refers to the production and transmission of media content meant for the subconscious mind using such methods that

the brains subconsciously perceive but are not consciously aware. It is because subliminal communication is below the threshold of conscious perception that its messages cannot be detected by the conscious mind despite the degree of fastidiousness on the side of the receiver.

The implication of the explanation above is either that there are conscious and unconscious pathways to the mind in which case the latter is involuntarily used by the human mind for the reception of subliminal messages or subliminal messages are perceived by the deeper part of a single integrated mind. Whichever way, advertisers, diplomatic personnel and propaganda experts judiciously use the techniques of subliminal communication in broadcasts for product and service advertising, partisan politics and diplomacy. Thus, it is possible to introduce subliminal messages to deepen and reinforce the persuasive power of such media content as radio and television commercials and songs, political and diplomatic talks and speeches or to insert entirely new semantics that would go hand-in-hand with the original semantics of the messages.

Some of the techniques of subliminal communication are figure-ground reversals, embedding, double entendre, tachistoscopes (quick flash) displays, lighting and background sound. The figure-ground subliminal technique is an intentional design by which the foreground and background of an existing image are deliberately swapped to create entirely new images. In the embedding technique, links, images, videos, gifs and other content are integrated into digital media content including social media posts. It is done such that it appears as a part of a post, and thus supplies a visual element that facilitates engagement with social media posts. A double entendre is the placement of media images in a way that they have double meaning. In the process, one of the meanings is explicit in line with the context while the other requires a deeper thought to extract the meaning. The hidden message may be such that cannot be stated clearly like socially awkward, sexually suggestive or generally offensive issues. A double entendre uses such literary tools as pun, ambiguity, euphemism and homophone to convey sender's intentions. Tachistoscopic display is a strategy of displaying an image in quick successions with a view to showing something too fast, increasing recognition speed or testing memorable images. Lighting and background sound as a technique of subliminal communication delivers a process message with additional messages meant to be processed subliminally by the receiver buried in the background of lighting, sound or picture.

VI. SUBLIMINAL COMMUNICATION AND ONLINE ADVERTISING

Subliminal advertising is the artful use of words and images (technically referred to as stimuli) in the production of an openly sponsored and impersonal message to promote or sell a product, service or idea. Online advertisers, firmly rooted in the belief that consumers are influenced by advertisements that they do not consciously receive; judiciously utilize the techniques of subliminal communication in the placement of their online ads. The whole scenario has necessitated a renewed attention to consumer psychology. The stimuli are embedded, quickly displayed, brandished to have double meaning, etc in some other images in such a way that the consumers who hardly detect the messages overtly, consume them unconsciously. The duration of the ads is estimated to be 0.03 seconds, which is about three one thousandths of a second, in the belief that most people will not be aware that they have seen such a stimulus, more so as it is presented in so short a time. Notwithstanding the subliminal technique deployed by the advertiser in the placement of subliminal ads, what really matters is the unconscious influence of the messages on the consumers.

When viewed against traditional advertising, online advertising has its own characteristics that particularly support subliminal communication. Some of the characteristics are summarized as follow. To begin with, in online advertising, users obtain valuable information on their own and can use the information to browse the web and read email. They can as well use other valuable services like web search engines and instant messaging. The users' direct exposure to the environment and its dependent carriers, as obtainable in banner and web page ads, is a major aspect of online advertising that facilitates the realization of the behavioral change expected from the online ads consumer. Again, the overarching idea of online advertising is the engagement of the users' attention and clicks. Furthermore, the means of expression in online advertising is rich, especially with the use of such coercive means as pop ads, full screen ads and interstitial ads, floating ads, and many others by the advertiser to force users to browse and click. Finally, online advertising is interactive. There are interactions among the users, advertisers and network providers.

The substance of these characteristics of online advertising is that users of the devices of media convergence are deeply exposed to an elaborate culture of nonverbal and subliminal communications. Youths and adults of Sub-Saharan Africa, evidently, encounter more online ads every day, and the result, among others, is media consumerism. Conversely, all the operations of online advertising are in themselves nonverbal communication with its subliminal connotations that are evident and resplendent in media convergence. What then is media convergence?

Media Convergence

Media convergence refers to the coming together of different equipment and tools for the production and distribution of multimedia signals to be received with the aid of a single home appliance like phone and computer. It is a milestone in media technology and convenience particularly because of its capacity of information flow across media platforms. Betiang (2004) observes that the convergence of telecommunications, print and electronic media has made broadcasting that was hitherto restricted to radio and television to gain another dimension through webcasting. Other media scholars have argued that media convergence should be viewed as an ongoing process that should not be viewed as a displacement of traditional mainstream media, but rather as interaction between media forms and platforms. Erdal, (2011) one of those scholars, argues that media convergence is a cooperation and collaboration between previously unconnected media forms and platforms. Similarly, Grant and Wilkinson (2009) inform that media convergence is a result of combining the media of communications, telecommunications and computer industries in a fashion that blurs the boundaries between media platforms and unites them into one digital form. This implies a link between media convergence and digital media.

Arguably, outstanding aspect of media convergence is the evolution of digital media and online communication networks. Thus, with the convergence of specific types of media like print, audio and video into a digital media form, news organizations, through their journalists, and even target audiences are able to tell their stories in text, audio, video and interactive media. Again, the digital content of media convergence has the ability to change the nature of traditional media, and consequently affect the way we use and perceive them. Take a book on the digital media for instance, a reader can take the advantage of the storage system of the book and enjoy an amazing reading experience because the book and various other books are stored in one device. It is therefore possible for the reader to flip, back and forth, the pages of the book, change text sizes to make reading more comfortable, look up words with a built-in dictionary, cross-reference passages, read other books, purchase new books on the spur of the moment and so on all with effortless ease. It is noteworthy that the impact of media convergence in the direction is that all the many and varied activities listed above can now be stored as digital content and performed within a single device instead of doing them separately with the unavoidable laborious consequences.

The telephony, particularly the contemporary cell phone, plays a major role in the production and transmission of the digital media of convergence. Apart from the computer, the cell phone does many activities including being used to communicate anytime and anywhere especially because of its mobility. Other wide range of digital activities to be performed within the device of the cell phone are the creation of social-networking pages, blogs and websites, transmission and reception of unsolicited email advertising messages, using the net to find information of sorts, exchanging text and chatting online and uploading music and other content to a file-sharing sites. All these and lots more activities on the digital media have culminated in blurring the hitherto existing line between mass communication and interpersonal communication.

Generally, the basic features of digital media content are compatible with nonverbal behavior. The features include multimedia, interactivity, automation and ethereality. Multimedia of media convergence explain a type of content that blends different content forms like text, audio, images, animations, video, etc. Generally, such content processing devices as cell phone and computer are used to record, play, display, interact with or access multimedia. Interactivity refers to the ability of media convergence to provide a platform for interaction with a computer and other machines with the aid of a user interface. It is through this feature of media convergence that the interactive media work with the user's participation and input. Automation or automatic control refers to the technology through which a process or procedure of content accessibility is done, almost effortlessly, with little or no human assistance. Ethereality describes the immaterial quality of digital content that allows the storage of large data without losing their original characteristics. All these features depict nonverbal applications, and distinguish the content of media convergence from that of its media divergence counterparts.

Nonverbal Messages are Processed Subliminally

We have mentioned that the process of subliminal communication suggests that the human mind is divided into conscious and subconscious parts. The conscious mind is functional only when a person is awake and conscious of his surroundings, while the subconscious part of the mind is continually active to regulate every in and around the human body like speech and character. The subconscious mind also receives and processes information without the knowledge of a person. Goleman (2006) informs that one of the brain's pathways is the amygdala that has the function of extracting emotional meaning from nonverbal messages like scowl, sudden change of posture, shift in tone or voice, etc even microseconds before we yet know what we are looking at (p. 15). He adds that although the amygdala has an exquisite sensitivity for such messages, its wiring provides no direct access to the centers of speech, which implies that the amygdala is speechless.

The process of subliminal communication begins when a person receives a feeling and the messages from his brain circuit instead of alerting the verbal areas for any verbal expression of the signals to the extent that instead of seeing the signals, the person feels them. It is the same pathway that the amygdala uses to read the emotional aspect of a person's perception of another person's tone voice, a hint of anger around the eyes, a posture of glum defeat, and so on and then processes that information subliminally, beneath the reach of conscious awareness. It is this reflexive, unconscious awareness that signals the accompanying emotion by priming the same feeling for a reaction to it such as fear in seeing anger among individuals.

It is understandable, therefore that the brain has a "low road" that is always at work. The low road is circuitry that is sensitive to nonverbal cues and operates beneath human awareness, automatically and effortlessly, and great speed. Hence, it is apt to say that subconscious mind receives information that the body is not aware of, and stores them for use when the need arises. Scholars like Sigmund Freud and Dr. O. Poetzle believe that subliminal communication has enormous effects on dreams and behavior of the receiver even days and weeks after the original stimuli.

It should be noted here that the bottom-line of interpersonal communication is interactivity. Now, the question is if there is any link between nonverbal communication and interpersonal communication.

Nonverbal and Interpersonal Communication

Nonverbal communication, though complex, is an indispensable part of interpersonal communication. Particularly, nonverbal communication strengthens interpersonal relations because it communicates messages between persons. Such nonverbal cues as dynamic movements, static appearance-related choices of clothing, grooming, and para-verbal acts (inflection, pacing, pitch and tone of speech, stressing some words, phrases or pauses during speech delivery, etc) by senders and the impressions of those actions and choices formed by receivers can be sent subtly or forcefully through numerous channels. As mentioned earlier, some nonverbal communication messages are universal while some others are limited to specific cultures, subcultures or inner circles, and generally, they enhance interpersonal psychology.

Interpersonal communication that is devoid of nonverbal cues will be productive of such a disgusting picture as two immobile interlocutors conversing without the conventional expressive movements. However, the complete absence of nonverbal cues would hardly be achievable because their frozen pictures, clothing, interpersonal distance, and the paraverbal behavior of speaking style, vocal intensity, tone, rhythm, and pitch would, inexorably communicate nonverbally much more than the content of the spoken words.

It is, therefore, understandable that nonverbal behavior is more observable in interacting individuals than it is in an individual expressing himself nonverbally without reference to others. The same situation obtains in human interaction with computer and cell phones. It is during conversations that the role of nonverbal cues in expressing the meaning and modifying (complementing, substituting and accenting) verbal messages as well as regulating the flow of interaction is visible.

Nonverbal and Subliminal Communication in Media Convergence

Media convergence emphasizes human-computer interaction, and from our discussion above, nonverbal cues are paramount in all interactivity at the interpersonal level. Particularly, the content of media convergence as obtainable in such devices as cell phones and the internet has got its own meta-communication (a single term for tone of voice, body language, gestures, facial expressions and other nonverbal cues, which convey meaning that complement, substitute or contradict verbal messages). To do this, it makes use of electronic paralanguage like emoticon and beauty/face marks. As a component of meta-communication, paralanguage can be expressed consciously or unconsciously to modify meaning and convey emotions such as prosody, pitch, volume, intonation and many others.

Emoticon is a portrayal of facial expressions like a smile, frown, etc formed by combining keyboard characters in a variety of ways and used in digital media production and transmission to express the feelings and intended tone of the sender. Some remarkable and commonplace emoticons are textual representations that convey the writer's mood and facial expressions that exist in form of icons. Icons hitherto consisted of ASCII art (American Code for Information Interchange – codes representing text in computer, telecommunications equipment and other devices), and later, Shift, JIS art (artwork created from character set – Japanese Industrial Standard) and Unicode art (text-based art that uses character to represent pictures). As art forms, icons perform similar functions with traditional arts. Ajibade and Enamhe (2014) inform that Nigerian arts reveal, nonverbally, hidden messages or meanings through visual symbols that serve political, social and religious purposes (p.19). However, contemporary icons (static or animated) are compatible with traditional text-based emoticons to be commonly known as emoji. Emoji, whether oriental or occidental, exists in different genres like facial expressions, common objects, places, types of weather and animals, and simply refers to ideograms and smileys that are used in electronic images and web pages. Generally, smile icons of the instant messenger, face/beauty

mark of the email, avatar of the e-mail applications and other nonverbal cues of media convergence-powered content have played great roles in communicating to receiver-users of cell phones and computers.

There is also the electronic nonverbal cue of motion capture. This refers to the digital recording of patterns of movement like that of a performer in a film or television program for using the image to animate digital character models. Specifically, performance capture is done to embrace the face, fingers and other subtle expressions that are embedded for subliminal communication.

It is obvious that the content of media convergence like email, texting and social networking has got a wide range of nonverbal cues. For example, interpersonal interactions on the cell phone and the internet have a rich harvest of gestures, postures, glances, gazes, expressions, distance, tone, clothing, grooming and other essential nonverbal cues that persistently apply in digital media production, distribution and consumption but are never recognized. There are also innumerable promotional messages of the digital media that are nonverbally intrusive, which the recipients though not aware of, subliminally internalize because they are, nonverbally, played at low volume or flashed on the screen for at least a second. The effectiveness of such digital media messages has underscored the increasing rate of media consumerism among cell phone and internet users.

Again, the insertion of “hidden” messages in movies and television programs of the digital media have given rise to subliminal advertising. Such messages have been used, over time, to influence the product and service consumption patterns of cell phone and internet users. It is the same subliminal cues that advertisers on the digital media use to expose culturally taboo content, which subliminally communicate to the audience who hardly perceive the messages consciously. Arguably, the majority of obscene connotations are meant to appeal to the subconscious mind. This is the case with some of the social media images, phrases, slogans, etc. The subliminal techniques represent two-sided illusions, in which case it is possible for a receiver to see something else while watching another.

Other characteristics of media convergence that make it take the trajectory of nonverbal communication include its storage technology, user interface and interactivity. As always, it is just a portion of media content that is distributed live or without storage, while the rest of the content we read, see or hear normally undergoes a storage system for subsequent editing, distribution and access. Media convergence has automated computation and digital storage of various data that include, among others, punch cards, optical storage and nanotechnology. Today, the storage technology of the digital media has changed the media-consumption patterns among the audience members. For instance, a digital video recorder (DVR) or a personal video recorder (PVR), which is essentially a set-top box with a large storage capacity, can be used for several hours of programming and to search automatically for shows (Pavlik and Mankintosh, 2018). There is also the compression of digital video and audio as well as other digital data. It is a technique of multimedia production of media convergence used for the reduction of the size of data for storage, handling and distribution of content, especially in applications like media streaming and internet telephony.

Again, user interface (UI) represents a whole lot of nonverbal cues. As an industrial design area of the interaction between human and computer, user interface makes it possible for human beings to operate and control the computer effectively. It also allows the user to exercise simultaneous reception of feedback that facilitates his decision-making during the operations. Typical examples are computer keyboards, computer mouse, search engines, touch-sensitive screens, etc. All these nonverbal cues and applications have simplified human-computer interactions.

VII. CONCLUSIONS

This paper has posited that nonverbal and subliminal communications transcend the age of media convergence. Media convergence simply attempts a deconstruction of the traditional one-way flow of public oriented messages only to emphasize nonverbal cues and its allied subliminal communication form. Thus, it is possible to assert that the traditional boundaries of the mass media can wither, with their isolated contents converted into multimedia that are emptied into a single channel, big enough to acquire, process and transmit all process messages with the aid of all manner of nonverbal cues. Nonverbal cues hallmark the interactive media of convergence, and thus engender more effective, vertical, horizontal and diagonal human communications.

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

In view of the invaluable nature of nonverbal and subliminal communications in media convergence, there is the need for greater attention to be given to them, particularly to unravel how best they can be harnessed, in such areas as public and citizen’s diplomacy for national development. Media scholars should research more on how to utilize nonverbal and subliminal cues for development purposes. Furthermore, nonverbal and subliminal communications should be made a part of the curricula of primary, post primary and tertiary schools.

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