THE ROLE OF POLITICAL, SOCIO-ECONOMIC FACTORS AND THE MEDIA IN NIGERIA'S INTER-RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

THESIS SUBMITTED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE REQUIREMENTS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LIVERPOOL FOR THE AWARD OF THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR IN PHILOSOPHY

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ABSTRACT

This study is about the coverage of religious conflict in Nigerian newspapers. Although it was not originally intended to compare the coverage of the conflicts between papers in the North and those in the South of Nigeria, the perceived differential situations of the media in the two regions necessitated such a comparison. It is a qualitative research project consisting of three studies: First, there was a comparative critical examination, through critical discourse analysis, of the reports by two newspapers, *THISDAY* and *Daily Trust,* during the November 2008 religious violence in Jos, a central Nigerian city. Second, by means of interpretative phenomenological analysis interview data obtained through the semi-structured technique from Nigeria were critically analysed. Third, also applying interpretative phenomenological analysis data obtained by means of focus group interviewing from Nigeria were critically analysed. The results in all three cases suggest the newspapers are regionally, ethnically and religiously inclined; they are particularly affected by factors like ownership, location, staffing and audience perception, which determine how they tailor reports; the newspapers are not usually the cause of religious crises but they stoke the problem through biased and sometimes inflammatory reports; and, although, they are very vibrant factors like Nigeria's economic recession, political culture – arguably comprising of violence, corruption and tribalism – and new media/technology and so on, contribute towards making their role in the conflicts one of amplification rather than mitigation. The thesis also suggests the application of Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis using the media as a conduit towards de-emphasising dissimilarities, while emphasising similarities to reduce tension and prevent conflict.

DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated to the following people:

My parents, late Alhaji Musa Ali and Hajiya Khadijat Musa

My late uncle, Ahmadu Igietsu

My late sister Hauwa Musa and late brother-in-law Abdullahi (Babanyawo)

My beloved wife Khadijat Musa and children Imam Ali Musa and Khadijat Niima Musa

Also to my brother DSP Hussein Babangida (Musa)

And, to all those who have paid a price in one way or the other towards making Nigeria a great nation and the world a safer place

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CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.   INTRODUCTION

The drive for doing this thesis came shortly after the sectarian violence of September 7, 2001 in the central Nigerian city of Jos. This researcher had been working as a journalist with *Daily/Weekly Trust* newspapers and was visiting home (Jos) for the weekend of 7-8 September. During the violence the researcher observed with utmost shock as people that had lived for several decades as brothers and sisters irrespective of tribe and religion ferociously attacked each other. In one gory case a young Christian woman was cornered and savagely attacked by a group of young Muslim men. The researcher realised there was an urgent need to intervene and save the woman's life in spite of the clear risk. Although he successfully prevented the killing of the woman the mob, angered by his intervention, turned their weapons on him and his life was only spared after a man who had watched from the distance raced to the scene begging the youths not to take the researcher's life. The man, who turned out to be the researcher's cousin, was a popular sportsman and well respected in the community and that, perhaps, was the quality that appealed to the reasoning of the mob.

Subsequent happenings during and after the crisis also contributed towards fuelling the desire to critically probe into the conflict in order to understand the real factors that have caused (and often fuel) it. For example, the then Governor of Plateau State Chief Joshua Dariye had, despite several allegations of incompetence on the part of his

government in handling the violence, blamed the media for all that happened. Dariye specifically accused *Daily/Weekly Trust* of waging a jihad against his government to mark 200 years of Sheikh Usman Danfodio's jihad in Northern Nigeria. Generally, there were attempts on both sides to shift the blame to the media, which the researcher found difficult to understand.

Thus, as a journalist with about 10 years of practice experience the researcher felt conducting a study of this quality was a possible means of critically evaluating and understanding the deeper meanings in the whole problem and how best it could be tackled with the media playing a huge role in the entire process. However, the researcher had to deal with his own biases in order to be able to effectively do the study: first, the researcher is a Muslim from Northern Nigeria, where often the conflicts erupt; second, as a researcher that has worked with one of the newspapers that is studied in the thesis there is a connection with the paper that needs to be cautiously handled; and, third the fact that at some point the researcher solicited assistance from former colleagues in Nigeria during the study might be been seen as having some effect on the study itself. Thus, the researcher decided from the outset to take a critical distance from all the links mentioned, including those perceived. The choice of phenomenology as a theoretical framework made this quite effective as often the choice of themes and theories was dictated by the subjective phenomenology of the researched. In effect, the researcher attempted to understand the phenomenon through the experiences of the researched and interpreted it in their own voices as illustrated by quotations in Chapters Five and Six.

The thesis is, therefore, a study of how newspapers have reported religious conflicts in Nigeria in terms of objectivity and other journalistic professional roles. It is an attempt to critically evaluate how they might have contributed to fanning the embers of hate in the

country's long history of sectarian violence. While it might not be a deliberate comparison of newspaper reportage in the country during such crises, the fact that the country is seen as constituting people of diverse and distinct cultures and religious beliefs with seemingly little similarities might necessitate such a comparison in order for us to understand how they become part of the cleavages. It is also important that this study critically determines how ownership, location, staffing, economic and political incentives among other issues possibly lead the press into being part of this dichotomy, otherwise referred to as the North versus South division.

Of immense relevance to this study are the colonisation of Nigeria and the amalgamation of the North and South to create one country as it is today, which many Nigerian's still consider artificial as well as later political and economic developments that might have played a role in further sowing the seed of discord among the people. Rosalind Hackett (2003) and Toyin Falola (1999, 2009) see colonialism as having major impacts on the people and country and events happening today; there are also arguments that the economic depression of the 1980s has had a huge effect (Campbell 2011). This study will seek to essentially determine how these factors might have affected the media as well, resulting in the possible jettisoning of their watch-dog, public interest role to promote sectional/sectarian/personal interests and how this might have impacted on their audience/readers. This is essential because the media effects model attempts to establish a link between crime/violence and the consumption media products (like news reports, violent movies/programmes and so on) as Gauntlett (1998) explains.

This research shall therefore, among other issues, explore the nature of the violence, involvement of the media in the Jos violence (November 2008) and develop a strategy for

understanding the problem and transforming it. It shall, thus, be guided by the following aims/objectives:

(a) To critically examine the emergence of newspapers in Nigeria and how it might be linked to their perception and choice of news values

(b) To extensively investigate the influence of ownership and control among other issues, on newspapers and how it affects the reportage of religion/religious conflicts in Nigeria

(c) To carefully determine how it might be possible for the media to manipulate their audiences/readers

(d) To thoroughly examine the role of political and socio-economic factors in the crises

(e) To significantly expose the danger of manipulation and its relations to violent conflicts in the country.

The significance of the study shall include to:

(a) Profoundly understand the particular challenges of reporting religion/religious violence in complex societies like Nigeria

(b) Genuinely proffer solutions to the problems discovered

(c) Significantly contribute to discourses on ownership, control and use of the media in the study of journalism and society in colleges and universities.

(d) To particularly device a framework for critically examining the issues highlighted and the means by which ethnic, cultural and religious similarities might be emphasised while de-emphasising dissimilarities especially in societies with complexities like Nigeria, using the media as a conduit.

On the basis of the above discussions the research project will attempt to answer the following research questions:

 (a) To what extent do the media (newspapers) in Nigeria provide a platform for promoting religious disharmony?

(b) What are the factors that make it difficult for journalists in Nigeria not to be biased when reporting religion or religious conflict?

(c) How are enemy images and stereotypes created in news production and reporting?

(d) To what extent are the conflicts actually religious?

This thesis shall comprise of eight chapters with Chapter One outlining the context in which the study shall be conducted. In this chapter attempts shall be made to establish the background knowledge of the study itself and the media, the environment in which newspapers operate (in this case Nigeria) and their historical antecedents, which are important for one to understand later chapters of the study. It is also pertinent to understand the political culture of Nigeria. The aims/objectives of the study are outlined as well as the significance and research questions. Attempts will also be made to set a background for the study in this chapter.

Chapter Two consists of the literature review and issues such as the sources of violence shall be discussed by means of an examination of a range of theories. Scholarly works shall also be employed in discussing previous studies on violent conflicts and their reporting in the media in Nigeria and other parts of the world. Chapter Three is an explanation/description of the research methodologies of this study like its ontology, epistemology, theoretical approach, which is phenomenology; including where primary and secondary data will be obtained. Here, how the data will be analysed and the specific approach to be applied, which is interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), will also be explained.

Chapter Four is a study, the first of the three studies this thesis will be made of. In this chapter critical discourse analysis will be used in discussing the reportage of two newspapers, comparatively, during one of the religious crises in Northern Nigeria – the November 2008 violence in Jos. In the light of this the *THISDAY* and *Daily Trust* reports shall be examined during a period of four weeks. A discussion shall be done to conclude the chapter by explaining the meaning and framing of headlines and texts of news stories/articles/opinions as well as other relevant issues. Chapter Five is the second of the studies and shall be the analysis of semi-structured interview data obtained from Nigeria. Data analysis in this chapter shall be presented by means of interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA), using themes and sub-themes that emerge from the data to categorise and explain statements (illustrative quotations) by participants in the study.

Similarly, Chapter Six is the third of the studies and shall be the analysis of focus group interviews. Two focus groups shall be considered from the field and these shall be simultaneously analysed using IPA too. As in Chapter Five, themes and sub-themes constructed from the data shall be used to analyse quotes from participants. Chapter Seven shall be an overall discussion of the findings of the studies in Chapters Five and Six. Using themes linked to theories, the discussion shall focus on how answers to the research questions earlier posed are answered. For example, in the discussions reference shall be made to the media systems theory of Jay G. Blumler and Michael Gurevitch (1995) and Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini (2004) and other theories that emerge from the data while discussing issues arising from the analysis. Chapter Eight shall be the last chapter of the thesis, wherein a conclusion for the entire study shall be drawn, outlining its limitations, findings, contributions and suggesting further areas of research.

1.1   BACKGROUND

Nigeria, a country with an estimated population of 151,212 million people[1], is Africa's most populous nation. The population is roughly divided between Muslims, who are dominant in the North, and Christians, who largely inhabit the South.[2] The major ethnic groups are: Hausa/Fulani, mainly found in the North; Yoruba, largely in the South-West; and Igbo, dominant in the South-East.[3] Figures from the country's National Population Commission (NPC) reveal that the lowest literacy level of 32.51 per cent is in the North (Yobe State), while the highest (88.45 per cent) is found in the South (Lagos State).[4]

Nigeria is also an oil-rich country, producing an estimated 2.458 million barrels of crude oil per day.[5] Its economy was boosted by oil boom in the 1970s. Fashoyin (1990) argues that during the period between 1965 and 1980 Nigeria's GDP grew at an average of 8 per cent a year and that an outstanding structural change in the economy at the end of the 1967-70 civil war was responsible for the growth. But the economy began a downward spiral from the early 1980s and today the GDP is (currently estimated at 8.4 per cent) much lower than what it was in 1970 and far below the average in sub-Saharan Africa (Campbell 2011). This has been blamed on political instability, corruption, inadequate infrastructure, and poor macroeconomic management (CIA The World 2011; Campbell 2011). A major issue, however, has been the country's overdependence on oil (Campbell 2011; Fashoyin

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[1] This figure is based on a 2008 estimated census and can be accessed at the following link**http://data.un.org/CountryProfile.aspx?crName=NIGERIA#Social** accessed 02 November, 2011.

[2] A recent estimate suggests 50% Muslim, 40% Christian and 10% indigenous beliefs. Information is available at http://www.indexmundi.com/nigeria/demographics_profile.html, accessed 10 November, 2011.

[3] Information available at http://www.indexmundi.com/nigeria/demographics_profile.html estimates that Nigeria comprises of Hausa and Fulani 29%, Yoruba 21%, Igbo (Ibo) 18%, Ijaw 10%, Kanuri 4%, Ibibio 3.5%, Tiv 2.5% among other smaller tribes, accessed 10 November, 2011

[4] This can be found at http://nigeriavillagesquare.com/forum/main-square/36507-nigerias-literacy-data-released-npc.html accessed 10 November, 2011.

[5] This information can be accessed at the following web address https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/ni.html accessed 2 November, 2011.

1990). For instance Fashoyin (1990) postulates that overreliance on oil as the main source of revenue saw a backlash following a world oil surplus while Nigeria's output sharply dropped. The implication was a serious budget deficit (including huge debts) leading to the government of Alhaji Shehu Shagari (1979-1983) introducing a medium-term stabilisation programme in April 1982 otherwise known as austerity measure. This had a major implication on the people's standard of living, dramatically increasing poverty. Expounding the issue of poverty further, Campbell (2011: 11) states:

> *Poverty is about people; statistics only attempt to measure it. Nevertheless,*
>
> *the standard social indicators used by international aid agencies confirm that*
>
> *most Nigerians are very poor…the standard of living for many people has*
>
> *fallen, possibly below the levels that existed at Nigeria's independence in 1960.*

In a bid to disguise the extent of the insidious poverty in the country the government of President Olusegun Obasanjo insisted the Nigeria Living Standard Survey (NLSS) in 2004 lower their metric for poverty line to a per capita income of twenty-six thousand naira (about US$200); it was far lower than the international standard of less than one US dollar per day for measuring poverty in developing countries. Yet it was so bad that 54.2 per cent of the population were found to live below the altered poverty line. It was particularly shocking in the North-East and North-West that 72 per cent live below poverty line (Campbell 2011: 12). Perhaps the figures would have shown no fewer than 90 per cent of the population living below poverty line if the standard had not been amended. A major cause of this was the death of the middle class following the collapse of the last oil boom in the 1980s, particularly during the regime of Gen Ibrahim Babangida (IBB). This class has been replaced by what Campbell (2011: 12) describes as the so-called respectable poor:

educated, white-collar Nigerians without the means to maintain a 'middle class' standard of living.
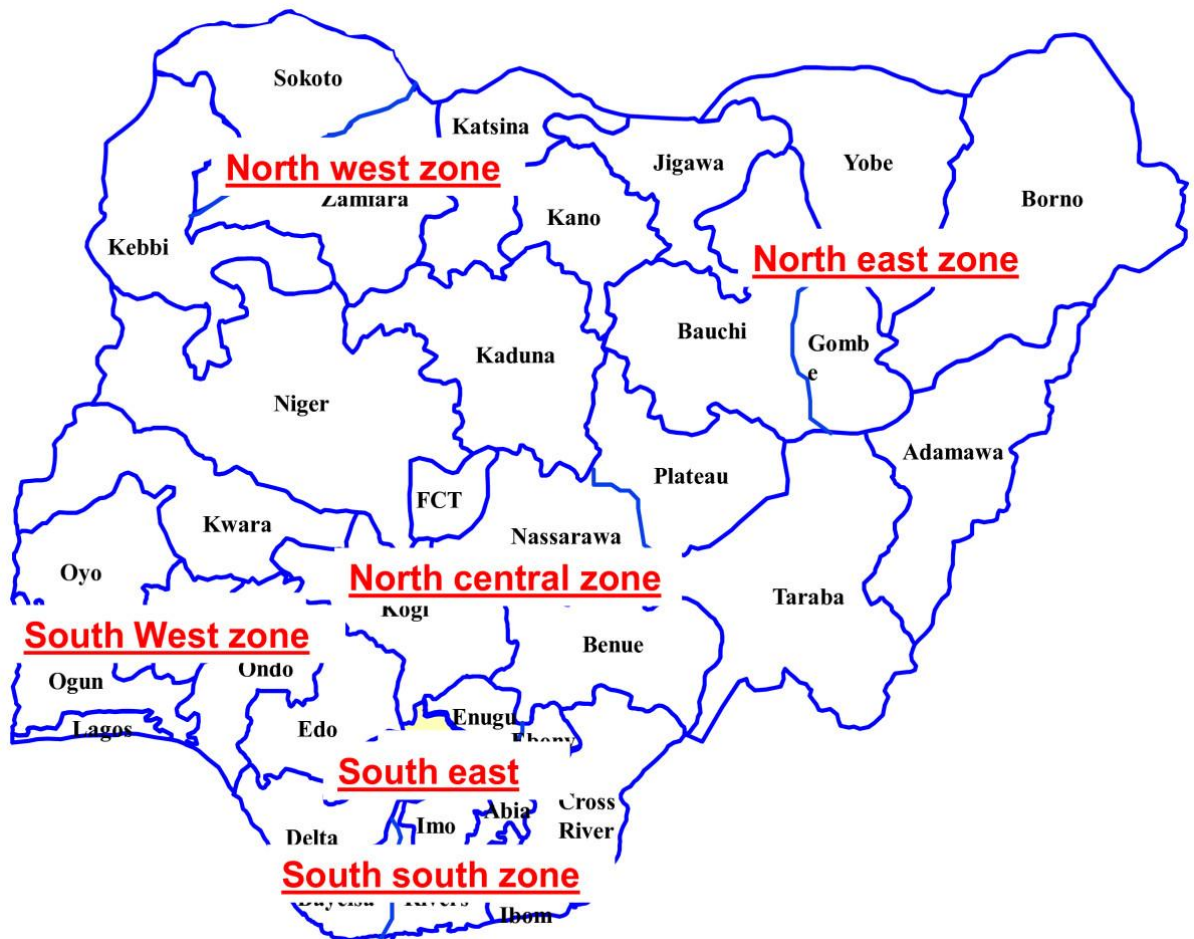
Map of Nigeria showing states and geo-political divisions.[6]

One of Nigeria's fundamental problems is that the vast of its oil is concentrated in the hands of a small group of wealthy Nigerians and distribution of income has been very unequal. Children are most affected as over 40 per cent of them are undersized due to chronic malnutrition. Many are also particularly exploited by politicians and used to provoke or maintain violent conflicts. Campbell (2011) observes that Kano, a city of 9.8 million people, is very poor and loitered by *"throngs of street children, dressed in rags"* and begging for alms and food. They are known as the almajiri (plural almajirai, meaning

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[6] Map was retrieved from http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2415/8/17/figure/F1?highres=y accessed on 09 November, 2011.

pupils/students), sent to the city from rural areas by their parents to learn about Islam under the tutorship of scholars known as malams (mullah/teacher). They are made to beg for money (to pay their own tuition fees) and food (on which they survive). Many of them hardly survive. But those that do, according to Campbell (2011), are often rented as street urchins to wreak havoc during sectarian or political violence.

Like most Nigerian cities that prospered prior to the oil boom, Kano's wealth was due to its position as an important manufacturing centre of textile and leather goods. But its fortunes have since dwindled. It is now clearly a hob of poverty; the textile industries have all folded up; the basis of its prosperity (groundnut and cotton) has collapsed. Campbell (2011) posits the Nigeria's oil boom has largely played a role in all this, as the arrival of oil led to the government focussing attention on oil at the expense of agriculture and transportation. Thus, railways which were used to transport groundnut and cotton were allowed to crumble, while roads have sufficiently disintegrated. Other factors that have contributed to the collapse of economic activities in Nigeria, generally, are serious energy production setback, rising costs of production (overhead costs inclusive), rising prices of petroleum and the failure of successive governments to introduce policies to protect indigenous industries. In the end most local industries and other businesses have liquidated, rendering millions of people effectively unemployed. With rising deficits all sections of the public sector also became incapacitated as they were forced to retrench or rationalize their workforce to cut cost. Fashoyin (1990: 653) notes that Railway Corporation, a semi-commercial government agency, responded to the situation by downsizing its staff force of over 10,000 by 34 per cent.

The mass media as Yusha'u (2009) has observed cannot operate in isolation of their environment. In Nigeria the press is the most vibrant strand of the media (Babalola 2002).

Since the media operate in environments where they are, like other industrial and commercial organisations, producing and distributing commodities (Murdock & Golding 1973) their entire survival depends on their ability to make profit. But Ojo (2008) observes that in Nigeria, giving a situation of acute recession, they face numerous challenges that make it practically impossible for them to survive. These include: the lack of adequate capital; a poorly developed market for media markets arising from the high level of illiteracy and widespread poverty; poor economic conditions of media establishments in the face of high production cost; poor medical facilities and infrastructure; widespread corruption and unethical practices in the media industry; and inadequate legal, regulatory, and policy frameworks for media practice.

In spite of an enormous population the fact that nearly 70 per cent (particularly in some parts of the North) is made up of illiterates explains why circulation figures of newspapers in Nigeria are very low. Ojo (2008) notes that even the nation's largest circulating newspaper, arguably the *Punch*, can only boast of an estimated average daily circulation of less than 100,000 copies. But Ojo (2008: 198) adds that there is no reliable circulation or readership figure as newspapers guard their circulation figures jealously. Nonetheless, a study by the Baltic Media Centre in 2001 estimates that the combined daily circulation of all national, regional and provincial newspapers in the country is between 350,000 and 500,000 (Ojo 2008: 198). This argument is boosted by another survey by the Advertisers Association of Nigeria (ADVAN) showing that the total daily circulation figures of all the newspapers in the country is a little over 300,000. For example, the *Punch* which claims to circulate between 100,000 and 120,000 daily was found to actually circulate only 34,264 copies while most smaller national dailies like the *Independent*, *New Nigerian*, *Triumph, Daily Champion* and others whose circulation figures are represented with an

asterisk in Table 1 were, according to the ADVAN survey, found to be circulating not more than 1,600 copies daily.

Below table 1 shows major Nigerian national daily newspapers and ownership and circulation figures based on research conducted by Advertisers Association of Nigeria (ADVAN) 2009.[7]

Newspaper	Ownership/publisher	Location	Region	Circulation figure
Business Day	Johnnic Communications West Africa LTD	Lagos	South	*
Daily Champion	Chief Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu	Lagos	South	*
Nigerian Tribune	Awolowo Family	Ibadan	South	8314
The Punch	Aboderin Family	Lagos	South	34264
The Guardian	Guardian Newspapers LTD	Lagos	South	25222
Vanguard	Vanguard Media LTD	Lagos	South	25241
Daily Trust	Media Trust LTD	Abuja	North	11672
THISDAY	Leaders & Company LTD	Lagos	South	21703
The Sun	The Sun Publishing LTD	Lagos	South	25632
Triumph	Triumph Publishing Company	Kano	North	*
The Nation	Asiwaju Bola Ahmed Tinubu	Lagos	South	*
New Nigerian	Governments of Northern States	Kaduna	North	*
People's Daily	People's Media Corporation	Abuja	North	*
Leadership	Leadership Nigeria LTD	Abuja	North	*
Next	Dele Olojede	Lagos	South	*

While poverty might be one of the major factors contributing to low newspaper sales in Nigeria there is deregulation of the media industry to blame too. In 1992, a new decree introduced by the military allowed private ownership of the electronic media (Oyovbaire 2001; Jibo & Okoosi-Simbine 2003). And the floodgate of private ownership of all other strands of the media was thus thrown wide open, including home video production (Larkin

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[7]fesmedia Africa, the media project of the Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung (FES) in Africa available at http://fesmedia.org/african-media-news/detail/datum/2010/04/09/-05d8ba2b4a/ accessed 09 November, 2011.

1997a, 2000). It also paved the way for the proliferation of hate literature (Hackett 2003) as both charismatic Christian groups and Muslim scholars profusely began to use the media to propagate their faith with a likely striking impact on the audience. Increased competition amidst rising poverty and economic recession also affected the fortunes of the media, especially newspapers. Other factors identified following the ADVAN survey[8] were: poor reading culture among Nigerians; corruption on the part of newspaper vendors who take advantage people's poor economic situations to encourage them to pay a token of 20 naira to read as many newspapers as possible instead of buying one copy at the cost of 150-200 naira, and the 20 naira goes into the vendor's pocket; declining creativity in newspaper contents which made papers less attractive and people began to rely more on the electronic media, especially radio and television, than newspapers; and the advent of the internet resulting in every newspaper publishing online, which is accessed free of charge. In Britain, following a similar trend after 1945, newspapers faced major challenges as costs rose and more competitors entered the market. Murdock and Golding (1973: 210) explain:

> *Inevitably prices reflected this cost inflation, and many national dailies doubled, or even trebled their cover price between 1959 and 1971. The resulting decline in circulations reflects both a decreasing willingness to buy two newspapers, and a growing use of television as a primary source of information and entertainment.*

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[8] Again refer to http://fesmedia.org/african-media-news/detail/datum/2010/04/09/-05d8ba2b4a/ accessed 09 November, 2011.

Table 2 shows national weekly newspapers, which are stable-mates of the dailies in Table 1.[9]

Newspaper	Ownership/publisher	Location	Region	Circulation
Sunday Champion	Chief Emmanuel Iwuanyanwu	Lagos	South	-
Weekly Punch	The Aboderin Famliy	Lagos	South	-
Sunday Punch	The Aboderin Famliy	Lagos	South	-
Saturday Sun	The Sun Publishing LTD	Lagos	South	-
Sunday Sun	The Sun Publishing	Lagos	South	-
Weekly Tribune	The Awolowo Family	Ibadan	South	-
Sunday Tribune	The Awolowo Family	Ibadan	South	-
Weekly Trust	Media Trust LTD	Abuja	North	-
Sunday Trust	Media Trust LTD	Abuja	North	-
THISDAY Saturday	Leaders & Company LTD	Lagos	South	-
THISDAY Sunday	Leaders & Company LTD	Lagos	South	-
Weekend Triumph	Triumph Publishing Company	Kano	North	-
Weekend Vanguard	Vanguard Media LTD	Lagos	South	-
Weekend Leadership	Leadership Company LTD	Abuja	North	-
Next on Sunday	Dele Olojede	Lagos	South	-

Thus, the issue of alternative media has become increasingly important with the internet (new media), radio, television and mobile phones stepping into the vacuum. Radio is quite appealing especially given that many of the programmes are broadcast in vernacular. In addition, newspaper reviews have been introduced to draw audience to issues/reports carried by major newspapers. The BBC Hausa service, which is quite popular among Hausa speakers in Nigeria, Ghana, Niger and the Cameroon, for example, does a review of major newspapers on a weekly basis. Television also plays an increasing role as an alternative since the world has become more globalised and events are televised (with pictures) in real time. The internet is having the most impact on Nigerians today as no fewer

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[9] Information is available at http://library.stanford.edu/depts/ssrg/africa/nigeria/nigerianews.html accessed 09 November 2011.

than 43 million people in the country have internet access.[10] This is complemented by the growing popularity of mobile phone technology.[11] Both the internet and mobile phones could easily be used in accessing and spreading information, which could be sent to one's mobile phone after subscription at no cost other than one's air time.

Thus, people hardly miss out on major happenings, although the flip side of it all is that these new sources of information might be subject to abuse, with serious implications. Nyamnjoh (2005) explains that people are forced devise or subscribe to alternative sources of information under regimes that repress press freedom (for example during colonial rule). Thus, Nyamnjoh (2005: 42) argues, pavement or clandestine media emerge under such circumstances as people utilise *"clandestine radio and word of mouth; turn to or marry with alternative channels of communication such as the grapevine, political rumour, humour, parody, irony an derision…"*

Media effects model focuses attention on the relations between violence/crime and what the media retail to their audience (Gauntlett 1998). This presupposes that people's behaviour is directly influenced by the media and anti-social behaviour is usually a reflection of the consumption of negative media contents. Gauntlett (1998) describes this approach as stereotypical and refers to a study by Hagell and Newburn (1994: 30), in which an attempt was made to trace the behaviour of 78 violent teenage offenders to media usage, by comparing them to more than 500 ordinary school pupils of similar age. Gauntlett (1998) notes that the researchers discovered that the violent behaviour of the teenage offenders had no connection with media usage as they watched less television and video than the

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[10] A report by International Telecommunications Union in August 2010 cites Nigeria as topping the list of countries with internet access in Africa. Information is available at http://saharareporters.com/news-page/nigeria-claims-top-internet-spot-africa accessed 10 November, 2011.

[11] As of 2007 more than 40 million Nigerians were using mobile phones http://www.infoplease.com/ipa/A0933605.html accessed 10 November, 2011.

other participants in the study and had no access to technology or interest in violent programmes.

In Nigeria, from what was revealed by the research by ADVAN on newspaper circulation and the reasons adduced for declining circulation, it is relevant to argue that newspapers, considered the most vibrant strand of the media, might have less effect on the people since they directly consume less of their products. And to ensure their own survival newspapers rely heavily on adverts, advertorials and special feature drives to accrue income. Thus, their products are customised to the taste of certain sections of the society as opposed to others. For example the Grand Patron of Newspaper Distributors Association (of Nigeria), Chief Elisha Akanle argues that in terms of sales newspapers rely mainly on bank executives and other wealthy Nigerians.[12] This, perhaps, could be better understood within the context of Peter Ekeh's (1975) 'Two Publics' explanations, where the educated elites are struggling to negotiate between the inherent contradictions in the civic and primordial publics to which they are expected to be generously connected. Newspapers, by tailoring contents to suit the taste of these elites, become part of the contraction as they are seen to be polarised and promoting divisions as Chief Akanle's statement suggests. Therefore, a proprietor's interest might have an overbearing influence over the public interest (Jibo & Okoosi-Simbine 2003).

Coinciding with Nigeria's economic depression was the recurrent eruption of religious violence, the first of which took place in Kano on December 18-19, 1980. The media, especially newspapers, were saddled with the responsibility of reporting the conflicts. Journalists were eventually singled out for blame by both sides in the conflicts, including observers, for either filing reports that directly or indirectly inflamed the tense

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[12] Chief Elisha Akanle's comment is available in an article at http://fesmedia.org/african-media-news/ accessed 09 November, 2011.

climate or for not properly reporting the conflicts, leading to amplification. Often they were accused of taking sides. They were, for example, accused of actively fuelling the Kafanchan religious violence of 1987. Ibrahim (1989) writes that the *New Nigerian* newspape*r* and *Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria* Kaduna (FRCN) incited people to murder by emphasising the reign of terror and the killing of Muslims by Christians in Kafanchan. Although Kukah (1993) argues the media have always contributed towards fanning and sustaining the embers of bigotry in Nigeria, Kukah[13] (1996a) rose to their defence in the case of Kafanchan saying no reports were sensationalised and that provocative ones were neither published nor broadcast. Nonetheless, Hackett (2003) argues they were seen to be creating stereotypes and shaping attitudes.

This study intends to further critically explore the issues raised, especially the accusation of biased reporting made against the media. It shall focus on the factors that aided the emergence of newspapers in the country and their possible links to bitter competition and divisions. It shall trace the history of the country and the likely contradictions in the colonial legacy passed on to Nigerians at independence in 1960. But most importantly the rise of sectarian violence, how they are reported in newspapers and how that might further fuel the crises shall be extensively discussed, taking into consideration the political and socio-economic factors in the crises that might be within or outside of the control of the media.

1.2   NIGERIA: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

The History of Nigeria predates the 1914 amalgamation of the entities that presently constitute the country. It dates back to before 500 BC, when humans were said to have

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[13] Revd Father Mathew Hassan Kukah is a prolific writer, author and a commentator on a range of issues of national and international importance in Nigeria.

populated some parts of it (Falola 1999: 1). The people had lived separately and independently in empires, kingdoms, chiefdoms, villages and clans (in-groups). In 1851 Britain occupied and established a consulate in the tiny Awori kingdom of Eko, Lagos (Isichei 1983: 362) heralding the beginning of the conquest of the diverse people and their colonisation under the name Nigeria. Prior to this, European contact with Africans had been restricted to four major activities namely: exploration, Christian missionary, trade and imperialism. Falola (1999: 39) explains further:

> *…explorers provided useful knowledge for others to use and encouraged the traders to move to the hinterland; missionaries served as pathfinders for colonialists; traders indicated the profits to be made from imperialism, and, together with missionaries, pressured the British government to take over Nigeria.*

From then, treaties were signed with indigenous monarchs or rulers eventually ceding control to Britain. While some were peaceful, many were done through expeditions like the one sent against Ijebu-Ode in 1892 leading to its bloody defeat and humbling. Isichei (1983: 365) notes:

> *The invading force consisted of West Indians, Hausa, Gold Coast and Ibadan troops, under a handful of British officers…The defeat of the brave and well-armed Ijebu had many consequences for the future. The Ijebu themselves seem to have felt their traditional gods had failed them, and turned to either Islam or Christianity with a wholeheartedness which missionaries compared with Uganda.*

The two possible implications of this development narrated by Isichei are: first, the involvement of foreigners from within Nigeria, for example Hausa, in the raid; and two, the

conversion of Ijebu to the two main religions that were to later sharply be used as a yardstick for dividing Nigeria. Both of these issues raised must have eventually played a role in the sort of division we are seeing today in Nigeria. By 1905, following the patterns described by Falola (1999) and Isichei (1983), almost the entire independent states of Nigeria had been brought under British rule. This was part of a grand design, following the Berlin conference of 1884-85, to conquer and impose colonial rule on African states with the exception of Liberia and Ethiopia (Falola 1999: 53). But the irony in this, particularly in relations to Nigeria, is that its heterogeneity defied, and still defies, the manner of administration imposed, despite certain modifications to give it a semblance of human face. Falola (2009: 171) argues that the manner of Nigeria's conquest and colonisation played out in later developments in the country, including the entrenchment of violence as a way of life (political culture):

> *Violence is not an irrational behaviour. The British used violence to unsettle and conquer the pre-colonial states and their leaders…the large Sokoto Caliphate crumbled, the powerful Empire of Benin destroyed, and the arrogant Ijebu humiliated. This violence had a clearly defined political agenda: to attain political domination.*

As Falola (2009) mentions above this has become the way Nigeria has been run, from its colonial days to present day.

By 1906 Nigeria's British Governor General Lord Lugard had imported his colonial style of administration that had been applied and adjudged successful in India to Nigeria. Known as indirect rule, it allowed the colonial administrator to rule without directly tampering with the structures on ground. It was for colonial convenience and cost-saving. And for the same purpose in 1914 Lord Lugard merged the constituent units into one big

whole, called Nigeria. This was called amalgamation, dismissed later by nationalist leaders

from the various regions as "a mistake"[14], or its outcome (Nigeria) as "a mere geographical

expression"[15]. Perhaps, the mistake or futility in this structure pointed out above was the

earlier mistake made by British administrators by partitioning the country into three

regions, North, West and East for easy administration and application of indirect rule. The

North, although not so homogenous, had more Islamic influences and had been

predominantly Muslim especially due to the early 19th century Jihad waged by Sheikh

Usman Dan-Fodio.[16] The West, owing to its closeness to the coast, had more contacts with

Europeans and missionaries; many had converted from traditional beliefs to Christianity,

although the Dan-Fodio's Jihad had some impact too. The East too had early visits from and

exchanges with Europeans owing to trade in legitimate goods and slaves; Christianity had

impacted more on them. In terms of systems of governance in the pre-colonial states of

Nigeria they had run completely different systems. In the North the Caliphate established by

Dan-Fodio was the most organised administrative system of the three. Administering from

the centre in Sokoto, a Caliph was both the administrative and spiritual leader. The entire

North, except the Kanem-Bornu in the North-East was under the Caliphate and every emir

and chief paid homage to the Caliph or Sultan. In the West, there was a not so homogenous

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[14] Reacting to the motion moved by leaders from South-Western Nigeria for independence by 1957, Sir Ahmadu Bello, who became the premier of Northern Nigeria at independence in 1960, said the *"mistake of 1914 has come to light. The North will not accept an invitation to commit suicide."* This led to the humiliating heckling of Northern leaders by the South-Western people in Lagos in 1953, and later when leaders from the South-West visited Kano, they were also heckled and attacked by Northerners.

[15] Chief Obafemi Awolowo, leader of the South-West and opposition leader of Nigeria at Independence, wrote in his 'Path to Nigerian Freedom' (1947) that "Nigeria is not a nation. It is a mere geographical expression."

[16] In 1804, a Fulani Islamic scholar Sheikh Usman Dan-Fodio began a military campaign against Hausa rulers in the territory that became Northern Nigeria in order to stop them from mixing Islam with traditional practices. Supported by fellow Fulani scholars Dan-Fodio's jihad successfully led to the overthrow of pagan Hausa rulers and their replacement with Fulani Caliphs/emirs/rulers. It also led to the establishment of a centralised system of administration with Sokoto as the capital. Sokoto was defeated and conquered by British forces in 1903 and months later the fleeing Caliph, Sultan Attahiru I, was pursued and killed at Burmi (to the east of the Caliphate) (see Falola 2009: 14-16).

setting but the powerful Oyo Empire headed by the Alaafin was able to bring much of the South-West, including parts of the Nupeland and Borgu (in the Middle Belt) and present day Republic of Benin under its control. But its fortunes dwindled and its strength weakened from the second part of the 18th century. There was also Benin Kingdom in the Mid-West, which rose to its peak and operated a centralised, powerful monarchy until its invasion and conquest by the British in 1897 (Falola 1999: 21). In the East they had a system based on gerontocracy, a system of governance based on age. They also had age-groups that were powerful in influencing peers. But the entire system was more chaotic than the others mentioned. It was operated in patrilineal clans and classified as non-centralised (Isichei 1983: 162; Falola 1999: 23-24). There were other non-centralised smaller states found especially in the Mid-West and Middle Belt.

Bringing these separate systems into one administrative unit became clearly a mistake after independence in 1960, as Ojie (2006: 550) observes:

The amalgamation of the Northern and the Southern Nigeria in 1914, by Lord Lugard, brought the separatist leaders of the regions into a marriage of convenience.

What is deducible from Ojie's (2006) statement is that the various regions (North, West and East) had their different cultural beliefs and orientations, symbolised by their distinct leadership styles and reflected in their leaders. The leaders eventually found themselves competing for national political positions at the centre and the differences played out almost immediately and easily. After independence in 1960, Ojie (2006: 550) states:

During the first republic, the regions were at each other's throats in a dangerous game of ethnic politics that easily deteriorated and culminated in

the 1966 coup d'état, which slid into the atrocious 30-month civil war in

Nigeria.

The January 1966 military coup led by seven Majors in the army who hailed from the South (West and East) was considered a fatal blow in the face of the North by Northern political, traditional and military leaders and people. The coup did not only sack the civilian government led by Muslim and Northerner Sir Abubakar Tafawa Balewa, it also ensured the killing of the two most senior Northern politicians in government and their alliance partners (and government officials) in the West and Mid-West. Some high ranking military officers from the North were also killed in the coup. This resulted in a counter-coup in July 1966, leading to the assassination of Nigeria's military leader who hailed from the East, General Aguiyi Ironsi and his host[17], the governor of Western Nigeria Colonel Adekunle Fajuyi. Isichei (1983: 471), commenting on the first coup's plotters' claim of trying to wipe out corruption and tribalism in the system says:

> *Perhaps few Nigerians would not have agreed with their aims. But the coup's*
>
> *execution gave, probably unintentionally, the appearance of that very*
>
> *tribalism the plotters sought to destroy. Six of the seven majors involved were*
>
> *Igbos. They killed two Northern leaders – the Sardauna of Sokoto and Tafawa*
>
> *Balewa – the Western Premier Akintola, Okotie-Eboh (the Finance Minister*
>
> *and Mid-Westerner), and several high army officers.*

What further exposed the coup to the allegation of one-sidedness was the fact that no Eastern (Igbo) or opposition politician lost his life or was directly hurt, as Isichei (1983) explains, despite the coup leader Major Nzeogwu saying it was due to incompetence in the execution of the coup.

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[17] The second coup occurred while the head of state was visiting the old Western region and was hosted by its governor, Colonel Fajuyi. Both General Ironsi and Col Fajuyi were killed in the coup.

The two coups put Nigeria on the brink as a bloody civil war was fought between the Nigerian government, headed by Lt Colonel Yakubu Gowon, a Northern Christian from a minority tribe, and secessionist Biafra in the East, led by the then Eastern Governor Lt. Colonel Emeka Ojukwu, leading to the loss about one million lives (Falola 1999: 123). At the end of it all Biafra was defeated, Ojukwu humbled and went into exile, while Gowon consolidated his hold on power and popularised the phrase 'no victor no vanquished' to moderate his victory and heal the wounds of the war. In addition he introduced policies aimed at rebuilding the country that were termed *Reconstruction, Rehabilitation and Reconciliation.* It was during that time that he introduced the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) through decree No.24 of May 22, 1973 *"with a view to the proper encouragement and development of common ties among youths of Nigeria and the promotion of national unity."*[18] But Gowon's government soon found itself struggling to perpetuate itself, promising to return power to a civilian regime after elections but failing to keep its words. On July 29, 1975 his junta was sacked in a military coup by Lt General Murtala Ramat Mohammed, a Muslim from the North and a Hausa.

Murtala's regime was short-lived. He was assassinated in an abortive coup on February 13, 1976. He was succeeded by Lt. General Olusegun Obasanjo, a Christian from the West and a Yoruba. Obasanjo continued with his predecessor's programmes and handed over power to the civilian government of Alhaji Shehu Shagari, after elections were organised in 1979. The Second Republic survived until December 31, 1983 as it was sent packing by the military in another coup that was led by Major General Muhammadu Buhari, a Muslim from the North and a Fulani. Buhari's regime was considered too tough as, like Murtala, he tackled corruption and indiscipline. In a palace coup on August 27, 1985 led by

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[18] In its dedicated website the NYSC explains the reasons for its founding and what the scheme hopes to achieve. Refer to http://www.nysc.gov.ng/history.php to read more about it. Accessed 4 June, 2011.

his army chief of staff Major General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (IBB), Buhari and his deputy Major General Tunde Idiagbon were removed from office and put in detention. The new regime was considered friendlier as IBB released political prisoners, repealed decrees considered obnoxious and operated what he called an 'open door policy'. But in 1993 IBB annulled a widely adjudged free and fair presidential election won by businessman M.K.O. Abiola, a Muslim from the West and a Yoruba, on spurious allegations. He was finally forced to step aside in August 1993 and named an Interim National Government led by another Westerner, although Christian, Chief Ernest Shonekan.

Gen. Sani Abacha eventually edged Shonekan out of office in November 1993. And for nearly five years Abacha unleashed a reign of terror as his Human Rights records reveal utter disregard for life and freedom. Anyone in any form of disagreement or seen to be disloyal was either sent to jail or assassinated or forced to go on self-imposed exile. Meanwhile Chief Abiola's bid to ensure the actualisation of his mandate had resulted in Abacha clamping him in jail. Abiola's wife, Kudirat, campaigning to get her husband released and his mandate actualised, was assassinated in cold blood. Bagauda Kaltho, a journalist accused of working for a news magazine consistent in criticising the regime was abducted and never found alive. In the West pro-June 12[19] election protests were savagely quelled. Environmental activist Ken Saro-Wiwa was convicted on trumped-up charges of murder and executed despite international calls for clemency. A number of journalists and other civilians were arrested alongside top military officers including Abacha's deputy General Oladipo Diya and imprisoned for allegedly attempting to overthrow his government. Former military leader Obasanjo and his deputy Gen Shehu Yar'adua were also accused of complicity in a

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[19] The election in which Chief M.K.O. Abiola was widely acclaimed the winner but annulled by General Babangida was held on June 12, 1993. It became known throughout the period of the struggle for its actualisation and thereafter as June 12.

coup plot and jailed; the latter died in prison. Trade unions across the country went on strike and the country ground to a halt. In June 1998 Abacha died in the presidential palace in Abuja. Commenting on Abacha's reign and death Falola (1999: 13) states:

Violence followed Abiola's arrest with many people injured or killed but with no positive results. Abacha manipulated ethnicity, the greed of politicians, and brutal violence to stay in power against the popular will until his ignominious death on June 8, 1998.

Abacha's death paved the way for General Abdulsalam Abubakar to assume power and organise elections within a year. And in May 1999 Obasanjo was sworn in as Nigeria's president he had defeated Chief Olu Falae, another Yoruba man, in an election only the Yoruba contested for the office of the President of Nigeria. It was during Obasanjo's first term in office that the first major sectarian violence on the Plateau erupted on September 7, 2001. Today, 10 years on the violence keeps erupting intermittently with colossal destruction of lives and property (Ishaku 2009). Although there was a temporary relief when Obasanjo imposed a state of emergency in Plateau State in May 2004 after suspending the state governor Chief Dariye and appointed a military administrator General Chris Ali, neither Umaru Yar'Adu nor Goodluck Jonathan, his (Obasanjo) two successors, has been able to tame the problem currently threatening the very existence of Nigeria as a nation.

It is essential to understand that the emergence of the media in Nigeria is directly linked to the colonial history of the country. In the next section of this thesis the history of newspapers shall be discussed explaining this connection with colonialism.

1.3   HISTORY OF NEWSPAPERS IN NIGERIA

The history of the print media in Nigeria is traced to the period of colonial rule when the press was consistently used as a medium of communication and enlightenment by the

colonial authorities and missionaries, on the one hand, and as a means for presenting a common voice against colonialism by the natives, on the other hand. It also served as a catalyst to the emergence of nationalism and nationalist movements because it provided a platform for the discussion of colonial policies and the development of fierce activism toward political independence. The first newspaper established was the *Iwe Irohin Fun Awon Ara Ebga ati Yoruba* in 1859 in Abeokuta. It was based in the South (South-West) of Nigeria and published in Yoruba and English (Ogbonda 1988; Olayiwola 1991; Babalola 2002; Salawu 2006; Nyamnjoh 2005). Explaining who the first media owners were then and the reasons for owning them, Salawu (2006: 55) states:

> *The colonialists and missionaries introduced writing and printing to Africa but they realised fairly quickly that effective communication with and among Africans meant using local languages. Reverend Henry Townsend of the Anglican mission started Iwe Irohin…to encourage the Egba and the Yoruba to cultivate the habit of reading for the purpose of information acquisition.*

Olayiwola (1991: 35) adds that missionaries, colonial administrators, nationalists, political parties, politicians and private foreign organisations were the dominant print media owners at the time and that the press was used as a medium for continuous public debate and political protests. Its involvement in political campaigns played a vital role in the stimulation of nationalism and the constitutional evolution of present day Nigeria, Olayiwola (1991) argues. Following the founding of *Iwe Irohin* was *The Anglo African* in 1863 and edited by Robert Campbell. While *Iwe Irohin* focused attack on slavery Babalola (2002) observes that *The Anglo African* concentrated on the issues of the time by carrying both local and national news. A torrent of other newspapers emerged 17 years after *The Anglo African* to herald the dawn of a wave of journalism that survived up until today. Among

these are: *The Lagos Times* in 1880 by Andrew Thomas; *The Lagos Observer* by Blackall Benjamin in February 1882; *The Eagle* in 1887 and then *The Mirror* (Babalola 2002: 405).

Events at the turn of the new century stimulated the emergence of more newspapers as Babalola (2002) notes. Those events were the establishment of the colony and protectorate of Lagos by the British as well as the amalgamation of the North and South in 1914. The events aroused nationalistic feelings among the people and *The Nigerian Chronicle* was started by Johnson Brothers in 1908, followed by *The Nigerian Pioneer* by Kukoyi Ajasa, although Ajasa's paper was criticised as an official mouthpiece. Others were *Nigerian Daily Times* in 1926 and edited by Ernest Okoli; *The West African Pilot* edited by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe in 1936; *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* came on board in 1937-38; and *The Nigerian Tribune* founded by Chief Obafemi Awolowo in 1946 (Babalola 2002; Ado-Kurawa 2006).

A fundamental trend common to all the newspapers was their resolve to criticise colonialism and lead a growing voice for independence. Salawu (2006: 55) has, against this backdrop, categorised the rise of indigenous press into five eras: between 1859-67 was *Iwe Irohin,* which he said stood alone, denoting the first wave; the second wave was 1885-92 in which two Efik newspapers, *Unwana Efik and Obukpon Efik,* were noted alongside *Iwe Irohin Eko,* a Yoruba paper; the third wave was marked by the emergence of *Eko Akete* in 1922, ending with the second and final death of the paper in 1937; *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo* (meaning truth is worth more than a penny) joined the league in 1937-38 symbolising the fourth wave which lasted till Nigeria's independence in 1960, and the intent of its founder, quasi-official Gaskiya Corporation, was the promotion of the development of literature in the North; and the fifth wave may be regarded as all that happened from then up until now. Salawu (2006) further spots that apart from *Iwe Irohin, which changed name to Irohin Yoruba* in 1945, and

Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo none of the newspapers in the first to the fourth waves is in existence today.

From the 1950s to the 1960s papers like *Nigerian Outlook, Nigerian Citizen, The Herald, Afriscope, the Times International* and others, made a short-lived appearance in the scene (Ado-Kurawa 2006). The 1980s and 1990s, in line with what Larkin (1997a) has described as the changing political economy of the global media, saw more private ownership. *The Vanguard, The National Concord*[20]*, The Punch, THISDAY, Comet*[21]*, Daily Sketch, The Monitor, The Guardian, The Post Express, The Triumph* all emerged in that time (Babalola 2002: 406; Ado-Kurawa 2006). But not all of them still exist today. In addition more newspapers have been founded in the North in an attempt to challenge the dominance of the South and these include *Weekly Trust* (and its stable-mates *Daily* and *Sunday Trust* and *Aminiya*), *Leadership, People's Daily* and so on. There are currently up to 21 national dailies across the country and a number of news magazines like *Newswatch, Tell, the News, National Encomiums, Ovation, Hints, Heart* and others*.*

Given the discussion about the emergence of the print media, which is clearly the most vibrant strand of the media in Nigeria, from colonial to present day Nigeria, a number of features can be deduced: first, the manner of their founding and reasons in the colonial period; second, the manner of their establishment and reasons in post-colonial Nigeria; third, those behind the founding, like ownership; and the location of the newspapers. In the colonial era we noted the first newspaper *Iwe Irohin* was founded by Reverend Townsend in Abeokuta, Southern Nigeria (South-West) and the reason was to encourage literacy and

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[20] *The National Concord* was owned by businessman M.K.O. Abiola who was jailed after proclaiming himself president in an attempt to actualise his June 12 mandate. The paper, like most of his businesses, collapsed during the period of his incarceration and his death while under house arrest.

[21] *Comet* is now defunct and has been replaced by *The Nation.*

communication. This was followed by the rise of more newspapers in the South with similar ideals except a few that saw colonialism as an issue and spoke against it. But as Babalola (2002) has argued new happenings at the turn of the 20th century galvanised the rise of more media to challenge those developments. The events were the formal occupation of Lagos by Britain and the amalgamation of the North and South in 1914. Thus, *the West African Pilot* was prominent in that period and played a major role in Nigeria's independence struggle. Its editor, Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe became the country's first ceremonial president during the First Republic at independence and remained in active politics until the collapse of the Second Republic in 1983. Also, the publisher of *The Nigerian Tribune* Chief Obafemi was actively involved in anti-colonial struggle and became the leader of opposition in the First and Second Republics.

One needs to note the link between nationalism (later regionalism, after independence), politics and the media both in colonial and post-colonial Nigeria and this has continued till date. Olayiwola (1991: 39) lists newspapers owned by or linked to politicians and these include: *Tribune* owned by Chief Awolowo; *The Nationalist* published by Waziri Ibrahim, a presidential candidate in the second republic; Augustus Akinloye's *Sunday Advocate; The Eagle* owned by K.O. Mbadiwe, Jim Nwobodo's *Satellite; The Trumpet* of Alex Ekwueme; *The Sun* by Anthony Enahoro and the defunct *National Concord* owned by Abiola.[22] Towards the end of the Second Republic newspapers like the *Guardian* of Alex

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[22] These men were either First or Second Republic politicians or both. For example Chief Awolowo was opposition leader in the two Republics, Waziri Ibrahim was presidential candidate in the second republic, Akinloye was a chieftain of National Party of Nigeria (NPN) in the second republic, Mbadiwe was also a prominent politician, so also were Nwobodo (a state governor), Ekwueme (vice president) and Enahoro.

Ibru[23], Lateef Jackande's *Lagos News*, Major General (Retired.) Shehu Yar'adua's *the Reporter* joined the league.

In addition to those mentioned by Babalola (2002) many newspapers have been bankrolled by politicians in the last 12 years since the Third Republic took off. There is another paper, *The Nation* currently owned by former Lagos State governor and Action Congress of Nigeria chieftain, Bola Tinubu. Also, another *The Sun* is run by former Abia State governor Orji Uzo Kalu. Babalalo (2002) argues that the only newspapers that has no direct link, among those in the South, with politicians is the *Punch*, owned by the Aboderin family even though its publisher Olubunmi Aboderin was a close friend of Awolowo.

From the above discussion it can further be deduced that apart from politicians owning newspapers to enhance their chances in politics there is commercial interest. This takes us back to the issue raised by Larkin (1997a) regarding the changing political economy of the media, which shows they are clearly out to make profit. Oso (1991) traces the root of the commercialisation of the press in Nigeria to the establishment of *Daily Times* in 1926, which was the result of collusion between some European financial interests and a group of wealthy Nigerians. It opened the doors for more financial investments in newspaper business as Oso (1991: 46) states:

> *The arrival of men of capital ready, for whatever reason, to invest in the newspaper business is a notable feature of the commercialisation of the press. The Daily Times, as mentioned above, started this process and it has continued till date.*

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[23] Alex Ibru's sibling Felix was a First Republic senator and first civilian governor of Delta State. Jakande is a former Lagos State governor in the Second Republic. Yar'adua was Obasanjo's deputy from 1976-79 and contested one of the aborted primary elections by IBB. He was also the late President Umaru Yar'adua's brother.

This trend became more pronounced after Nigeria's independence and especially during partisan politics as we noted earlier. Almost every of the newspapers owned by a politician or other proprietors had commercial interest at the core of its ideals, some even very questionable. For example, *THISDAY,* although its owner Nduka Obaigbena is not directly linked to any political party, is seen as politically and commercially influenced because Obaigbena is believed to be current Nigeria's president's close ally. In a recent programme, Listening Post[24], by *Aljazeera* he was portrayed as using his paper to make money off politicians and publish favourable reports about them. This, in essence, suggests the extent some proprietors can go to realise their commercial agenda using the media as a means. Oyovbaire (2001) also associates such commercial sway to the 1992 deregulation of the electronic media by IBB. The print media had before then dominated the entire media scene because of their private ownership as opposed to the government-controlled TV and radio companies. But their deregulation and mass entry made the market more competitive and the drive for capitalisation more intense.

Another important development in the print media was the change in the way news is sourced, packaged and retailed. Oso (1991) calls this change professionalism in which media owners employ highly qualified editors and journalists who try to effectively compete with others in the market by getting the best and credible information. As a result of this Oyovbaire (2001) suggests an improved profile in the professional conduct of journalists despite the increasing complexities of the society they operate in. For instance there has been a change from dichotomy (North and South) to trichotomy (North, West and East) and finally multichotomy (36 states spread across the country) in which ethnic and religious

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[24] The Listening Post programme in which the report about *THISDAY* was made can be viewed via the following link: http://www.saharareporters.com/video/pay-playchequebook-journalism-why-nigerians-distrust-their-local-media-outlets-aljazeera-tv accessed 9 June, 2011.

influences in the pluralistic states seem to serve as some sort of gravitational force, attracting loyalty from the media and journalists and resulting in the sort of reportage often seen.

1.4   NIGERIA AND SECTARIAN VIOLENCE: A CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW

Violent conflicts associated with religion in Nigeria became a major issue from the early 1980s with the mayhems unleashed by the Maitatsine (meaning accursed) extremist group in the Northern part of Nigeria. Falola (1998) says the first noticeable of these conflicts was the one in Kano on December 18-19, 1980 in which at least five thousand lives were lost although many people remain unaccounted for. The violence had spread to at least three other states in the region leading to a higher casualty rate. Within two years, on October 29, 1982, another crisis by the same group erupted in a place near Maiduguri (North-East) causing another huge number of deaths (Falola 1998; Kukah 1993; Ishaku 2009). Commenting on the second eruption Falola (1998: 137) states:

> *…another four thousand people were killed, almost two thousand were left homeless, and over three million naira worth of property destroyed. On the previous day, a riot in Kaduna had killed just twenty-three, but millions of naira in property was lost to the riot there as well. Back in Kano, a church was destroyed on 30 October, along with a great deal of property belonging to Christians.*

Both Rev Fr. Mathew H. Kukah (1993) and Ishaku (2003) have corroborated Falola's (1998) account albeit with a few dissimilarities. For instance Kukah (1993: 154) does not see the attacks as deliberate targeting of Christians by a mainstream Muslim group but as attacks by a deviant, extremist sect:

The central figure in the 1980 saga, Alhaji Muhammadu Marwa who came to

be known as Maitatsine, had a long history in Kano. His doctrine was a

mishmash of theological absurdities and some of his ritual practices said to

border on sorcery.

Following the sectarian violence in Maiduguri was the one in Sabon Gari, Kano on

October 30, 1982 in which for the first time there was a direct fighting between Muslims

and Christians in Nigeria. In reference to the Kano crisis of 1982 Usman (1987: 72) observes:

The attack on, and destruction of, Christian Churches in Sabon Gari Kano,

marks the highest, and most dangerous, point this systematic manipulation of

religion has yet reached in its opposition to the unity of the people of Nigeria.

This incident enables us to see more clearly the purposes and direction of this

campaign of manipulation built around religion.

A number of factors contributed towards making the campaign Usman (1987) mentioned in

the statement above dangerously successful in the coming years. These factors shall be

discussed later. Again, in February and March 1984 there were clashes leading to the death

of 1,000 people and destruction of Jimeta's modern-day market. Falola (1998) notes that

property worth five-million naira was destroyed and that the crisis looked like an armed

struggle with guerrilla warfare. Gombe in Bauchi State became another battlefield on April

26, 1985 with a hundred people dying as there was exchange of gunfire between the police

and the rioters. At least one thousand people were said to have been displaced from their

homes and forced to take refuge in army barracks, police stations and the emir's palace.

 Those earlier few religious violence in Nigeria, except the Sabon Gari case, have been

described by Falola (1998) as the Maitatsine riots after the founder of the extremist group

earlier mentioned, Muhammadu Marwa Maitatsine. The Sabon Gari Muslim-Christian

violence came at a time Nigeria first saw major religious manipulations leading to the crises of the scale mentioned. The next violence was to happen in Kafanchan in March 1987, which was sparked by a clash between Muslim and Christian students of the College of Education in Kafanchan, Kaduna State. The crisis spread to other parts of the state and threatened the stability of the entire nation. It took nearly two weeks to bring the situation under control. Ibrahim (1989) notes that it was only the second time Muslims and Christians fought each other in the kind of manner seen in 1987.

Another period of mayhem linked to the two religions happened in Tafawa Balewa in Bauchi State in April 1991. The problem that time was reportedly caused by a quarrel over meat sold to a Muslim boy by a Christian boy, which another Muslim claimed might not be Halal.[25] The violence, according to Ishaku (2009: 65): *"…soon spread to other towns in Bauchi State with massive casualties and colossal destruction of property and places of worship."* In the same year in Katsina there was a religious riot that came to be known as the *Fun Times* riot. It followed the publication of an opinion survey in *Fun Times* magazine in Lagos (a stable of *Daily Times*) in which they alleged *"Prophet Muhammad had an affair with a woman of easy virtue and later married her,"* (Ishaku 2009: 67). Hackett (2003: 58) explains that the riots, which took places in March/April 1991, were in reactions to the newspaper report and that one Yakubu Yahaya, a follower of the national Shi'ite religious leader, Ibrahim El-Zakzaky, had led thousands of supporters to burn down the office of the government-owned *Daily Times*. The report was actually published by the magazine in December 1990. The riots spread to Kaduna, Kano and Sokoto.

The next bout of fighting between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria was in Kano over the coming of a German preacher Reverend Reinhard Bonnke in October 1991. Like all

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[25] Halal is the food recommended for Muslims to consume. Meat especially has to come from an animal slaughtered by a Muslim following certain Islamic procedures.

others that one also left in its trail a huge number of deaths, destruction of property worth millions of Naira and internal displacement of thousands of people. The second crisis in Tafawa Balewa erupted in April 1992 due to misunderstanding between Muslims and Christians over the use of abattoir. It was the turn of Kaduna again in May 1992. It was caused by initial riots in Zangon Kataf in February 1992 over the relocation of a market place. Corpses of slain Muslims had been brought to Kaduna and taken to the Mosque and this provoked reprisal attacks on Christians in Kaduna, Zaria and Ikara. There were clashes also in September 1994 in Potiskum and in December 1998 in Maiduguri. While the former was as a result of a disagreement with a local police officer the latter was over the introduction of the teaching of Christian Religious Knowledge (CRK) in schools in Borno State (Ishaku 2009: 72).

It is instructive to note that Nigeria was under military rule the greater part of the time these crises erupted; apart from the ones in the early 1980s. In 1999 there was a return to civil rule and former military leader Obasanjo became the elected president. With him came a new set of elected governors in the 36 states of the federation. In the North some decided to introduce Sharia law in their states. Zamfara was the first to implement the law in January 2000 and by the end of 2001 twelve of the 36 states in Nigeria had introduced Sharia. There were riots in many parts of the North either in support of or opposition to the system of law. In most cases lives were lost followed by reprisal attacks in the South (South-East).

Between September 1999 and 2000 there were also inter-communal clashes in the South (South-West) between the pan-Yoruba group Odua People's Congress (OPC) members and non-Yoruba citizens residing in the West leading to deaths and the destruction of property. But the worst situations happened in Plateau State beginning from September 7,

2001 when the first of the series of conflicts on the Plateau erupted in Jos, Plateau State capital, between Muslims and Christians. Reports had it that a Christian woman walked through a Friday prayer session and was accosted by Muslims, leading to frayed nerves and people from the lady's side intervened and it snowballed to clashes that lasted nearly a week and spread to other parts of the state. The violence intermittently raged until May 1994 culminating in the siege of Yelwan Shendam[26] and sacking of the entire settlement. The insensitivity of the then state governor, Joshua Dariye to the crisis in Yelwan Shendam led to his suspension from office for six months and the imposition of a state of emergency in the state by President Obasanjo. This action was faulted by many as it lacked constitutional backing, yet it restored normalcy in the state for the rest of Obasanjo's tenure in office.

On November 28-29, 2008 there was a fresh outbreak of violence in Jos under the new government of Jonah David Jang. It was also under newly elected President Umaru Musa Yar'adua. The violence, blamed by opposition parties on the ruling PDP, was according to a Human Rights Watch (HRW) report of December 21, 2008 due to dispute over a Local Council election in which the contest was between a Muslim and Christian candidates. They drew support from people in their religions. In the ensuing violence at least 500 people were killed, many by security forces drafted to bring the situation under control. Based on interviews with scores of eyewitnesses, HRW published a report on December 21, 2008 documenting several incidents in which police and military personnel killed over 90 civilians. It categorically notes that almost all of the victims were Muslims/Hausa/settlers and that

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[26] On May 2-3, 2004, following persistent but isolated attacks between the people of Shendam and Yelwan Shendam who are neighbours a major siege of Yelwan Shendam was carried by people from Shendam assisted by a large army of militants from several other places. A Human Rights Report said the attacks started with the killing of a woman and her two children who had gone to fetch firewood in the early hours of May 2 and continued to the next day, with several different groups invading and retreating (see HRW report via http://www.hrw.org/en/node/11755/section/5) accessed 5 June, 2011.

the killings took place after the governor had issued a shoot-on-sight order. The report states that:

The vast majority of the killings were perpetrated by the anti-riot Police Mobile Force, commonly referred to as the MOPOLs... According to witnesses, all of these victims were Muslim men, most were young, and nearly all were unarmed at the time they were killed. Human Rights Watch urges these investigative bodies to investigate the allegations of widespread killings by security forces as well as the circumstances surrounding, and consequences of, Governor Jang's shoot-on-sight order. (Dufka 2008: 1)

Although there was no spread of the violence beyond Jos it brought back the fear of reprisals seen between 2001 and 2004 in the state. And in January 2010 there were clashes in the city between Muslims and Christians. There were different explanations of the cause of the crisis. One had it that a Muslim man whose property had been destroyed in the November 2008 violence wanted to rebuild it but was prevented by Christians, who are predominant in the area. This led to a disagreement and fighting that spread to other parts of the city. The second version, reported by the then commissioner of police in the state, Gregory Anyantin was that a Sunday Church service was subject to an unprovoked attack by Muslim youths. That spread to other parts of the city. But Anyantin's account was said to have sparked more violence and killings in other parts of the state the next day as Muslim settlements in the outskirt of the capital and other parts were attacked.

In one of the horrific cases the Fulani settlement of Kuru Karama was razed and women and children were killed and their bodies dumped in wells and latrine pits. In March 2010 there was what was believed to be revenge killings by Fulani herdsmen in a quiet settlement in the outskirt of Jos, Dogo Na Hauwa. Again, women and children were

butchered in cold blood. Despite the heavy presence of joint military and police security operations in various parts of the state many more killings, mostly isolated, continued to take place up until the run-up to the April 2011 general elections. The elections further precipitated more clashes on April 16-17, which initially were in protest against alleged malpractices but turned into religious violence as places of worship were attacked. The violence took place in at least 10 Northern states including Plateau, Bauchi, Kano and Kaduna.

So far attempts have been made to look at the background of Nigeria and the media in the country. It is important to understand the impacts of the historical experiences of the people and the kind of cultural orientations that developed over a number of years and how these might have contributed to what is happening today. Against the above backdrop, the next section of the thesis will be discussing Nigeria's political culture.

1.5   NIGERIA AND POLITICAL CULTURE

The concept of modern-day political culture is linked to the 1950s, especially in the US. One of the outcomes of Second World War was that different political institutions were emerging and social scientists wanted to understand and explain why people had decided to adopt such systems. For example, while in some countries the system was based on democracy in some it was autocracy (Olick & Omeltchenko 2008). But the term *political culture* became well known with the American political scientist, Gabriel Almond and his colleague, Sidney Verba (1965). Almond (1965), who asserts that *"every political system is embedded in a particular pattern of orientations to political action,"* also published a ground-breaking study of political cultures in five countries in the early 1960s, namely: Britain, Italy, Mexico, USA and West Germany, (Olick & Omeltchenko 2008; Eatwell 1997: 16). The study led to the scientists advancing a theory that stable democracies needed

certain set of attitudes, grounded on a complex balance of subject and participants cultures; it was also necessary for such democracies to have high levels of system support and social trust nurtured by corresponding memberships of diverse groups (Eatwell 1997). Based on their study they revealed that Britain and America were the classic civic cultures. Seymour Martin Lipset is also another social scientist that has contributed to the development of studies in political culture by arguing that democracies that survived for long were disproportionately located in the richer and more Protestant nations.

Another contribution is by Sharkansky (1969), who asserts that state political culture, measured by a one-dimensional scale ranging from moralism through individualism to traditionalism, is associated to features of popular participation patterns, the bureaucracy, and certain governmental programs (Johnson 2001: 499). There is also the work of Wegener who, like Sharkansky (1969), based his discourse of political culture on the individual attitude and its effect on the state as well as the impact of the relationship between leaders and followers on people's perception of political action and values etc.

A country's political culture is, based on the foregoing, the combination of people's diverse cultures or ways of life in a political system. Thus, the political culture of a society *"consists of the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place,"* (Verba 1965: 513). It has also been defined:

> *…as the pattern of successive alliances embedded in a specific cultural context, it can be seen as a dialogue or conversation between rationalities (and alliances): some cultural biases are loudly voiced, others are muted. Differences are rooted partly in the cultural context.* (Mamadouh 1999: 479)

In Nigeria the political culture has been described by Falola (2009) as consisting primarily of violence. Falola (2009: 171) argues that violence: *"…is often used to resolve*

major arguments and conflicts between the state and its citizens, between the state and its

component units, and between civil society and the state." Yet other aspects of the

happenings in the society contribute towards making the political culture a mixed-bag of

several issues, like corruption and ethnicity/tribalism. It is instructive to note that in the

Nigerian society the three work *pari passu* i.e. corruption-ethnicity-violence. In the First and

Second Republics, as was discussed earlier, civil rule was on both occasions sacked by the

military on allegations of corruption and tribalism/nepotism. In the case of the First

Republic, Isichei (1983) points out in Major Nzeogwu's address on the day of the coup the

allegations of corruption and tribalism, which the coup plotters wanted to rid Nigeria of by

sacking the Republic and eliminating its principal officers. Unfortunately, the composition of

the coup leaders, all from the South (six from the East and one from the West) gave them

the same bad image of tribalism, and by implication prone to corruption. But the allegations

were not entirely wrong about the Republic, even though tribalism and corruption were,

and still are, part of the larger picture in the country.

In the years of military rule we also saw how tribalism/ethnicity largely influenced

the removal of the General Aguiyi Ironsi following a pro-North coup in which he was killed

and replaced by a Northern although Christian officer in the army, Gowon. Gowon did not

do much better as his promises to return the country to civil rule yielded no fruit until his

removal through another coup by General Murtala Muhammed. Muhammed's effort to

fight corruption did not last long as he was sacked less than a year after he came to power.

The same old story continued from Obasanjo, to Shagari, Buhari, Babangida, up until the

current regime of Goodluck Jonathan. Corruption clearly remains Nigeria's major problem as

Richard A Joseph's (1987) work *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: the rise and fall*

of the Second Republic suggests*.* Joseph had attempted a critical look at the nature of

corruption in the Second Republic and how political offices are seen as a means to amassing 'spoils' and rewarding clients. His findings further confirm the entrenchment of a culture of corruption. There's also Daniel Jordan Smith's (2007) book *A Culture of Corruption* explaining the various patterns corruption is perpetuated in the Nigerian society. Smith (2007: 122) observes that during elections Nigerians vote for the best patrons because they are aware that they can only benefit from democracy before politicians occupy public positions; once in office their access to political leaders is only through the structures of patron-clientelism.

Earlier on Falola's (2009) take on the role of violence in Nigeria's political culture was mentioned. It is necessary to explore this argument at this point. Falola's (2009) position stems from current and past events in the country and it looks at the manner in which the entity called Nigeria today was created by Britain in the early 20th century using force. For instance, the colony of Lagos was established after it was forcibly annexed in 1906. Then, there was the conquest of the Sokoto caliphate, the invasion and destruction of Benin Kingdom, the humiliating defeat and humbling of the Ijebu, all through violence. Simultaneously, labels were used to cast the invaded people negatively and justify the violence meted on them. Falola (2009: 171) states: *"They presented the Aro as brutal slave traders, the Ekumeku as murderous insurgents, and the Muslims as blood-thirsty crusaders."* Since Nigeria regained independence violence has continued to dominate its political culture as Falola (2009) notes, arguing that the situation became so severe that the scholar Ali Mazrui once expressed a fear of resurrection of the warrior tradition in Africa's political culture. By 1966 Nigeria's First Republic had violently collapsed and within a year the country had been dragged into a costly civil war leading to the death of one million people.

The tradition of violence continued after the 30-month civil war although there was a brief interlude in the 1970s. In the 1980's, following dwindling economic fortunes of the country, for the first time Nigeria began to witness sectarian violence on a large scale in furtherance of that culture of violence. It eventually became a commonplace for violence to occur and for followers of the two main religions to pick up arms at the slightest provocation as is witnessed today in Plateau State and many parts of Nigeria. The climax of all this is the current clear division of the country on the grounds of ethnicity and religion. The media, as Hallin and Mancini (2004: 26) have noted, reflect the divisions in their political environment and that journalism in any part of the world is not expected to be plainly neutral. The media in Nigeria may be, therefore, actively participating in nurturing this culture, especially the print media which is the most vibrant strand. However, the picture is not entirely gloomy as there might still be some who, despite the inclination towards bandwagon, choose to practice ethical journalism.

1.6   THE SEARCH FOR FRAMEWORK FOR COMPARATIVE STUDY

The world is obviously very diverse with states in different parts practising different types of systems of governance. In previous discussion of political culture it was noted that social scientists were concerned about the reasons for these differences and sought to explain by carrying out studies in various parts of the world. David Almond and Sidney Verba (1965) were foremost in this search for answers. In the same vein the media in different parts of the world are very different since the sort of freedom those under liberal democracies enjoy in the course of doing their job is not the same as those under dictatorship, communism or monarchy enjoy. The variations stem from the different systems of governance and willingness/unwillingness of rulers to grant much freedom, which they fear might undermine their hold on power. In order to sufficiently understand how they operate we,

therefore, are not able to apply a uniform strategy or theory for studying them in different places under different conditions.

Acknowledging this difficulty arising from the differences mentioned, in their book *The Crisis of Public Communication* Jay G. Blumler and Michael Gurevitch (1995: 60) note that:

Clearly the relationship of mass media institutions to political institutions is assumed in all states to have consequences of major import and is never left to chance. All political systems must one way or another regulate the performance of media institutions in the political field.

In order to get round the problem of comparative cross-national analysis of media systems they suggest the adoption of certain methodologies, which they refer to as:

…a framework, consisting of four dimensions that include: degree of state control over mass media organisations; degree of mass media partisanship; degree of media-political élite integration; and the nature of the legitimising creed of media institutions. (Blumler & Gurevitch 1995: 61)

It is important to note at this point that while Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) are concerned with trans-border studies of media system hence this framework, our study is specifically within the precincts of the geo-political entity called Nigeria. It is therefore not a cross-national research even though a wide level of diversity exists among the constituent units of the federation. In terms of comparison, this study intends looking at the media operating in the two main regions North and South (West and East). However, before expounding this further it is essential to also introduce the work of Daniel C. Hallin and Paolo Mancini *Comparing Media Systems: Three Models of Media and Politics* (2004). In it

they seek to expand and simplify the work of Blumler and Gurevitch (1995). They admit that theirs is only an attempt to:

…build on previous work, refining it based on our attempt to make sense of the patterns of difference and similarity we have found among countries covered here, and to link these patterns to the social and political context in which they evolved. (Hallin & Mancini 2004: 21)

Against the above backdrop Hallin and Mancini (2004: 21) propose a framework for comparing media systems in Western Europe and North America which consists of: development of media markets, with particular emphasis on the strong or weak development of a mass circulation press; political parallelism that is, the degree and nature of the links between the media and political parties or, more broadly, the extent to which the media system reflects the major political divisions in society; the development of journalistic professionalism; and the degree and nature of state intervention in the media system.

Again, we are back to the issue raised in relations to the strategy earlier recommended by Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) as this one also is based on cross-national analysis and might not be easily applicable to our specific situation without modification. It is pertinent to take into cognisance the political history of Nigeria particularly the pre-colonial separateness of the people that were forcibly united under colonialism and compelled to continue to live a sort of marriage of convenience. It is also essential to consider the manner in which the media emerged and the lop-sidedness that characterised that emergence. It is equally important to note how the media have been part and parcel of the cleavages in the system and might be keen on promoting those. Oyobvaire (2001) has noted the transition from dichotomy (North versus South) to trichotomy (North/West/East)

and finally multichotomy (36 states). Yet the same old North versus South politics has continued to dominate the thinking of the people and the media see themselves and are seen from this perspective too. It is also very helpful to understand Toyin Falola's (2009) assertion that Nigeria's political culture is essentially violence due to the nature of its constitution by Britain using force and how that legacy has been bequeathed to the people. In addition, other factors have been discussed, like corruption and tribalism, combining to make up the country's political culture. All this will explain how the media have attempted to play their watch-dog role in a massively expanding (in terms of population) country like Nigeria. It will also help in understanding what roles the media have played in the inter-religious violence in the country which reached its climax on the Plateau (Jos and other towns and villages).

Finally, it is essential to explain that the main theoretical framework adopted for this study is the qualitative phenomenological approach, under which the researcher hopes to (based on their own background experience), investigate and interpret the phenomenon through the views/experiences of participants in the study. But, since this study also involves examining newspaper reports Hallin and Mancini's (2004) framework for comparing the media systems in Western Europe and North America will be contextualised and appropriately cited in discussions. Other theories, like the media effects model and critical political economy approach, might also be referred to in the course of the discourses. However, they will by no means be allowed to influence the emergence of themes or direction of discourses. Participants' phenomenology will be allowed to subjectively determine the course of discussions and data representation of their phenomenology will be appropriately illustrated wherever required.

1.7   CONCLUSION

This chapter is crucial to this study. Hence attempts have been made to lay down a solid base in this chapter by situating the variables to be examined within certain historical context. For instance we have tried to place the entity Nigeria within a historical context; the same thing was done with the media and then sectarian conflicts in the North of the country. These are the major issues to be examined: religious violence, the involvement of newspapers in it, and within the boundary of Northern Nigeria.

In order to understand how things work in Nigeria the country's political culture was also analysed. And to explain why this study needs to be done the aims/objectives have also been highlighted, as well as the significance and research questions that must be answered in order to achieve the objectives outlined. The background of the study has also been explained in order to clarify the context, while attempts have been made to look at some theoretical frameworks that might be applied to discussions later in the study. From what has so far been discussed it is obvious that religious violence is a major problem in Nigeria, but it's also important to understand the factors that cause, provoke and continue to fuel or maintain it. Understanding the role of the media in the crises is essential and could lead to further insight into the problem and ways of resolving it.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

Theories and Studies on Violent Conflicts

2   INTRODUCTION

This chapter attempts to look at the various social psychology theories explaining aggressive behaviours in human beings and the eruption of violent conflicts. This is essential as the theories might provide some explanations for the violent crises that have been witnessed especially in the last two to three decades. Such theories as basic needs, drive, biological, aggression-frustration, realistic conflict, social identity etc. will be explained and examples will be looked at by studying some major violent conflicts, bringing out the nature of the involvement of the media. First of the conflicts to be studied is the Rwandan ethnic violence in which there was ethnic cleansing of the Tutsi minority by the ruling Hutu majority. Second, the Bosnian violence will also be looked at to understand the background (root causes) and how perceived insecurity by the Serb majority played a role in igniting the war and its final resolution. Third, the Darfur ethnic cleansing, the role of the Sudanese government as well as factors within Darfur contributing to the violence will be explored. Fourth, attempts to understand the genesis of the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland will be made, bringing out the nature of the polarisation of the system between the Catholic and the Protestant and consequent resort to violence. In each the main causative factors will be examined and the role played by the media will be discussed. Finally, attempts will be made

to look at how the evolution of Nigeria, the emergence of the media and the religious violence discussed in Chapter One can be linked to understanding this study by exploring previous reporting of the conflicts by Nigerian media. This will further provide the necessary gap for the main study in this thesis.

2.1   THEORETICAL UNDERSTANDING OF VIOLENT CONFLICTS

It is essential to also set a context for this chapter by examining violence and its relationship to human beings. Put differently, this section intends considering issues like why human beings sometimes become hostile in their environments or in relations to other human beings, why people become very aggressive and allow the aggression to climax to violence and even the destruction of lives and property. Social psychologists have advanced various arguments and theories in a bid to provide answers to these questions, yet many of these theories appear to be in conflict with each other and suggest there is no single reason to explain violent eruptions in different human societies. For instance, while a particular conflict might have features of all or most of the factors, some might just have one. This is due to the specificity of each situation and the manner in which the reactions have arisen. The terms aggression, violence and conflict will be briefly explained before the various theories explaining sources of conflict are discussed.

Aggression, according to Geen (1990), refers to a number of things that may actually mean different things. Kool (2008: 37) argues that aggression involves delivery of a noxious stimulus to a victim but such behaviour will be considered aggression if it includes: intention to hurt the victim; aversive consequences are expected; and given the opportunity, the victim might have avoided harm. However, social scientists have posited that the above definition is not broad-based and suggest the use of the term violence rather than

aggression. Kool (1993) explains that the term violence is used in group or institutional context whereas aggression is used when referring to an individual case. Barak (2003, cited in Kool 2008: 37) states: *"violence involves an action or structural arrangement leading to physical or nonphysical harm to one or more victims."* Conflict, however, could result in violent or nonviolent struggles. Conflict in a general sense is described as "*a struggle over values and claims to scarce status, power and resources*" (Boulding 1962: 5; Jeong 2008: 5). Conflicts arise as people struggle over scarce or limited resources. Competition results in antagonism, ethnocentrism, discrimination and prejudice (Levine & Campbell 1972; Leyens, Yzerbyt & Schadron 1994: 46). Violent conflict is particularly caused by deeply embedded social grievances. These grievances may be made worse in situations where there is perception of discrimination against certain groups, leaders are not seen to be neutral in mediation or the political entrepreneurs use rhetoric or inflammatory statements (see Bellamy, Williams & Griffin 2007). Explaining how the use of rhetoric or propaganda helps to electrify people to violence Zimbardo (2009: 11) writes:

> *It requires a 'hostile imagination', a psychological construction embedded deeply in their minds by propaganda that transforms those others into 'The Enemy'. That image is a soldier's most powerful motive, one that loads his rifle with ammunition of hate and fear. The image of a dreaded enemy threatening one's personal well-being and society's national security emboldens mothers and fathers to send sons to war and empowers governments to rearrange priorities to turn plowshares into swords of destruction.*

Human nature, according to some psychologists, is linked to aggression or violence, which is usually ignited given the slightest chance. Such theorists try to make analogy between humans and animals and claim that the urge to fight and dominate is inherent in

human species (Lorenz 1966 & 1974; cited in Jeong 2008). It is on this basis that Jeong states:

In pessimistic views, a violent conflict may be inescapable in human relationships due to unconscious motivations alone…or in combination with competition for limited supplies of basic necessities.

The argument that violence is inherent in human nature is further explained by the biological theory which comes from the belief that aggressive behaviour is genetic and as each human grows older the gene manifests through interaction with the environment and such manifestation is instinctive. Freud (1920) explains that instincts of life and death are fundamental, with the one for life ensuring life's preservation through behaviour while the one for death causes life's destruction. In times of conflict humans are forced to channel their energies inward or outward and that following an outward reaction, arising from the blockage of libidinal impulses, aggression leads to violence - destruction or killing – (Kool 2008: 41). But this assumption by Freud (1920) has been challenged by other scholars who postulate arguments like social and economic factors etc. For instance, Ardrey (1976) has opined that human beings are territorial animals that are xenophobic and do not tolerate the presence of strangers in their territory. In order to preserve themselves and defend their territory they acquire weapons and resort of violence.

Another assumption is that previous traumatic experience could galvanize a group of people into becoming very aggressive. This school of thought, psycho-political trauma, attempts to explain the Israeli reaction as a result of their experience of the holocaust and in response to perceived Arab (Palestinian) threat. Another example is the ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia which the psycho-political trauma theory would explain as an

outcome of the reservoir of trauma from the WWII atrocities in the Balkans (Jeong 2008: 46).

Under the drive theory human beings are believed to be pushed by non-instinctive forces into taking actions that might be considered aggressive or violent. The predisposition of human beings to violence increases when there is interference with their desire to achieve certain goals and not necessarily as a result of human instinct or genes. This position was advanced by John Dollard and his colleagues (Dollard, Doob, Miller, Mowrer & Sears 1939). The failure to achieve a goal leads to frustration, which is then vented on the blocking source or a weaker target in the form of aggression (Frustration-Aggression Hypothesis or FAH). It is essential to note that in a situation like this it is not always the blocking source that is targeted but a weaker one is invented and attacked. The explanation of this deliberate invention and targeting of a scapegoat has been described as scapegoat theory (Leyens et al 1994; Jeong 2008; Kool 2008). One of the men accused of carrying out the genocide in Rwanda was quoted thus:

Our Tutsi neighbours, we knew they were not guilty of no misdoing, but we thought all Tutsis at fault for our constant troubles. We no longer looked at them one by one, we no longer stopped to recognise them as they had been, not even as colleagues. They had become a threat greater than all we had experienced together, more important than our way of seeing things in the community. That's how we reasoned and how we killed at the same time.

(Zimbardo 2009: 15-16)

Arousal is equally crucial in understanding how people react to situations. For instance Zillman (1994) posits that arousal from one source could merge with arousal from another source to result in increase or decrease in aggressive reaction to a situation (also

see Kool 2008: 47). An example here is a man who spends the whole day on his farm working only to come back home and be provoked by an otherwise minor issue. Such a person might react in a way that could shock many. In Zillman's (1994) excitation-transfer theory, man's aggressive reaction follows a mislabelling of a cognitive cue (provocation) not the initial arousal. There is also the emotional experience, the psychology of humiliation school which provides explanation for violence by suggesting that people could resort to extreme reactions when facing such emotional challenges as despair, disempowerment, helplessness and a desire for revenge. Given people's social experiences feelings of hate and rage are developed, which end up shaping their relationships with others.

Negative moods which result in collective political action often follow the failure of government or leadership to live up to their task of providing people's social and material needs. People's standards of living begin to decline while they face increased burdens and threats like rising rate of unemployment, declining material production and scarcity of essentials. Jeong (2008: 50) notes:

Thus, a shift from social and economic progress to a state of recession is encountered with a high level of uncertainty and anxiety. Relative deprivation arises from a gap between people's expectations and their actual obtainment especially commensurate to capabilities.

The scenario above usually ends in violent reactions as people who see their situations suddenly changing for the worse amidst growing uncertainty become frustrated and aggressive. As Jeong (2008) explains the frustration is due to increasing gap between anticipated and manifest reality. Basic needs, physical and psychological, if they are not met often result in ethnic or identity-based conflict. Such essential needs include security and safety (from fear and anxiety), belongingness and love, recognition and acceptance by

others, dignity and feelings of personal fulfilment (Galtung 1990; Jeong 2008). Of all these needs, seeming threat to or non-fulfilment of identity and security needs lead to conflict most often. These are ontological needs that must be met so as to maintain peace and stability.

In further attempts to understand the role of competition for basic resources in precipitating violent reactions realistic conflict theory (RCT) needs to be mentioned. Following studies in a summer camp for adolescents in 1949, 1953 and 1954, RCT shows how group interactions are established and cohesive groups are formed on the basis of competition and conflict (Sherif, Harvey, White, Hood & Sherif 1961). The researchers also observed how cohesive groups were easily formed and members became aggressively competitive, resorting to name-calling and raids to defend the interests of their newly formed groups; while such intolerant competition went on leaders of the groups, clearly benefitting from the conflict, did nothing to control their members or restore sanity.[27]

Among the issues mentioned under the basic needs theory are belongingness and love. People are quite concerned about others' perception of them and at the same time see their distinctiveness as essential. This often provides a strong motivation for forming a different identity. As much as other basic needs are important, the issue of group identity and perceived inequalities could precipitate organised violence (Bellamy et al 2008). Identity formation results in the creation of in-groups as opposed to out-groups. It is through this perspective that issues are seen and interpreted. Any perceived threat to identity leads to violent reactions during which boundaries are further defined and fortified. Jeong (2008: 55) observes: *"Stronger, exclusive identity increases the chances for an in-group to defame, and justify discrimination against an out-group with the development of stereotypes."* Identity

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[27] RCT is further explained in Chapter Seven where it is applied in one of the discussions.

provides a strong basis for mobilising support and unifying people under a common culture, common heritage or even certain historical myth binding the people together. Identity, when politicised, results in the categorisation of people on the basis of religious, ethnic, tribal or even occupational differences. This results in the intensification of in-group versus out-group competition which eventually results in hostility and potential violence.

The group identity formation argument is further corroborated by Stewart (2000: 15-18; cited in Bellamy, et al 2007: 252) who suggests that mobilisation occurs: where members of the group experience a relative similarity of circumstance; leaders must see violence as being helpful to their political ambitions and work hard to achieve them, by clearly defining group identities which might not be noticed by members unless pointed out by outsiders; there is economic and political differentiation among groups i.e. horizontal inequality; and a past history of violence contributes to group identities, animosities and mobilisation.

Social identity theory (SIT) contributes to various efforts to explain the role of identity and group formation in competition and conflicts (Tajfel 1969). According to SIT symbolic and not material resources are responsible for conflicts. And issues like status, self-esteem and beliefs override objective benefits in importance. Interdependence is central to this theory as it says members of a group become aware that their destiny depends on interdependence (Leyens, et al 1994). People, therefore, form a group when they are aware of the interdependence of their destiny (Rabbie 1991). SIT also discusses in-group favouritism, arguing it is usually induced by factors like shared fate or objective competition.[28]

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[28] SIT is also further explained and applied in one of the discussions in Chapter Seven.

South Africa's xenophobic violence against foreign nationals in 2008 was an example of group formation in order to defend the interest of an in-group. The main cause of the violence was economic as unemployment rate rose sharply among South Africans while immigrants were perceived to be relatively more comfortable. Following a study Steinberg (2008) argues that the perpetrators of the violence blamed their plight (poverty) on foreigners who were stealing what by right belongs to them. Thus, they see competition for resources as a zero-sum game in which foreigners', particularly Zimbabweans and Mozambicans, gain was their loss. The violence represented a vehement resistance to economic domination by immigrants. Both RCT and SIT attempt to explain how people resort to such resistance, sometimes violently, in order to maintain a status quo or ensure that any threat is eliminated. In the next section of this chapter attempts will be made to review studies on four different conflicts to understand where some of these factors fit in.

2.2   STUDIES ON VIOLENT CONFLICTS

In this section brief review of studies of violent conflicts in four countries will be presented. The conflicts to be reviewed include the Rwanda Genocide (1994), the Conflict in Bosnia Herzegovina, the Conflict in Darfur and the 'Troubles' in Northern Ireland. Attempts will be made to look at them individually in order to understand the historical basis of the conflicts and causes, the protagonists and extent of violence, victims and media reporting/involvement in the conflicts.

2.2.1   The Rwanda Genocide

Like most African countries Rwanda is a product of the Berlin European Conference for the partition of Africa. Following the division of Africa Rwanda (Ruanda) was recognised as Germany's given that it was the first European country to have arrived there (Rwanda)

about 100 years earlier (Grunfeld & Huijboom 2007c). Rwanda had existed as a well-organised monarchy before the arrival of colonialists; it was well-structured, highly controlled and hierarchical. Its population was divided into three groups: the Twa (1 per cent); the Tutsi (17 per cent); and the Hutu, who constituted the large majority. They were, however, not seen as different tribes since they spoke the same language, shared the same religion, had the same historical myths and lived in the same places. But their differences were mainly in physical appearance. The Twa were very diminutive, the Hutu with Bantu features looked broadly built and short, while the Tutsi had taller, thinner, sharper and angular features. The Tutsi produced the monarch, chiefs and king's as well as important positions in the monarchy while others, particularly the Hutu, simply obeyed.

As was the case in most places where there was a structure as organised as that the Germans did not tamper with it but introduced indirect rule and boosted the Tutsi domination of others. But it was the Belgian colonial policy that contributed immensely in sowing the seed of discord that later imploded leading to the genocide in 1994. After their defeat in WWI Germany lost Rwanda to Belgium and from 1926 its policy further reinforced Tutsi supremacy over the Hutu and Twa. For instance a new policy merged provincial, hill and district chiefs' positions into one and Tutsis were given almost all the slots. A new landholding policy favoured the Tutsis over the Hutu, just as a new privatisation rule ensured they gained access to land previously owned by Hutus. The Tutsi also had access to education which helped them rise higher, over and above the Hutus in terms of positions of public authority (Grunfeld & Huijboom 2007c). A major decision that sharpened this division was the introduction of ID cards by the Belgians in 1933 to differentiate the three tribes (Zimbardo 2007: 14). And with the ID as a guide Hutus suffered more discrimination and many fled to neighbouring countries.

By 1957, despite a UN pressure on Belgium to allow Hutus access to administrative positions, there was a Hutu mobilisation and by 1959 violence led to 2000 deaths. In 1962 Tutsis dominance effectively ended as Rwanda became an independent country with a Hutu president, Gregoire Kayibanda. Kayibanda introduced extreme Hutu nationalism, abolished the monarchy and installed a quota system in education and employment giving Tutsi a mere nine per cent. He made life completely unbearable for Tutsis who became victims of a sustained hate campaign and massacre, and many fled to neighbouring Uganda for refuge. Despite the overthrow of Kayibanda by military officer Juvenal Habyarimana in 1973 discrimination against Tutsis continued although with less violence. By October 1, 1990 Tutsi refugees who had joined the Ugandan National Resistance Army (NRA) invaded Rwanda, starting a three-year civil war. By that time France had replaced Belgium as Rwanda's European ally and French President Francoise Mitterrand provided military support for the small Rwandan army. Despite being beaten back the NRA were later able to regroup, re-strategize and fight back under the leadership Paul Kagame.

There is a need to observe the trend here, how the crisis continued to fertilise under the watch of various European powers until the genocide. The German and Belgian colonial policies encouraged minority Tutsi domination, while the French policy supported the Hutu violent suppression of the minority Tutsi and moderate Hutu population. Between 1991 and 1993 Hutu extremism reached its peak and laid the foundation for the genocide.[29] Following international pressure Habyarimana allowed multiparty politics and by April 1992 he was forced into a coalition government with extremist Hutus from Kayibanda's party and constituency. This led to the reinvigoration of anti-Tutsi hate campaigns and violence, as

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[29] Following the invasion by RPF the country's defence minister urged people to track down and arrest infiltrators. They were also told to burn down houses of 'inyenzi'(cockroaches) and kill Tutsis. Many innocent Tutsi elites and Hutu moderates became victims of this hate campaign.

well as the formation of a militia, Interahamwe, which enjoyed military training and access to arms imported from France. Between January and June 1991 Interahamwe members had systematically killed 1000 people. The massacre continued into 1992 up until March when a local radio report alleged a plot by Tutsis to kill Hutus and called on the government to act by 'clearing the bush' (that is, kill the Tutsis) and by the next day a fresh wave of killings began leaving in its trail 300 deaths while 1500 Tutsis were forced to flee. This attracted international concerns with the Canadian, US, and Belgian ambassadors either urging Habyarimana to act to bring the perpetrators to justice or report to their countries indicting the government of Habyarimana for using soldiers to carry out the massacre of Tutsis. Their French counterpart refused to be part of this action. Despite the Arusha Peace Accord the killings continued and towards the end of 1992 it was clear a Hutu racist death squad, Akazu, was responsible for the killings and was planning Tutsi extermination, including their supporters like Hutu moderates and peace workers. It was also discovered that Habyarimana's wife, Agathe Kanzinga and her three brothers were senior members of the squad. France was also said to have continued to sell weapons to the Rwandan government despite warning signs of impending genocide. For instance, in the spring of 1992 the Belgian ambassador to Rwanda, Johan Swinnen, was said to have reported to his country his finding of a secrete group poised on exterminating the Tutsis.

Early in 1993 a report by an International Commission of Human Rights groups revealed the government-backed massacre of 2,000 Tutsis between 1990 and 1992 and that more than 10,000 Tutsis and Hutu moderates were detained under deplorable conditions. They blamed Habyarimana's government for such Human Rights violation by soldiers, militia and civilians. The UN Special Rapporteur on Extrajudicial, Summary or Arbitrary Executions Bacre Waly Ndiaye was the first to tacitly mention 'possible genocide' in reference to the

killings in Rwanda, following his investigation from April 8-17, 1993. In the inter-communal violence he said Tutsis were largely targeted for the simple reason of their membership of an ethnic group. Ndiaye's report was published in August 1993 and the HRW published similar warnings thereafter and even suggested France's involvement in the conflict, including arms shipment from Egypt and South Africa with France's support. According to HRW:

France has supported the Habyarimana regime for many years, even sending French troops to assist in the army's actions against the RPF, in October 1990 and again in February 1993. In Arming Rwanda: The Arms Trade and Human Rights Abuses in the Rwandan War published in January 1994, Human Rights Watch documented French participation in arming and training the Rwandan army. Along with Egypt, France has received representatives of the self-proclaimed government, thus helping accord them respectability in the international community. (HRW, 1994: 16)

But neither the UN nor the international community took any of the early warning signs seriously and the situation was allowed to degenerate.

2.2.1.1 The role of the media in the genocide

As early as March 1992 there was a local radio broadcast claiming Tutsis were planning to kill Hutus and the report called for a pre-emptive attack on Tutsis. This was followed by widespread killings the next day targeting Tutsis mainly, at the end of which about 300 were massacred while 1500 fled for safety. Grunfeld and Huijboom (2007: 74) observe that:

Integral parts of the hate propaganda against the Tutsi minority were the hate-inciting radio broadcasts and newspapers articles. Kangura, the most racist newspaper in Rwanda, started publishing four years before the outbreak

of the genocide and became more violent in its expressions towards April

1994.

Another extremist media involved in the genocide was *Radio Television Libre des Collines* (RTLMC) which became prominent in the hate propaganda from 1993. *Kangura,* which means wake others up, published extremely racist articles like the "Ten Commandments" in which it painted Tutsis as the enemy and Tutsi women as enemy agents. A prominent female government official involved in the massacre, Pauline Nyiramasuhuko, reportedly encouraged and supervised the rape of Tutsi women. Perhaps it was in line with this enemy frame *Kangura* created of Tutsi women, but one of the reasons suggested for Pauline's action was:

> *…the widespread sense of the lower status of the Hutu women compared to*
>
> *the beauty and arrogance of Tutsi women. They were taller and lighter-*
>
> *skinned and had more Caucasian features which made them more desirable to*
>
> *men than Hutu women.* (Zimbardo 2009: 14)

Kangura consistently called for the maintenance of the purity of the Hutu race by getting rid of the 'impure' Tutsi and referred to them as inyenzyi or cockroaches. Apart from *Kangura* and *RTLMC* there were 42 other journals and 11 newspapers actively involved in the enemy campaign and linked to Akazu (Chretien 1997; Grunfeld & Huijboom 2007: 76). Both *Kangura* and *RTLMC* were owned by Hutu extremists with Akazu members as stakeholders. They used pop and street language as a strategy of attracting audience and allowed access to people who could express extreme anti-Tutsi opinions. Their hate messages were spread to a population made up of over 70 per cent illiterates through rumours – someone who read the paper or listened to a report shares with others and even

exaggerates. Allan Thompson (2007: 2) describes the role played by Rwandan hate media in inciting people to murder:

The voice of Hutu Power was the private radio station RTLM, established by extremists who surrounded the president. And RTLM was an echo of other extremist media, notably the newspaper Kangura. Once the president's plane was shot down by unknown assailants, the message from RTLM was unmistakable: the Tutsi were to blame; they were the enemy and Rwanda would be better off without them. The killings began almost immediately in Kigali through the night of 6-7 April.

The assassination of President Habyarimana after his plane was shot down was the trigger for the genocide, as Thompson (2007) mentioned above. But it was clearly not the cause. On board the plane were neighbouring Burundi President Cyprien Ntaryamira, Rwandan chief of army staff Deogratias Nsabimana and three French crew members (Grunfeld & Huijboom 2007: 153). One thing that has remained a mystery despite its role in the genocide is the identity of the attackers of the president's plane. While no one has owned up no serious investigation has been done to reveal those responsible for the plane downing. The most popular conspiracy theory is that Hutu extremists hoping to prevent the implementation of the Arusha Accord for power-sharing between Hutus and Tutsis carried out the assassination so as to also blame it on Tutsis and carry out the genocide. Roland Paris (2007: 73) explains that within minutes after the missile had struck the plane near Kigali airport members of the Presidential Guard and CDR militias mounted roadblocks in all parts of Kigali, killing Hutu and Tutsi politicians, activists, journalists and clerics that had supported the democratic transition agreement or criticised delay in implementing it. The killings continued for the next three days and spread to other parts, with peasants further

executing the genocide. Within a space of three months about one million Tutsis had been killed and an estimated four million had been displaced from their homes (Jones 2001)

The international media, by being only interested in the early part of the crisis and misunderstanding its nature, added to the problem. Thompson (2007) notes that most international news media mistook the genocide for a tribal warfare and were only interested in the scramble to evacuate foreign expatriates. And by mid-April, when the killings reached a peak, only a few were left behind. The only clear evidence of the cruelty meted out was captured by Nick Hughes from the top of a building. If there were lots of international journalists around to observe and report the killings that would probably have changed the behaviour of the perpetrators or mitigated the slaughter.

2.2.2 The Bosnian Ethnic Warfare

In order to comprehend the nature of the conflict in Bosnia-Herzegovina (1992-1995) that is usually referred to as the Bosnian war or Bosnian ethnic cleansing there is a need to look at the wider conflict in the federating units constituting former Yugoslavia. President Titos' death in 1980 signalled the gradual disintegration of the country he had held together as a communist leader – there were increasing quests for independence and nationalism (Trifunovska 1997). Chandler (2000: 19) notes:

> *In 1989, Yugoslavia was a federal state consisting of six republics, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Macedonia, Montenegro and Serbia. By the end of 1999 only two republics, Serbia and Montenegro, remained within the rump of the federation which was undergoing further disintegration with Montenegro seeking greater autonomy and Serbia having lost control of the province of Kosovo.*

In June 1991 war broke out in the former Yugoslavia after two constituent republics, Slovenia and Croatia, declared their independence from the Yugoslav federation (Trifunovska 1997). Fighting broke out between Slovenian nationalists and the Yugoslav National Army (JNA) in Slovenia on the one hand, and between Croatian nationalist forces and ethnic Serbs resident in Croatia, on the other hand. While in the case of the war in Slovenia it only lasted 10 days with JNA forces forced to withdraw from Slovenia, in the case of Croatia it raged for quite a few months as ethnic Serb militias enjoyed support and supplies from JNA. A ceasefire was only agreed at the end of 1991 after Serb militias and JNA had secured control of a quarter of Croatia's territory (Paris 2007: 97; Chandler 2000).

In March 1992, following a referendum Bosnia also declared its independence from Yugoslavia. Bosnia's ethnic and religious divisions need to be understood at this point, especially how they came into play in the referendum. In fact the entire disintegration of Yugoslavia is blamed on two main factors, namely: the ethnic differences of the constituent units; and the territorial ambition of Slobodan Milosevic who became Serbia's president in 1987 (Chandler 2000). Trifunovska (1997: 52), emphasising the ethnic and religious factor states:

…those generations, who might remember the creation of the Kingdom of Serbs, Croats and Slovenes, in 1918, the state – made up 'artificially' of many culturally and religiously different entities – has never been destined to succeed.

For instance in Bosnia, Bosniaks (Bosnian Sunni Muslims) constituted 44 per cent of the republic's population. The Bosnian Serbs (Orthodox Catholic Christians) made up 31 per cent, while the Croats (Roman Catholic Christians) were the least in number and comprised 17 per cent of the population (Steinberg 1993: 41; Paris 2007: 98; Chandler 2000: 24; O

Tuathail & O'Loughlin 2009: 1046). The Muslims and Croats wanted independence and overwhelmingly voted for it in the referendum, but the Serbs were against it, so they abstained. That development led to further disagreement and sporadic shootings by paramilitary supporting the three major ethnic groups (O Tuathail & O'Loughlin 2009: 1046). The war witnessed ethnic cleansing as the Serbs were particularly accused of forcefully evicting and sometimes executing Muslims and Croats in territories under their control, but the Muslims and Croats were equally alleged to have been involved in ethnic cleansing especially during the Croat-Muslim war of 1993-94 (Shrader 2003; O Tuathail & O'Loughlin 2009: 1047). Initially the war was between a coalition of Muslims and Croats against the Serbs, but with the collapse of the alliance forces on the sides of Muslims and Croats began fighting each other as well as fighting the Serbs. The war became three-pronged, to the substantial advantage of the Serbs, who annexed for themselves up to 70 per cent of the territory (Paris 2007: 98).

Despite a UN mission to protect civilian lives and provide relief material Bosnian Serbs were able to blockade and invade two designated safe areas – Srebrenica and Zepa, where massive ethnic cleansing took place. More than 7000 Muslim men and boys were said to have been executed in Srebrenica (O Tuathail & O'Loughlin 2009: 1047) and concentration camps operated by Serbs discovered. In the Trnopolje concentration camp a Muslim woman told of how her husband was detained and eventually killed (Clark 2009: 427). No fewer than 100,000 lives were lost in the Bosnian war while an estimated one million people were internally displaced and more than one million became refugees (O Tuathail & O'Loughlin 2009: 1047).

The conflicts were finally resolved after the Muslim and Croat forces agreed a re-alliance in the summer of 1995 to reconquer territories Bosnian Serbs had taken control of.

At the US-mediated talks in November 1995 at a military base near Dayton, Ohio the Dayton Accord for peace in Bosnia and Herzegovina was produced. It was agreed on November 21 and signed formally in Paris on December 14, 1995. Among the issues decided were the convening of elections for pan-Bosnian political institutions with a three-member presidency and a bicameral parliament. It was also arranged that the country would be divided into ethnic sub-units: areas controlled by Muslims and Croats would become the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, while those under Serbs would form the Republika Srpska and each would have their democratically elected political institutions (Paris 2007: 99).

2.2.2.1 The Role of media in the conflict

The most visible role often mentioned played by the media in those conflicts was in the manner of reporting, particularly by the international media. This was based on the belief by the US forces that they could win the war and lose the media war. Hence the need to develop a cleverly mediated relationship with media, in which favourable news is reported and the not so good news is "buried" (Skoco & Woodger 2000: 79). Even then, in the latter part of the war NATO forces felt they were not fairly represented in the media. However, in the early 1990s the press in Yugoslavia were commended for being the closest thing to democracy. With a growing new media market they demonstrated a high sense of dynamism and even criticised their own governments' handling of the war. Such privately owned media as Dnevni telegraf, Danas, Nasa Borbi, Blic and Glas among others, were said to have been influential and rebuffed attempts to censor them (Gocic 2000: 88).

2.2.3 The Conflict in Darfur

The crisis in Darfur can be traced to the 1980s when drought and desertification forced the nomadic tribes to abandon their homes and encroach on lands belonging to farmers in search of food, water and grazing land. This often triggered clashes between the farmers and the nomads, although at a point they were able to devise a strategy of seasonal migration to deal with the drought and avoid clashes (Salih 2008: 3). The conflict situation in neighbouring Chad is also believed to have impacted on Darfur as arms freely found their way to the region with which armed bandits were able to carry out acts of violent intimidation. There was also the Libyan factor and this is in reference to the Islamic Brigades, five of which were set up by Libya and based in Darfur. Salih (2008: 3) further argues that this movement of arms coupled with militarisation resulted in the use of the region for covert operations by foreign military forces and organisations under the guise of Humanitarian Aid.

Since the 1960s the government in Khartoum had neglected and politically marginalised Darfur and this played a major role in radicalising the people in the 1990s, but the rebellion was temporarily crushed. By 2003 the armed resistance had regained momentum to continue its campaign. There were attacks on government targets, like military forces stationed in some parts of the region. The attacks by rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and Justice and Equality Movement (JEM) (Olsson & Siba 2010: 5), provoked harsh government response, thereby escalating the crisis (Salih 2008; Apsel 2008). However, even before the 2003 attacks it has been suggested that systematic ethnic cleansing were being perpetrated by about 5000 Janjaweed fighters trained and equipped by the government of Sudan (Burr & Collins 2006: 292; Apsel 2008: 241).

The SLA and JEM targeting of Sudan's military led to the government retaliating on the people of Darfur through direct military hostility and its proxy armed group, Janjaweed (Burr & Collins 2006). Ethnic cleansing was carried out with rape used as a major weapon against women while many people were either ousted from their homes or forced to flee out of fear. As of 2008 more than four million people were affected in one way or the other just as over 2000 villages and hamlets were burned or destroyed (Apsel 2008: 241; Markusen 2009: 103). More than one million people are internally displaced and 200,000 have taken refuge in Chad (Markusen 2009: 103).

The killings by Janjaweed also have racial motivation as findings have found the perpetrators' *"systematic killing of civilians belonging to particular tribes…large scale causing of serious bodily and mental harm to members of the population belonging to certain tribes…"* (Markusen 2009: 103). The fact the most people caught up in the violence often do not have a choice of what side to belong to has helped in giving the conflict ethnic, racial, regional and religious interpretations. Apsel (2008: 242) argues that the population of rebel fighting alongside SLA, JEM and other factions has greatly risen since the escalation of violence in 2003 due specifically to the extremely atrocious response of the government. And that most of those backing the rebels do so in expression of racial and tribal allegiances.

The neglect and marginalisation of Darfur and its people was earlier mentioned as one of the causes of the conflict, which fuelled the attack on government forces. The rebels in Darfur were hoping that since Khartoum was involved in negotiations with the late John Garang-led Southern People Liberation Army (SPLA) from the South of the country their case would be treated with the same urgency and be included in the talks. But that has not been the case and they have suffered much.

2.2.3.1   The role of the media in Darfur conflict

As in the case of the Bosnian war Darfur media coverage is considered here in terms of the way the conflict was reported. Arab media in general do not have the kind of press freedom that media in the West enjoy. Often they are subjected to censorship, particularly in terms of what they report and how they do it. For instance, during the conflict journalists were often restricted to doing studio-based news reporting relying heavily on packaged (tailored) information. Since the information or press releases usually come from the government they are made to present only the sort of information the government is happy to allow the public to consume. There is also the use of tough rules and a mixture of religious and nationalism sentiments to get journalists to conform to government overtures of making sure only what suits them is reported and not the exact reality. A report by the *Sudan Tribune* (March 27 2007) said the Sudanese government had banned the media in the country from publishing or reporting details of any criminal cases related to Darfur. The message which was circulated to the editors-in-chief of the major newspapers did not give any reason for the ban. But this is one of the tactics the government is believed to be employing to ensure news about atrocities in Darfur is hushed. There were also reports of intimidation and veiled threats against foreign media and journalists by the authorities in Khartoum.

2.2.4   The Troubles in Northern Ireland

Northern Ireland's Troubles is another classic example of a conflict that has dragged for a long while, although there have been long periods of cessation of violence. The conflict has its root in the British rule of the 32 counties of the island of Ireland under the Act of Union in 1801 (Morrissey, Fay & Smyth 1999: 51). By 1916 what could be conveniently described as the first rebellion against British rule by the forebears of Irish Republican Army (IRA) was

witnessed although the rebellion was crushed and the protagonists executed. This development dramatically galvanised the people into rebellion as by 1918 the hitherto less popular Sinn Féin – the pro-independence political party – became substantially popular and won a massive victory in the elections that year (Morrissey, et el 1999: 51). This laid the basis for further struggle, initially against British rule but currently for the unification of the islands.

The conflict can be traced to the creation of Northern Ireland and Irish Free State in 1920 under The Government of Ireland Act (Morrissey, et al 1999: 52; Holloway 2005: 13). Given the pattern the sectarian division in the island had taken, two highly polarised groups, the Protestants and Catholics, emerged. While the Protestants favoured being part of Britain in order to escape becoming a permanent minority in an Irish state dominated by the Catholic, the Catholic, for obvious reasons preferred independence. In 1920 six of the nine Ulster counties were excluded from Home Rule arrangements and the six counties were left under the administration of a pro-union majority, with its own government enjoying devolved powers while Britain continued to retain final authority (Holloway 2005; Morrissey, et al 1999). Although not enjoying absolute independence the Protestant majority in the new Northern Ireland were more comfortable with this arrangement than being in a united Ireland under Catholic-majority domination. On their part the Nationalists (Catholic) became isolated and felt unsafe in a Protestant-dominated state. A Free Irish State comprising 26 counties in the South of the island was also created, triggering off a civil war between those who felt comfortable with the new face of the islands and those who saw it as a betrayal. This paved the way for a series of campaigns of violence in the 1920s, 1940s and 1950s.

A clear picture of sectarian violence in Northern Ireland began to manifest between 1920 and 1922 when series of attacks targeting the Catholics were carried out in Belfast resulting in the death of over 400 and nearly 2000 sustaining injuries (Foster 1988: 526; cited in Morrissey, et al 1999: 52). The leadership did not do much to calm the tense situation as they continued to make statements further hyping sentiments. For instance the first Prime Minister Sir James, later Lord Craigavon, reportedly described the new parliament as *"a Protestant Parliament for a Protestant people,"* (Morrissey, et al 1999: 52). These happenings and domination of the political scene by the Ulster Unionist party confirmed the fears of the Catholic minorities and contributed immensely in causing the security issues and crisis in the region. This eventually led to the imposition of an emergency legislation to deal with increasing security challenges as the Catholic minority were seen as a threat and their allegiance doubted. The police and armed reserve forces were militarised and mainly had Protestants in their services.

Although post Second World War events, including the economic boom experienced by Northern Ireland, had weakened anti-partition campaigns by IRA, the Northern Catholic population still felt marginalised and were more affected by poor conditions of living (housing and unemployment) (Morrissey, et al 1999: 55). Inspired by the civil rights calls in the US a Catholic middle class emerged campaigning for social change through peaceful means under the aegis of the Northern Ireland Civil Rights Association (Holloway 2005: 16), which reached its peak in 1968 during the 'one man one vote' protests. It was clashes at the protests with the police that gave rise to what came to be known as the Troubles. The protests had been improperly handled by the police, while government loyalists attacked a three-day civil rights march. This fuelled sectarian protests across Belfast and kindled the Battle of Bogside in Derry/Londonderry. With government being unable to effectively

handle the crisis troops were despatched from Britain. The troops were soon considered one-sided and pro-Protestant, causing the revival of the Provisional Irish Republican Army, relying on paramilitaries and enjoying a massive support from the Catholic population, especially following a wave of sectarian violence and ethnic cleansing. There was also the displacement of more than 21,000 people from their homes. From 1972 the crisis escalated as Britain imposed a direct rule in Northern Ireland and considered means of putting in place a political system acceptable to all (Holloway 2005: 17-18).

Violence and bombing campaigns continued until the Anglo-Irish Agreement was signed in 1985, bringing in the Irish government to play a consultative role in resolving the problem. On August 31, 1994 IRA formally announced its renouncement of violence, which was a condition for its inclusion in talks. In the violence that lasted 25 years 3535 lives had been lost. Despite the ceasefire more lives were still lost in intermittent bombings and attacks; in fact between the ceasefire in 1994 and the Good Friday Agreement in 1998 the number of deaths recorded was 69 (Morrissey, et al 1999: 64). And on Friday, 17 April, 1998, despite initial difficulties with Ulster Unionists refusing to 'negotiate with terrorists' i.e. Sinn Fein, the Good Friday agreement was reached.

2.2.4.1   The Role of the Media in the Conflict

The role of the media in the entire conflict is not much different from those earlier discussed as three main national newspapers have been mentioned for contributing in stoking the problem even before the 'Troubles' began in 1968. The *Belfast News Letter* was founded by a strongly unionist family in 1737 but later taken over by a group of unionist businessmen; the *Irish News* is a pro-Catholic publication established with the help of the Catholic Bishop of Down and Connor, it advocates constitutional nationalism; and the *Belfast Telegraph,* which is a centrist with appeal to both sides and high sales. Of the three it

is only the *Belfast Telegraph* that presents a moderate, more objective view of the conflict. Kingston (1995: 205) observes that there are several other local newspapers but often do not produce sectarian or propaganda news as those newspapers and journals established for the purpose of promoting sectarian and political interests.

It is important to note that none of the major parties, the Official Unionist Party (OUP) and Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) runs a successful newspaper although they rely on those aligned to their side for support. The most extreme publication is the *Revivalist,* founded in 1955, and portraying its founder Rev. Ian Paisley's anti-Catholic feelings. Both the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) and Irish Republican Army (IRA) had journals to promote their propaganda and were immensely used to manipulate the audience. The importance of the media to the parties in the Northern Ireland conflict, as Kingston (1995) observes is that each side tried to use it to psychologically defeat the enemy and garner more support for its cause. On the part of the British press many also wanted to keep up sales in the conflict region and usually had separate editions for Northern Ireland. Yet they were not seen to be significantly criticising government policies that were unpopular at some point. An example is the handling of the prisoner hunger strike in the 1980s in which the government of Margaret Thatcher allowed 10 protesting prisoners to die while on hunger strike rather than change its position. Although there was criticism of government handling of the matter it was not robust enough to bring about the concession the prisoners had hoped for.

2.3   REPORTING SECTARIAN VIOLENCE IN NIGERIA

In this section there is further discussion of how sectarian conflicts were reported by the media, whether the reportage was objective, balanced, fair and truthful or not. As was mentioned in Chapter One the first of these violence erupted in the early 1980s through the

Maitatsine extremist group. The violence which started in Kano spread to other parts of the North and within a few years many parts of the North had been affected. Although at the beginning it was an extremist Muslim group against the rest of the population – Muslim and Christian – the violence in Sabon Gari, Kano on October 30, 1982 saw, for the first time, a direct fighting between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria. Usman (1987) describes this development as a dangerous and systematic manipulation of religion as opposed to the unity of the country. Other similar violent conflicts continued to occur up until 2011.

In reporting these conflicts which have come to characterise relations between Muslims and Christians in Nigeria one needs to take into cognisance the location, ownership and the choice of news values of the newspapers in the country. For instance in the South, where most of the newspapers are located and owned by non-Muslim and non-Northern proprietors, their reportage is highly likely to be in consonance with their specific situations. There is also a need to consider Hallin and Mancini's (2004) assertion that no media in any part of the world can be entirely neutral. Also, the media in the North, given the circumstance of their founding are most likely to continue the rivalry with Southern press even in terms of reporting conflicts in which there is a clash between Muslims and Christians or the North versus the South. The *New Nigerian* for instance has been described as *"the voice of the North and also the voice of Islam in the North"* (Kukah 1993: 73). During the Kafanchan religious crisis of 1987 the *New Nigerian* was, alongside *FRCN* Kaduna, accused of publishing or broadcasting anti-Christian inciting reports (Hackett 2003; Ibrahim 1989; Gofwen 2004: 154-155) leading to the escalation of the violence.

In the same vein Southern newspapers allowed their sympathy for Christians and the South to determine how they reported the Kafanchan violence. Ibrahim (1989: 68-69) refers to the *The Guardian* of March 14, 1987 that wrote about the 'Mullahs of easy violence' and

thereby stereotypically painting Muslims as violent people; and the *Standard* of March, 13 and *The Punch* of March 14, both of which ignored the sufferings of Muslims but conveniently demanded compensation for the Christian communities.

In the sectarian violence that erupted in Jos, the capital of Plateau State, in November 2008 despite the killings of 133 mainly Muslim youths by security personnel as documented by the HRW report of December 21, 2008, the South-based newspapers showed no sympathy as they continued to emphasise the killing of youth corps members from the South by hoodlums from the Muslim side. The North-based media like *Daily Trust* were also said to have particularly showed interest in the plight of the Muslim and Northern victims alone. This manipulative media reporting later impacted on the clergy who as religious leaders rather than being the conscience of the society and criticise wrongdoings even by their own followers chose to look the other way. It was against this backdrop that Haruna[30] notes:

> *It is, I believe, the lack of even-handedness in reporting and condemning*
>
> *political violence that camouflages as religious violence by both the media and*
>
> *the clergy which is the greatest obstacle against the emergence of democracy*
>
> *in Nigeria.*

Ishaku (2009: 135) also comments on the manner in which newspapers report religious crises in Nigeria as follows:

> *What we have been witnessing in the reportage of the ethno-religious conflict*
>
> *in northern Nigeria is a form of journalistic recklessness that reflects total*

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[30] Mohammed Haruna is currently a columnist for newspapers in both the North and South and was formerly the Managing Director of the *New Nigerian.* The above comment was published in his article 'The Media and the Genocide in Jos', *Daily Trust* [Online Edition], Available at: http://news.dailytrust.com/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=349&Itemid=1:testset, accessed 3 December 2008.

disregard for the truth or the continuing survival of Nigeria as a corporate and

sovereign entity.

Ishaku (2009: 136) goes further to mention some Northern newspapers like the *New Nigerian* and *Daily Trust* as well as broadcast media like *FRCN* Kaduna, the Hausa versions of international broadcast organisations like the *BBC*, *VOA*, *Radio France International* (RFI) and *Deutsch Welle* (DW) as pro-Islamic North. The international broadcasters Ishaku (2009) mentions have their Hausa sections staffed predominantly by Muslim Hausas and this means they usually have more access to Hausa sources which might determine the perspectives projected in their reports.

A broader discussion of the media reportage of sectarian violence in Nigeria will be presented in Chapter Four, where critical discourse analysis is applied in studying the manner, framing and even frequency of reporting each side in the conflict. This study will be presented by analysing the reportage of the November 28-29, 2008 conflict by two Nigerian newspapers.

2.4   CONCLUSION

Lynch and Galtung (2010: 3) argue that "*the first victim in a war is not truth: that is the second victim. The first victim is, of course, peace.*" Truly, with the eruption of any violent conflict peace is murdered and in the process of justifying this act falsehood is peddled endlessly. The media as the society's watchdog cannot afford to be involved in peddling lies yet they often fall into this trap, especially where they are founded or directly controlled by proprietors bent on using them for the purpose of propaganda or inciting hate. In our previous discussions of the four case studies in this chapter we saw how in each case the media were either used or they struggled to spurn such efforts. By being objective even when peace is murdered journalists might be able to mitigate the negative impacts of

violence. For instance, in the genocide in Rwanda the international media were said to be more interested in reporting the evacuation of expatriates than the actual violence and as soon as the evacuation was completed they hurriedly left the country, leaving the victims of the conflict at the mercy of the murderers. Thompson (2007) has argued that if only there was enough international media reporting of the actual killings as they were perpetrated it might have forced the perpetrators to change their behaviour at least, or might have resulted in the mitigation of the crimes. But British journalist Nick Hughes was perhaps one of the very few that stayed behind and captured the only clear evidence of the cruelty as it happened. Its impact remains far more than still pictures of mutilated bodies and if there had been more of such the world might have acted faster and more robustly than it did.

Objectivity in journalism is a prerequisite for effective, ethical practice. It goes hand-in-hand with balance and truth to make the combination perfect. Lynch and Galtung (2010: 51) have noted that: *"Objectivity, balance and truth are like motherhood and apple pie."* In the same vein Mano (2005: 58-59) has argued that journalists see themselves as professionals, whose work is motivated by truthfulness, accuracy, objectivity and balance – all essential to give their work credibility (Mano 2005; citing McNair 1998). Jay Rosen (Lynch & McGoldrick 2005a: 203; cited in Lynch & Galtung 2010: 51) has, therefore, defined objectivity as:

> *…the value of fairness, which is extremely important. It's the ethic of restraining your own biases, which is also important…It's the idea that journalism can't be the voice of any particular party or sect.*

In all four case studies it is arguable that the above argument about objectivity was let down, except in the case of Bosnia where some newspapers struggled not to be

manipulated by their governments. Yet there were issues with the international media reporting as often a stereotypical picture of the conflict was painted and the NATO forces wanted a friendlier reportage. In Rwanda both the *RTLMC* and *Kangura* were effectively utilised by the Hutu to demonise the Tutsi and encourage the extermination of the inyenzyi or cockroaches, as they used such an extreme enemy frame to drive home their anti-Tutsi message.

In Darfur it was clearly a one-way thing as the government had the media in its control and simply urged them not to report crimes relating to the Darfur ethnic cleansing. With such a blatant censorship Darfur victims were left with no voice to speak out against the cruelty they suffered or to tell the world their plight. In Northern Ireland, the most developed of the four, the newspapers were as polarised as the society and this takes us to what Hallin and Mancini (2004) mention about difficulty in being neutral and, more importantly, the fact that the media could be linked to political parties or become a reflection of the cleavages in the society they operate. Both the *Belfast News Letter* and *Irish News* are linked to the Protestants and the Catholics respectively, just as the SDLP and OUP have benefitted from the support of the media.

The Nigerian context of this analysis has also revealed how the media in sectarian violence often rise to the defence of the religion or tribe they are sympathetic to. In the North the *New Nigerian, Daily/Weekly Trust* and *FRCN* Kaduna were fingered for often rising in defence of the North and Islam. In fact, the *New Nigerian* has been described as the voice of the North and Islam. In Southern Nigeria where most of the media are based many including the *Guardian, Tribune* and the *Punch* were mentioned for their roles in pro-South, pro-Christian propaganda while presenting stereotypes of the North.

One of the aims of this thesis is to find out how and why the media in Nigeria got involved in manipulative reporting, especially in times of religious crises, which we have tried to discuss in Chapters One and Two. In Chapters Four, Five and Six attempts will be made to further understand this issue particularly through the analysis of specific newspaper reports and interviews with both journalists/media owners and the audience/readers. Meanwhile, in Chapter Three the methodologies this researcher has engaged in this thesis will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

Research Methodology

3   INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses and describes the various methodologies this researcher has employed to carry out this study based on their suitability to the specific nature and needs of the study. In the chapter attempts have been made to explain certain philosophical paradigms on which research studies, including this one, are based. It takes a look at ontology and epistemology and how they can be linked to this study, leading to the choice of research design, research methodology and data analysis techniques. By and large, not only the choice of techniques used in carrying out the study is discussed but the rationale for such decisions is also elucidated.

Gray (2004) has cautioned against dogmatically grounding one's study on a specific research approach or philosophy as this will mean imposing an avoidable constraint. Thus, there might be a need to use more than one strategy and in the process there is a possibility of comparing or testing results/findings obtained through one strategy against those got by employing another technique. This takes us to the idea of triangulation, which has been explained as the use of more than one method or source of data in the study of social phenomena (Bryman 2004: 275; Flick 2009; Gray 2004; Davies 2007). Triangulation is further defined as the use of *"multiple observers, theoretical perspectives, sources of data, and methodologies"* (Denzin 1970: 310; cited in Bryman 2004: 275).

Against this backdrop, this researcher has adopted triangulation albeit with slight modification in the sense that the research is based on the application of three different qualitative research techniques to compare and/or strengthen outcomes. Given the type of phenomenon under study this researcher has adopted the qualitative method and to further explore this option an attempt has been made to understand the relationship between ontology and epistemology, on the one hand, and how they are related to the study, on the other hand.

3.1   ONTOLOGY, EPISTEMOLOGY & SOCIAL REALITY

Ontology is the study of being, the study of the nature of existence or what is (Gray 2007; Davies 2007; Grbich 2007). Epistemology, however, is the study of what it means to know, the philosophical background to understanding what knowledge is legitimate and adequate (Gray 2007: 16; Grbich 2007). Bryman (2004: 3) also describes ontological issues as those concerned with whether the social world is considered as something external to social actors or something that is in the process of being shaped by people. Creswell (2007: 17) suggests that ontological issues are linked to the nature of reality and its characteristics and researchers doing qualitative research deal with multiple realities. In the same vein epistemology has been explained by Bryman (2004: 11) as concerned with the question of what is seen as satisfactory knowledge in a particular field or discipline. Epistemology is further described by Grbich (2007) as a Greek word, episteme, meaning knowledge and logos, meaning theory. It asks questions about truth or what we accept as truth and how this has been constructed. Bryman (2004) adds that a major issue here is whether it is possible to study the social world using the same principles, procedures and ethos as the natural sciences as an epistemological position known as positivism has argued (Bryman 2004: 11). While epistemology is useful in helping one choose a research design and

analytical processes like positivism, constructivism, postmodernism and post-structuralism, Creswell (2003, cited in Creswell 2007:16) outlines five major philosophical assumptions a researcher conducting a qualitative study makes. These assumptions, Creswell (2007) says, are a position toward the nature of reality (ontology), how knowledge is acquired by the researcher (epistemology), the function of values in the research (axiology), the language of research (rhetoric) and the method employed by the researcher to do the study (methodology). Following the above explanations of epistemology Creswell (2007) argues that in carrying out a qualitative study researchers attempt creating as close a rapport as possible with the people being studied.

Epistemology is important in research because it, amongst other reasons, helps in clarifying issues of research design through evidence gathered like interpreting the how, why and where questions and to have the knowledge of research that will help determine which design will work or not (Creswell 2003; Creswell 2007). It also gives one the philosophical background to decide the type of knowledge to seek or apply in the process of conducting a study (Gray 2004). Having explained the terms ontology and epistemology, it is pertinent to mention that this researcher will attempt linking them to a theoretical context within which this study may be based. Attempts will also be made to explain the research design and methodologies, including the data collection techniques, applied in conducting the study.

Positivism, which urges the employment of the natural sciences techniques in studying social reality (Bryman 2004; Flick 2009) is the theoretical perspective that is closely related to objectivism (Gray 2004). Objectivism has been defined by Bryman (2004: 16) as an *"ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings have an existence that is independent of social actors"*. And on this basis, a researcher is expected to

accept that there is a reality out there which must be discovered at the end of the study. Research is therefore about discovering this reality or the objective truth according to the positivist/objective epistemological position (Gray 2004: 17).

Constructivism (constructionism) has been defined by Bryman (2004: 17) *as "an ontological position that asserts that social phenomena and their meanings are continually being accomplished by social actors."* It is opposed to the argument put up by positivism about objective reality and argues that rather than just existing in some external world truth and meaning are created through interaction with the world; meaning is not merely discovered but constructed (Gray 2004: 17). Interpretivism is the theoretical perspective connected closely to constructivism (Gray 2004: 20; Creswell 2007; Grbich 2007).

A view of this study through the prism of objective/positivist explanation of the external world or reality may itself become problematic, as in the end one may become saddled with collecting and dealing with data through empirical research techniques akin to the sciences but alien to the social world. Thus, understanding the strand of epistemology that argues that truth and meaning are constructed in the process of interaction (Gray 2007) with the world is essential. One should seek to go beyond mere observation of data or analysing them by empirical means. Interpretivism (epistemology) and constructivism (ontology) recognise that reality is changing and knowledge is jointly created during interaction between the researcher and the researched through cooperation (Grbich 2007). This approach is more applicable to this study.

3.2   INTEPRETIVISM AS THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVE

The study is strongly considered a qualitative one and based on Creswell's (2007) suggestion that in carrying out a qualitative study researchers should attempt creating as close a rapport as possible with the people being studied, this researcher has had a close

interaction with the social world in order to make sense of the situation under study. Against this backdrop and from earlier arguments positivism cannot be an appropriate tool for this study and steps have further been taken to explain this.

Interpretivism looks for culturally derived and historically situated interpretation of the social reality (world) (Crotty 1998); individuals try to comprehend social reality or the world in which they are (Creswell 2007). It argues there is no objective truth out there and that meaning is non-existent but created by subject's interaction with the world or in researcher's interaction with the researched (Creswell 2007; Crotty 1998). It suggests further that no objective knowledge is independent of thinking and that reality is viewed as socially and societally embedded and existing within the mind (Grbich 2007). In explaining the emergence of interpretivism as a school of thought challenging the dominance of discourse by positivism, Bryman (2004: 12) states:

> *Interpretivism is predicated upon the view that a strategy is required that respects the differences between people and the objects of the natural sciences, this means that social scientists need to grasp the subjective meaning of social action.*

Bryman (2004) postulates that proponents of this school have argued that the study of social world needs a logic of research processes that differentiates humans from the natural order. Reality is fluid and changing and knowledge is constructed jointly in interaction between the researcher and the researched through consensus. Knowledge, thus, is subjective, constructed and is based on the shared signs and symbols that are recognised by members of a common culture. And that multiple realities are presumed with different people experiencing them differently. To make sense of a situation, therefore, a researcher needs to place themselves in the research, with their own peculiar experience

and background shaping the interpretation of their findings (Creswell 2007). Interpretivism is, thus, sub-divided into five major traditions, namely: symbolic interactionism; phenomenology; realism; hermeneutics; and naturalistic inquiry. Each shall be briefly explained.

3.2.1 Symbolic Interactionism

This tradition of interpretivism emerged from the works of social psychologists like George H Mead (Flick 2009) and John Dewey who were frustrated with the irregularities of contemporary philosophies and social sciences (Gray 2004). The aim of this perspective is to draw from human interaction with the world meanings and interpretations (Davies 2007). It emphasises people's objectives and actions in the world and then acts upon interpretation, that is meaning arises from the process of social interaction. Meaning, according to this school, is not fixed and is revised on the basis of experience like self or who we are. Researchers try to understand the process by studying the subject's actions, objects and society from the perspective of the subject themselves. This entails going to the field to observe either by means of ethnography or participative observation (Gray 2004: 21). Bryman (2004) has also discussed symbolic interactionism as a tradition that explains the development of our notion of self by appreciating how others see us. Despite its influence as an interpretative tradition it has drawn a lot of controversy regarding Mead's concepts and ideas that are seen to be consistent with natural sciences (McPhail & Rexroat 1979; cited in Bryman 2004). Symbolic interactionism contends that interaction occurs in a manner that the individual is consistently interpreting the symbolic meaning of his or her environment (including others' actions) and acts on the basis of imputed meaning (Bryman 2004; Davies 2004).

3.2.2 Phenomenology

Phenomenology has been described as an intellectual tradition within interpretivism that is concerned with the question of how individuals make a sense of the world around them and how in particular the philosopher should bracket out preconditions in his or her grasp of that world (Bryman 2004: 13). Grbich (2007) adds that phenomenology attempts to understand the social reality or people's experience of social reality. It argues that a new meaning emerges if we set aside our understanding of a phenomenon and revisit our immediate experience (Gray 2004). Phenomena are understood on their own merit and our perception of them does not taint them. It is an exploratory research through personal experience and tends to avoid the researcher's bias. Phenomenology is different from ethnography in that it is based on human experiences of the lived world, which uses the individual as unit of analysis and based almost entirely on interviews (Tesch 1994; Gray 2004; Grbich 2007). Bryman (2004: 13-14) explains that phenomenology started from the work of German philosopher Alfred Schutz (1899-1959) who has argued that:

> *The world of nature as explored by the natural scientist does not mean anything to molecules, atoms and electrons. But the observational field of the social scientist – social reality – has a specific meaning and relevance structure for the beings living, acting and thinking within it.*

Unlike the belief by natural scientists that objective truth exists and can be discovered by means of empirical observation, Shutz's postulation in the above quote suggests that reality is actually a product of joint construction during interaction between the researcher and the researched. Thus, meaning arises as the researcher gets as close as possible to the phenomenon, observers, understands and interprets it through the voice of the researched.

3.2.3   Realism

Realism is another tradition under interpretivism and it supports natural sciences (Bryman 2004; Grbich 2007) as it argues that the picture they paint is true and accurate (Chia 2002; cited in Gray 2004: 17). It argues further that cultural, organisational and corporate planning exists independent of the observers. Knowledge, it says, is advanced through the process of theory-building and discovery adds to knowledge. It adds that while some observable facts may be mere illusions, some phenomena can't be observed but it admits they do exist. Flick (2009: 69) also explains that both realism and positivism advocate the use of similar principles by natural and social sciences to collect and analyse data and that they assume there is a world that is external (external reality) or separate from what is described (Bryman 2004).

3.2.4   Hermeneutics

Hermeneutics (also known as hermeneutic-phenomenology) argues that social reality is not rooted in objective facts but socially constructed. It gives more primacy to interpretation than explanation and description (Gray 2004). Hermeneutic phenomenological approach involves finding meanings of social action by actors who interpret from their own point of view (Bryman 2004; Grbich 2007) and that, like other strands of interpretivism, it rejects positivism.

3.2.5   Naturalistic Inquiry

Naturalistic inquiry believes that multiple constructed realities should be studied only holistically (Lincoln & Guba 1985; Gray 2004). It says that a phenomenon is understood only within its setting or environment.

Of the five interpretivism traditions explained this researcher is adopting phenomenology because the researcher finds it most suitable for the study. Particularly, given that phenomenology is an exploratory research through personal experience and tends to avoid the researcher's bias (Grbich 2007). This researcher intends revisiting a previous experience, while setting aside a personal bias of the experience, and hopes to make a sense of the phenomenon through the interpretation of other people's experience with similar phenomena. Adopting this option of interpretative perspective, which means a researcher taking a position from outside the particular social situation under study enables the researcher to discover surprising findings or those that may seem surprising (Bryman 2004: 15). Phenomenology, as Gray (2004) suggests, uses the individual as a unit of analysis and based mainly on interviews. The individuals in this case are journalists, including reporters and editors, and their readers or audience. Attempts have been made by the researcher to do an exploratory study of their reportage, the situation in which they work/report and how it impacts on the audience. In this way the researcher also seeks to understand the perception of news and news reporting amongst the audience and the perception of audience reception of news amongst the journalists responsible for producing and selling news to the audience. In the next section of this chapter this researcher tries to explain how phenomenology affects the choice of the research design and research methodologies that would lead to the successful completion of the study.

3.3   SUITABILITY OF PHENOMENOLOGY

A phenomenological study gives a description of the lived experiences of a concept or phenomenon for several individuals and a phenomenologist concentrates on what every participant has in common with others as they experience a phenomenon (Creswell 2007). According to Gray (2004), phenomenological research is an unstructured method of data

collection which focuses on inductive collection of a large amount of data and is likely to pick up more factors that are not originally part of the study. Grbich (2007) adds that phenomenology attempts to understand hidden meanings, the essence of experience and how participants make sense of these. Essence does not exist in time and space like fact, Grbich (2007) suggests, but it is known through essential or imaginative intuition involving interaction between the researcher and respondents or between researcher and text. Phenomenology, therefore, involves in-depth exploration of experiences or text to clarify their essence.

Creswell (2007) discusses two approaches to phenomenology and these are hermeneutic, on the one hand, and empirical (classical), transcendental or psychological phenomenology, on the other hand. Max van Manen (1997, 1990; in Creswell 2007) says research is directed toward lived experience (phenomenology) and interpreting the text of life (hermeneutics). van Manen (1990) argues phenomenology research is a dynamic interplay among six research activities which include researchers turning to a phenomenon that interests them seriously; they then ponder essential themes like what constitutes the nature of lived experience; they write a description of the phenomenon, while keeping a strong link to the topic of inquiry and balancing parts of the writing to the whole. Apart from being a description phenomenology is also considered an interpretative process in which the researcher interprets the meaning of the lived experiences (Creswell 2007; Grbich 2007). van Manen (1990: 26) describes this as the researcher mediating between different meanings.

Grbich (2007) also describes hermeneutic phenomenology as investigating the interpretative structures of experience or text – public and private – art or material forms like building. The interpretative focus is

done either from inside or outside. While the inside involves interaction between researcher and text, the outside focuses on objective research. The approach is also about the researcher integrating parts and whole, which is essential. It posits that everyday transaction predominates and being is revealed through individual activities. It does not encourage bracketing but recommends keeping a reflective journal recording the researcher's own experiences, personal assumptions and views. The process also relates to the co-construction of the data between one and one's respondents, which keeps occurring and that the outcome involves a continuous conversation.

Transcendental/psychological phenomenology has been described by Clark Moustakas (1994) as focussing less on interpretations of the researcher and more on their description of the phenomenon or people's experiences. Moustakas (1994) also draws from Husserl's (1981) notion of bracketing – setting aside one's experience and taking a neutral view of the phenomenon to avoid personal biases. Thus, transcendental means *"in which everything is perceived freshly as if for the first time"* (Moustakas 1994: 34). Often, this is very hard to achieve. Empirical, transcendental phenomenology explains a procedure in which, according to Moustakas (1994), researchers identify a phenomenon that needs researching or studying, the researchers bracket out their personal experiences, and collect data from several people that have witnessed the phenomenon. Collected data is then analysed through reduction of the information to significant quotes or statements and finally phrasing themes by combining the statements. In the next step the researchers come up with a textural description of the experiences of the participants, (what they experienced), a structural description of their experiences (the condition, situation or context in which they experienced it) and to convey a total essence of the experience by combining the textural and structural descriptions. Husserl (1981: 3) states:

To every object there corresponds an ideally closed system of truths that are

true of it and, on the other hand, an ideal system of possible cognitive

processes by virtue of which the object and the truth about it would be given

to any cognitive subjective. (Grbich 2007: 85)

Another approach is existential phenomenology which, according to Grbich (2007), directly poses questions to Husserlian phenomenology (essences) and the layers and consciousness associated to it. It argues that essence is not necessarily based on human experience of everyday life, but some form of cerebral reconstruction. The proponents of this approach are Jean-Paul Sartre, Martin Heiddegger, Maurice Merleau-Ponty and Clark Moustakas (Grbich 2007). Sartre has emphasised a reflection on the construction of consciousness using the issues of freedom and choice and the concept of the 'other'. Merleau-Ponty on the hand has focused on bodily selves, embodiment, the body of experience and its reflection in the mind. Generally, existential phenomenology emphasises consciousness not as a separate entity but as being linked to human experiences, especially in relations to the active role of the body and to freedom of action and choices. Essence is therefore part of human experience and that people are inextricably immersed in their world, which Heidegger calls *Dasien* or being-in-the-world. It focuses on issues of in-the-world existence; it precedes existence according to Sartre, especially 'being' and provides an absolute beyond essence. It argues that Intentionality links humans with their physical contexts and within context humans have the capacity to respond and react to situations or relationships with others they confront, meet or attach to in their world.

To existential phenomenology the notion of freedom in this world is individual responsibility not a group or society's responsibility. Choice and responsibility, physical and intellectual experiences like action and emotions that eventuate and interconnect

individuals in 'being-in-the-world' all provide a focus for being, it adds. Nothingness, this school argues, comes through death and is the final outcome. But it disagrees with Husserl's view about the process of phenomenon reduction as a necessity in order to alienate one's interconnectedness in the world. Complete reduction is therefore not possible and that one's experience exists; to experience other aspects individuals are inseparable from the worlds. Our conceptualisation of any essences is affected by the fact and nature of our existence and intentionality is revealed by our involvement in the world, focus on contextual relationship and allowing things to sort themselves not through bracketing.

This approach is a broad movement from Husserl's abstract to the real and uncovers meaning of being, which comes first in contrast to Husserl's real to abstract. This researcher finds the Husserlian proposition of phenomenon reduction as a means of checking one's biases interesting as much as one considers the position advanced by existential phenomenology on bracketing valid. One cannot run away from a lived experience and this has to be allowed to reflect, even minimally, as the study is undertaken. But how this is allowed to reflect in the research as the researcher takes a fresh look at the phenomenon depends on the situation when collecting data and the participants. Another point to note is that Husserl's (1981) approach inclines towards either the hermeneutic or existential strands of phenomenology. Bracketing may or may not be necessary depending on the need to separate essences from human generated discourses that constitute them. According to Peter Wills (2004) there is a possibility of more traditional descriptions dulling essences and resulting in boredom for readers. In the description of lived experiences, living text is more appropriate and using metaphor or drawing closer to the experiences through a range of literary approaches like autobiography. Thus, Wills says poetry, fiction and graphic and

visual arts are appropriate. Moustaka's (2004) approach focuses on subjective involvement and immersion, incubation, illumination, explication and creative synthesis.

All three schools of Phenomenology have their pluses and minuses and the researcher considers useful those aspects of each of the approaches that may make the conduct of this study more appropriate. As was pointed out above, classical (transcendental) phenomenology, as much as it differs from the other two, inclines toward either of them in some ways too. While existential clearly disagrees with phenomenon reduction, hermeneutic phenomenology does not encourage it, neither does it discourage it. However, both are opposed to separating essence from experience as has been proposed by Husserl (1981).

3.4   PHENOMENOLOGY & QUALITATIVE METHOD OF DATA ANALYSIS

Earlier on, it was noted that the choice of phenomenology will enable the researcher to appropriately apply the qualitative research method of data analysis. But there is also a need to understand how this works and other advantages that may result from this choice. Under the qualitative method Creswell (2003) explains the various strategies that may be applied, while Wolcott (2001) identifies 19 of such approaches including phenomenology. The qualitative method offers the researcher an opportunity to apply the content analysis (CA) or discourse analysis (DA) technique. Attempts are made in this section to understand both CA and DA although this researcher favours the application of a strand of DA (critical discourse analysis or CDA), which will be used in analysing newspaper reports within a specific period during the phenomenon under study, that is one of the religious crises in Plateau State.

Gray (2004) describes CA (content analysis) as a relatively modest approach which is used to analyse answers to open-ended interviews. Grbich (2007: 112) also describes CA as a commonly used method of studying and analysing documents:

…a systematic coding and categorising approach which can be used to unobtrusively explore large amounts of textual information in order to ascertain the trends and patterns of words that have been used, their frequency, their relationship and the structures and discourses of communication.

Bryman (2004: 181) has equally defined CA as an *"approach to the analysis of documents and texts that seeks to qualify content in terms of predetermined categories in a systematic and replicable manner."* Bryman (2007) adds that it is a flexible method that is applicable to various types of documents and often treated as a research method due to its unique approach to analysis.

On the other hand, before discussing critical discourse analysis (CDA) there is a need to first define discourse analysis (the parent methodology of CDA). DA is a technique that often uses interview material and can exemplify the concept of interpretive repertoires. There are different versions of this approach like Discursive Psychology (Edward 1992; Harre 1998; Potter & Wetherell 1987), which is interested in showing how in conversations participants' conversational versions of events are constructed to do communicative interactive work. It focuses more on the content of talk, its subject matter and its social rather than linguistic organisation (Flick 2009); and critical discourse analysis (Foucault 1980) is referred to as Foucauldian Discourse Analysis, which focuses on the critique of ideology and power. CDA has its root in linguistics and sociolinguistics (Wooffitt 2005) and is associated with scholars like Norman Fairclough, Teun A van Dijk and Ruth Wodak. It is

primarily concerned with analysing *"how social and political inequalities are manifest in and are reproduced through discourse"* (Wooffitt 2005: 137). CDA also sees language as social practice (Fairclough & Wodak 1997; Wodak 2001) and considers the text of the language used as crucial (Wodak 2001c; cited in Wodak 2001; Benke 2000; cited in Wodak 2001; Wodak 2001). Kress (1990: 94) has articulated the basic assumption of CDA as: language is a social phenomenon, not only individual, but also institutions and social groupings have specific meanings and values, that are expressed in language and systematic ways; texts are relevant units of language in communication; readers/hearers are not passive recipients in their relationships to text; and there are similarities between the language of science and the language of institutions, and so on.

A fundamental question this research seeks to answer is how language is used to demonise the other or create stereotypes, particularly in the media. Given the definition of CDA and how it could be utilised to understand the use of language, CDA becomes appropriate for this study in order to fully comprehend the phenomenon under study. Using CDA, attempts will be made in another chapter to look at newspaper reports covering a certain period in order to find out how language was used, by whom and targeted at whom.

3.5   RESEARCH DESIGN AND RESEARCH METHOD

A research design offers the framework on which a researcher collects and analyses data (Bryman 2004: 27). Bryman lists five types of research designs commonly available to a researcher as: experimental and related designs, like quasi-experiment; cross-sectional design, considered most common form of survey research; longitudinal e.g. panel study and the cohort study; case study design; and comparative design. On the other hand Bryman (2004: 27) has defined research method as a technique for collecting data like administering a questionnaire, doing a structured interview or participant observation. Research method,

he explains, is often linked to research design because the latter acts as a guide for applying a research method and the analysis of data collected through the process. In the same vein Creswell (2007: 42) suggests the consideration of 'methodological congruence' (Morse & Richards 2002) underscoring the interconnectedness and interrelatedness of the purpose, questions and methods of research in order to produce the study as cohesive whole. Against the above backdrop, the design employed in this study will be explained in the following subsections:

3.5.1   Purpose/Aims of the Study

The purpose/aims of the study, which have been stated in Chapter One, are to: (a) critically examine the emergence of newspapers in Nigeria and how it might be linked to their perception and choice of news values; (b) extensively investigate the influence of ownership and control among other issues, on newspapers and how it affects the reportage of religion/religious conflicts in Nigeria; (c) carefully determine how it might be possible for the media to manipulate their audiences/readers; (d) thoroughly examine the role of political and socio-economic factors in the crises; and (e) significantly expose the danger of manipulation and its relations to violent conflicts in the country.

3.5.2   Research Questions

In the attempts to achieve the above purpose/aims efforts have been made to answer the following research questions: (a) To what extent do the media (newspapers) in Nigeria provide a platform for promoting religious disharmony? (b) What are the factors that make it difficult for journalists in Nigeria not to be biased when reporting religion or religious conflict? (c) How are enemy images and stereotypes created in news production and reporting? (d) To what extent are the conflicts actually religious?

3.5.3   Theoretical Framework

In view of the earlier decision to opt for a qualitative research method, the theoretical framework adopted is the qualitative phenomenological approach and under this strategy the researcher set out to understand (based on their own background experience), investigate and interpret the phenomenon through the views of participants in the study. The researcher was able to get as close as possible to the essence of the experience under study and report it in the voice of the researched. Since this study also involves examining newspaper reports Hallin and Mancini's (2004) media system theory, the media effects model as a means of focusing explanation of violence on media contents as Gauntlett (1998) postulates and the critical political economy argument that the media are, like other industrial and commercial organisations, producing and distributing commodities (Murdock & Golding 1973) have been considered useful and will be appropriately contextualised and cited in the study. This is particularly important because this study is also comparatively looking at the reportage of newspapers from the perspective of the North versus South, Muslim versus Christian media ownership and/or control and how the audiences/readers might be influenced by what they read, leading to violent reactions sometimes. This led to the adoption of *THISDAY* (Southern, Christian) and *Daily Trust* (Northern, Muslim) newspapers for CDA analysis too.

3.5.4   Data Collection Procedure

The researcher has also employed three methodologies of collecting data in this study, namely: collection of newspaper reports over a period of four weeks, and for this purpose *THISDAY,* a Southern newspaper owned by a Christian, and *Daily Trust,* a Northern newspaper owned by a group of Muslims, are comparatively studied by means of critical discourse analysis; the presentation of interview questions through semi-structured

technique to 16 journalists, editors, media owners and commentators/stakeholders cutting across both religions and regions in the cities of Abuja and Jos; and the presentation of questions through focus group interviewing to two separate focus groups in Jos and Kano.

3.5.5 Data Analysis Procedure

In the case of newspaper reports data were analysed by means of critical discourse analysis using van Dijk's (1985) framework to identify the use of slant/rhetoric or framing etc., while interpretative phenomenological analysis was used to analyse interview data. Following analyses there were discussions in which findings were linked to theories explaining the phenomenon. For instance attempts were made to understand whether the media were actually the cause of the crises or not, and specific situations in which they were involved were also discussed, especially the nature of their involvement.

3.5.6 Significance of the Study

The significance of the study are to: (a) Profoundly understand the particular challenges of reporting religion/religious violence in complex societies like Nigeria; (b) Genuinely proffer solutions to the problems discovered; (c) Significantly contribute to discourses on ownership, control and use of the media in the study of journalism and society in colleges and universities; and (d) Particularly device a framework for critically examining the issues highlighted and means by which ethnic, cultural and religious similarities might be emphasised while de-emphasising dissimilarities especially in societies with complexities like Nigeria, using the media as a conduit.

3.5.7 Pilot/Preliminary Survey

Pilot survey questions were initially sent to prospective interviewees through email and although six people were identified and sent the questions only two responded. Based on

their responses the researcher modified the questions slightly and carried out a pilot survey between July 26 and August 7, 2010 during which a number of new discoveries about the phenomenon being researched were made, and these are: (a) It was realised that in order to properly address the issues being researched there was a need to phrase two different set of questions, one set for journalists, editors, proprietors and commentators and the other for media audience/readers; (b) there was also a need to tailor each of the questions to cover a range of issues to enable more insight into the phenomenon; (c) although the newspapers under study are two, it was realised there was a need to speak to people from more newspapers located in or owned by proprietors from both regions; (d) following suggestion by one of the respondents in the pilot survey, it was decided that there are newspapers in the North that do not necessarily share the same ideals with other newspapers because their owners are Christians and from Northern minority tribes; (e) the researcher agreed that speaking to journalists working with such newspapers and even their owners was essential; (f) based on the number of respondents mentioning the use of mobile phones to spread rumours it was also realised that in the absence of credible alternative media people devise means of reporting stories their own way irrespective of its danger; (g) having tried without success to organise a pilot group survey the researcher decided to devise another plan taking into consideration participants fears, like security and safety; (h) Kano, which was not initially one of the cities to conduct a study was included in the list due to its relatively better security situation than Jos; (i) in the case of Jos a neutral venue was considered to enable both Muslim and Christian participants feel comfortable/safe; (j) the researcher also made provision for local clothes to wear when visiting certain areas to avoid appearing different from people in the community so as not to arouse suspicion; (k) more time was created to allow interviewees to be late, since people hardly keep to an appointed

time; (l) due to suggestion during pilot survey a female stakeholder/commentator from one of the flashpoints was added on to the list of interviewees.

3.5.8 Challenges Faced by Researcher

Researcher faced a number of challenges in the process of the data collection in Nigeria. The first challenge was whether to visit the restive city of Jos or not and the risk involved in this. The researcher decided to seek second opinions from people on the ground who gave useful pieces of advice and these helped during the visit. First, interviews had to be organised in neutral areas, in the case of focus group, since there is residential segregation pattern of housing in the city. To ensure the safety of participants the Nigerian Film Institute, Jos was used as a venue. There was also the ethical issue of safeguarding the identity of participants and it was agreed codes shall be used to represent participants in the study. The researcher also had to consider their own safety when meeting individuals for semi-structured interviews. There was a particularly risky part of the city that was visited by the researcher in which case the researcher had to dress to make them easily pass for a member of the community.

Another major problem encountered was getting people to keep to appointed times, as on one occasion an interviewee kept the researcher waiting for eight hours after the researcher had driven nearly 200 miles to the venue, and despite repeated reassurance they would come on time. Also, in one of the focus groups there was a participant whose English was difficult to comprehend and had to speak in Hausa language. The researcher eventually translated the participant's comments into English. There was also a technical hitch on one occasion when the mini recorder the researcher was using refused to work and, because there was a second recorder, it was turned on to continue recording. Another issue was that some people that had initially agreed to take part in the study suddenly withdrew and

researcher was left with a vacuum since the notice was short. In one of the focus groups a participant did not turn up and in the end it was agreed to carry on with those available.

3.6   ANALYSIS OF DATA

In analysing the primary data collected during field study interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) was applied. IPA took off from the theoretical backgrounds of phenomenology, hermeneutics and idiography (Smith & Eatough 2007; Moran 2000; Smith, Harré & Langenhove 1995; Palmer 1969). It seeks to explore in full individual personal and lived experiences, and examines how participants make sense of their personal and social world. IPA is directly concerned with the meaning made by participants of their specific experience with an event or phenomenon.

A fundamental argument of this approach is that since research is a dynamic process in which a researcher plays an active role the application of IPA involves a two-way interpretation process or double hermeneutic. This means, for example, the participants or interviewees making sense of their world just as the researcher also makes a sense of how the participants make a sense of their own world. This process, explain Smith and Eatough (2007: 35-36), involves the researcher playing a dual role. It also implies that a researcher employing this technique tries to fit into the situation of the participants as much as possible, while ensuring that the researcher equally steps back a little to ask curious and critical questions from the accounts of the researched (further probing). In the same manner the researcher makes a connection between what they say and their thinking and emotional state, which may not be easily connected. As such the researcher interprets the participant's mental and emotional state from what they say by employing different ways of interpretatively considering the data. IPA agrees that any analytical account will be partial and cannot be seen to ever be the final word on the topic (Smith & Eatough 2007: 37).

3.6.1 Stages of IPA Application in Data Analysis

In applying IPA a researcher needs to follow a number of steps which include several close and detailed reading of the data to obtain a holistic perspective so that future interpretations are based on the participants' account; identifying and organising initial themes into clusters and checking against the data; refining, condensing and examining themes for connections between them; and producing a narrative account of the interplay between the interpretative activity of the researcher and the participants' account of their experiences in their own words ((Smith & Eatough 2007; Smith & Osborn 2003).

One of the criteria for the choice of IPA is that it was hoped that it would help the researcher to appropriately play a dual role in the attempt to understand and interpret the situation being studied and from the perspectives of the participants. As such, reading through the transcripts availed the researcher with the opportunity to closely look at the data and interpret the accounts of the participants to produce reasonable meanings. This was so because each interviewee's account was considered individually and as the specific account of the participant's experience. In the end the themes that were identified were rearranged into categories under which major issues in the research questions were identified and addressed in narratives (discussions). Thus, having had an initial considering about these possibilities the researcher decided to apply IPA and was able to effectively use it as explained above.

3.7   CONCLUSION

At the start of this chapter this researcher had explained that there might be a need to apply triangulation technique, which was applied here through three different qualitative techniques. Those were critical discourse analysis, semi-structured and focus group

interview methods. This chapter has explained how all three methods were applied in the study.

The chief aim of the discussion in this chapter was to help the researcher come up with a comprehensive picture of a methodological approach for the study. In doing this the researcher took into consideration the research questions in Chapter One and how best they would be answered using certain strategies. The flexibility regarding the researcher's consideration for triangulation comes from a desire to avoid or minimise probabilities of errors. Since the main aim of the study is to identify how the media use enemy images and stereotypes to stigmatise others and the reasons for this as well as how this might have contributed to the violence in some parts of the country, the choice of methodology was clearly made to ensure that the researcher's biases do not stand in the way and each side is given a fair chance to contribute evenly in the discussion. This also explains why both semi-structured and focus group interview techniques have been employed in addition to critical discourse analysis (for studying and analysing newspaper reports).

Finally, this researcher was aware that any choice of technique or methodology made at the initial point might not be by any means a final one, as new circumstances could warrant the adoption of new techniques to complement or substitute the ones already chosen. For instance difficulties in reaching a participant for any of the interviews could result in the researcher either finding someone else to replace them or adopting new means of obtaining information from the same participant. In the same vein venues that were found to be too risky to access might be changed and somewhere else used even if there might be some dissimilarity in the information that were to be obtained insofar as such data were useful for the study and could help in providing answers to the research questions. It was in view of all this that a number of changes were made to both the

interview questions and the processes of conducting the interviews. In the end, despite the challenges faced the interviews were done and no one's safety was compromised. The next chapter of this study will discuss how newspaper reports of the *Daily Trust* and *THISDAY* were analysed leading to the phrasing of interview questions and discussions about possible enemy framing in news reporting etc. This is very crucial to the research because it is there that one will be able to identify, if at all there's any, use of negative language or images intended to create stereotypes.

CHAPTER FOUR

Analysis of Newspaper Reports using CDA

4   INTRODUCTION

Following discussions in Chapter Three this chapter has been devoted to analysing the newspaper reportage of one of the sectarian crises in Jos, a city in central Nigeria. In the last chapter it was explained that due to the appropriateness of qualitative research procedure to this study critical discourse analysis (CDA) has been used to analyse newspaper reports during a religious crisis in Northern Nigeria. In this chapter the entire process will be further described before showing how it was suitably applied in analysing reports by two Nigerian newspapers, *Daily Trust* and *THISDAY*, during the crisis. Initially there will be an attempt to explain the research process, that is how the researcher collected the documents/newspaper copies used in the analysis. This will be followed by a description of the process of the analysis, leading to the emergence and adoption of themes under which each category of reports was analysed. There will then be a presentation of the analysis of the text/headlines of each newspaper's report over the period mentioned in the form of narrative using the themes identified as headings. A discussion section will also be used to present and discuss findings and relate them to theories before concluding the chapter.

In the last chapter both discourse analysis (DA) and CDA were described and there was further discussion of CDA. Since this study is not concerned directly with DA, only CDA has been further described. As was previously mentioned CDA is a strand of DA (Foucault 1980) that is referred to as Foucauldian Discourse Analysis. It focuses on the critique of

ideology and power and has its root in linguistics and sociolinguistics (Wooffit 2005). It, particularly, focuses on analysing the manifestation and reproduction of social and political inequalities through discourse (Wooffitt 2005). CDA assumes, basically, that language is a social phenomenon, not only individual, but also institutions and social groupings have specific meanings and values, that are expressed in language and systematic ways; texts are relevant units of language in communication; readers/hearers are not passive recipients in their relationship to text; and there are similarities between the language of science and the language of institutions etc (Kress 1990: 94).

Fairclough (1989) explains further that CDA is used to scrutinise the language of the mass media as a site of power and struggle and also as a site where language is seen to be transparent. While the mass media tend to portray themselves as neutral by providing space for public discussion and reflecting the state of affairs without any vested interest, Fairclough (2001) illustrates the mediating and constructing roles of the media citing a wide range of examples to expose this fallacy (Wodak 2001). Against this backdrop CDA contends that language, on its own, is not powerful, but becomes powerful depending on the use it is put to (Wodak 2001). CDA poses questions that include: How does language figure as an element in social processes? What is the relationship of language to other elements of social processes (Chouliaraki & Fairclough 1999; Fairclough 1992, 1995; Fairclough & Wodak 1997; Fairclough 2001)? CDA often focuses on language just as visual images like photographs and diagrams or body language, gestures and facial expression are also considered (Fairclough 2001). Fairclough (2001) adds that semiosis means the use of language, body language, visual images or other ways of signifying to make meaning. And in order to deal with social issues and problems, CDA analyses texts and interactions as well as other forms of semiosis

material (Fairclough 2001). CDA is critical in that it is concerned with progressive social change; it has been seen to possess an emancipatory knowledge interest (Fairclough 2001). In order to achieve its emancipatory goal, Wodak (2001) explains that while CDA asks research questions, scholars act as advocates for those who suffer social discrimination.

4.1   BACKGROUND

After four years of relative peace Jos was up in flames again from November 28-29, 2008. On November 27, 2008 Local Government elections were held in the state and the Jos electorate were divided on the basis of religion (Human Rights Watch December 19, 2008). The two main rivals were Aminu Baba and Timothy Buba, a Muslim and Christian candidates, respectively; they also represented the two main groups, 'settlers' and 'indigenes'. In the election for the Jos North Local Government chairman position it was alleged that the state government had a preference for the Christian candidate, who is also the governor's kinsman and family friend (*Weekly Trust* November 29, 2008). It was further claimed that the governor had planned, in collaboration with the state electoral commission officials, to rig the election in favour of their preferred candidate. It was later rumoured that the process had been manipulated and supporters of the Muslim candidate went into the streets protesting before the results had been officially released (*THISDAY* November 29, 2008). It was at this point that anti-riot police and military men were sent to the scene leading to the shooting and killing of many of the protesters. The state governor, David Jonah Jang, reportedly gave a 'shoot-on-sight' order to security officials and by the next day reports claimed more than 300 people, mainly from the rival Muslim group had been shot dead (Human Rights Watch December 19, 2008). In the midst of it all, results of the elections across the state were released, including the one disputed in Jos.

Most of the news reports on the crisis were by international media like the *BBC, CNN, VOA, Islam Channel, Al Jazeera English, Reuters, AP (Associated Press)* and *FRI (Radio France International*). The reports were seen to be either balanced or biased depending on the prism through which they were viewed. For example, from within the country some individuals and groups claimed the *BBC Hausa* and *VOA Hausa* services had been heavily biased in favour of the Muslims (*Daily Trust* December 4, 2008). There were further allegations that within Nigeria news reports were not very balanced and, to a large extent, only reflected certain interests. For instance *Daily Trust* and its Weekly and Sunday versions were said to have mainly focused their reports on the Muslim and Northern victims. In the case of other newspapers like the *Guardian, THISDAY, Punch, Tribune, The Nation* and so on their reports allegedly only featured Southern victims living in the North. For example, among the victims were three fresh university graduates doing their mandatory National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) in Jos. They were allegedly murdered by 'hoodlums' from the Muslim side. Reports said there were also more than a dozen Muslim school pupils that were burnt to death after their schools were invaded and classrooms set ablaze by suspected 'hoodlums' from the Christian side. Apart from those who lost their lives many others were said to have managed to escape with all sorts of injuries. But there were allegations that while the graduate victims received sufficient media attention from the Southern press, they (the Southern press) ignored victims from the Muslim/Hausa/Fulani side. In the same manner the Northern press were said to have given the Southern victims little attention. Such allegations of biased reporting will be the subject of this CDA analysis.

Two Nigerian newspapers, *Daily Trust* and *THISDAY*, will be studied and both are national daily and weekly publications. *THISDAY* is a South-based Nigerian newspaper and is

one of the largest circulating national newspapers in the country. It was, until the November 2002 sectarian violence, the largest circulating newspaper in Northern Nigeria. It currently has a daily sales unit of 21,703[31]. *Daily Trust* is, with a daily sales unit of 11,672[32], the most widely read newspaper in Northern Nigeria and is owned by a group of Northern private proprietors. Both newspapers have offices and reporters across the country.

4.2   RESEARCH PROCESS

The process of collecting the newspaper back copies used in the analysis began shortly after the crisis. Since each of the newspapers has an online presence it was initially quite easy monitoring the reports and copying and pasting on a word document. But it was later realised that not all the reports could be accessed online because *Daily Trust's* archive allowed access to only a few reports. Some of the links were not working properly and often led the researcher to the wrong stories. A decision had to be made on alternative means of obtaining hard copies of the reports from Nigeria. The researcher then contacted one of the editors of the newspaper, a former colleague, who promised to help with making photocopies of all the reports needed, which were then listed and emailed to the editor. The list contained exactly what the researcher wanted to use for the analysis that had been monitored online but could not be accessed or downloaded. Therefore, the editor did not influence the researcher's choice of reports/articles used for the analysis.

Although the entire process took nearly three months copies of the *Daily/Weekly/Sunday Trust* reports of the Jos crisis of November 2008 were made, parcelled

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[31] It is very difficult to know the exact daily circulation of newspapers in Nigeria as they are believed to be hiding it for reasons best known to them. However, a report by Advertisers Association of Nigeria (ADVAN) between March and May 2009 revealed the figures referred to in this section. Most of the papers, including *THISDAY* and *Daily Trust* have since disputed these figures.

[32] Same explanation above applies to this case (see the following link http://m2weekly.com/cover-cover/advans-newspaper-circulation-report-why-the-figures-remain-controversial/ accessed 23 June 2011.

and sent to the researcher through another former colleague travelling to London from Abuja. The researcher offered to cover the cost incurred by both former colleagues but they declined, insisting that was their own contribution towards making the study a success. But the researcher made it clear that neither their contribution nor the researcher's links to the paper would be allowed to influence the analysis. The links include being a former *Daily/Weekly Trust* journalist; a Muslim and from the North of Nigeria; and the assistance received from the former colleagues during the research process. This researcher made sure he distanced himself from these links during the process of the analysis and specifically allowed the data/documents (newspapers reports, articles) to dictate all that happened during the entire analysis.

Obtaining copies of *THISDAY* reports was not as complicated as the case of *Daily Trust.* With a properly working archive all its reports on the crisis were accessed online and copied and pasted on a word document. The only minor problem encountered in the process was a mandatory registration before one is permitted to access their archive. This was done after providing the required information. The researcher then printed the document in readiness for reading and analysis. There is a need to mention that although in the case of *Daily Trust* hard copies were obtained and used for the analysis while in respect of *THISDAY* online copies were used there was no difference in terms of what the researcher could have access to in each of the newspaper's publications during the crisis under study. *THISDAY's* online archive allowed access to all the reports and articles the paper published on the conflict. In the same vein all *Daily Trust* reports and articles were accessed and analysed.

Having obtained copies of both newspapers' reports for the analysis a decision needed to be made on the exact period the analysis should cover and what exactly should be analysed. Before agreeing on this the researcher glanced through all the reports in order to have a good idea of where to begin and end the analysis. It was based on this the period between November 29 and December 26, 2008 was chosen, covering four weeks.

4.3   ANALYTIC PROCESS

The actual analysis began with the researcher heeding the advice of Teun van Dijk (2001) that no specific, ready-made guideline is available for the application of CDA. Thus, van Dijk (2001) suggests the integration of the works of many people from different fields, countries, cultures etc. in order to come up with a strategy for its application. Based on the above, and in a bid to draw from the works of different scholars, this researcher considered the lens offered by Fairclough (1995: 5-6) in which he explains how the analysis of the language of media text illuminates three sets of questions on media output. And these questions are: How is the world (events, relationships) represented? What identities are set up for those involved in the programme or story (reporters, audience, 'third parties' referred to or interviewed)? What relationships are set up between those involved (for example reporter-audience, expert-audience or politician-audience relationships)? Fairclough (1995: 5), thus, adds that it will be essentially assumed that any text will concurrently represent, set up identities and set up relations. Following this process in the analysis of a TV report he suggests writing on the left (or producing) a rough representation of visual images in the extract, and on the right the language (reporter voice-over).

Another piece that caught the attention of this researcher was Carabine's (2001) analysis of the 1834 New Poor Law Act & Commissioners' Reports by applying the

Foucauldian discourse analysis. In the process Carabine (2001: 281) suggests an 11-step analytical procedure that includes: selecting a topic (possible sources of data); knowing the data (by reading and re-reading to establish familiarity); identifying themes (categories and objects of the discourse); looking for evidence of an inter-relationship between discourses; identifying the discursive strategies and techniques employed; looking for absences and silences; looking for resistances and counter-discourses; identifying the effects of the discourse; outlining the background to the issue; contextualising the material in the power/knowledge networks of the period; and being aware of the research, data and sources.

It is essential to recall that the main framework of this study is phenomenology although CDA is applied in this specific aspect of the analysis. And since phenomenology is an interpretative tradition through which a researcher attempts to make sense of the world around them or interprets social reality (Bryman 2004; Grbich 2007) this researcher decided to approach the analysis by, first, adopting Fairclough's (1995) assumption of representation, identities and relations situating it within the text (copies of newspapers obtained). With that the researcher created an image of each scenario on the left hand side of the text as the researcher read through the report, identifying points where there might occur any of the three nouns (representations, identities and relations) mentioned by Fairclough (1995). Second, the researcher followed Carabine's (2001) proposition although not all 11 steps were taken in. Already the issue to be studied had been agreed and the data was available for scrutiny. The researcher then immersed themselves in studying (reading and re-reading the newspaper copies several times), which went on for more than two months before an initial draft of the chapter was produced. But during those readings

Fairclough's (1995) suggestion of representation, identities and relations became clearer and the researcher made a sense of it by contextualising the media representation of the conflict (November 2008 crisis), identifying the conflicting parties based on the identities set up for them in the reports, and understanding the relationships created between the those producing the reports (journalists) and those consuming them (audience). It was based on this that this researcher turned back to Carabine's (2001) guideline again to come up with themes and categories under which trends identified in the text would be analysed. For instance this researcher identified the attempts by each newspaper to paint pictures of a very grave situation and in the process represent each side either as an aggressor or aggressed depending on its leaning. There were also attempts by each party to accuse the other of being responsible for the crisis and, thus, add fuel to the conflict. Having identified reports with such trends the researcher constructed the first theme: Aggravation/finger pointing.

The second theme was also identified by reading through the texts (reports) and trying to identify how each party (especially politicians and leaders aligned to them) was reacting to the grave situation painted by the reports and the urgency on the ground. The researcher identified two major issues here: first, there were those presented in the reports as showing clear lukewarm even after 100s of lives had been lost; and second, there were those presented as having no qualms maintaining the situation (grave situation). The difference is that while the first group was willing to do nothing to resolve the problem, the second group appeared to be doing more to fuel it irrespective of the consequence. From this trend the researcher constructed another theme: Indifference/lack of concern.

It is important to also note the polarising role of the media in all this; it was realised they were either providing a platform for the representation of a positive image of one side as opposed to the other or painting a negative picture of the other. As would be seen in the analysis there was outright use of enemy frames or consenting to the use of propaganda. On this basis the researcher categorised reports here under the theme: Satire/use of labels/rhetoric. A similar inclination noted by the researcher was the cynical attitude of some people to the situation. Even journalists were at some point seen to be painting a picture of hopelessness. In some instances the situation was deliberately hyperbolised by both journalists and politicians and reports identified here were categorised under the theme: Pessimism/exaggeration. Finally, recalling Fairclough's (1995) suggestion of relations between the media and their audience and having identified situations in which attempts were made to offer solutions (like giving hope or a glimmer of hope) the researcher constructed another theme, peacebuilding/conciliation, to categorise and analyse such reports/articles.

Although these five themes were finally agreed there were occasions the researcher struggled with coming to a conclusion on each. At some point the researcher considered collapsing some to avoid duplication or creating more themes but decided to allow each to stand after examining the amount of documents under each theme. Besides, it was realised that some reports could appropriately fit into more than one theme. It was also discovered that although the reports being analysed came from two different publishers each of the themes could be represented by reports from the two newspapers given the enormity of the situation, the newspapers differences, their audience (waiting to be updated) and the extent of polarisation (as was earlier discussed).

Having identified the main themes, the researcher decided to tackle the issue of identifying a framework for analysing each report (text/headlines) on its merit. Although Fairclough (1995) provides a framework that appeared quite appealing due to its generalised approach, van Dijk's (2001) socio-cognitive approach (focusing on written texts specifically) was adopted. In analysing texts to expose the use of language in a discourse van Dijk (1985, 2001; Meyer 2001: 26) recommends the following steps: (1) analysis of semantic macrostructures: topics and macropropositions; (2) analysis of local meanings, like the many forms of implicit or indirect meanings, such as implications, presuppositions, allusions, vagueness, omissions and polarisations etc.; (3) analysis of 'subtle' formal structures: where most of the linguist markers are analysed; (4) analysis of global and local discourse forms or formats; (5) analysis of specific linguist realisations, for example such rhetoric as hyperboles (exaggeration) and litotes (understatement); and (6) analysis of context.

van Dijk (2001: 101-102) argues that discourse topics play an essential function in communication and interaction and defines them as *"semantic macrostructures derived from the local (micro) structures of meaning."* van Dijk (1980) explains that topics symbolise the meaning or purpose of a discourse as well as the most important information about it; topics also explain the general coherence of text and talk. He adds that topics are usually articulated in titles, headlines summaries, abstracts, thematic sentences or conclusions etc. Local meanings, according van Dijk (2001: 103), are *"the result of the selection made by speakers or writers in their mental models of events or their more general, socially shared beliefs."* He explains that under the overall control of global topics they are the sort of information that most directly manipulate the mental models and, as such, the opinions and attitudes of recipients; and that topics and local meanings are easily stored in recipients'

memories and reproduced whenever necessary and could have grave social consequences. Subtle 'formal' structures are those structures of a text or talk that are not easily controlled or hidden by writers or speakers (van Dijk, 2001). They include intonation, syntactic structures, propositional structures, rhetoric figures and the numerous properties of spontaneous talk like turn taking, repairs, pauses, hesitation and so on. All these suggest rather 'pragmatic' properties of a cumulative event, such as intention, present mood or emotions of speakers, perspectives on an issue of discourse, opinions about persons or speakers etc.

van Dijk (2001) also explains global and local discourse formats by means of contrasting them. He, therefore, describes global forms or superstructures as overall, canonical and conventional schemata comprising of classic genre categories, for example in arguments, stories or news articles. On the other hand local forms include those of (the syntax of) sentences and formal relations between clauses or sentences in sequences, like ordering, primacy, pronominal relations, active voice, nominalisations. Rhetoric such as hyperboles (exaggeration) and litotes (understatement) are used in language to emphasise 'our good' qualities by topicalising positive meanings, through hyperboles or positive metaphors and de-emphasising 'their positives' and emphasise 'their negatives', which van Dijk (2001) says is aimed at influencing, manipulating and controlling the mind. Lastly, van Dijk (2001) explains global and local contexts and their role in analysing discourse. Global contexts, he says, are defined by the social, political, cultural and historical structures in which a communicative event occurs. Local context, he asserts, is defined by its relations to the properties of the immediate interactional situation that the communicative discourse happens, such as the overall domain (politics, business), an overall action (legislative, propaganda) and so on.

Following the above discussions, particularly van Dijk's (2001) model that we intend applying in the analysis, news reports and articles by *Daily Trust* and *THISDAY* will be analysed to find out where any of the above features was used. Attempts will also be made to establish whether there was any link between such reports and ethnic or religious tension or violent crisis. Again, the themes constructed are: aggravation/finger-pointing; indifference/lack of concern; pessimism/exaggeration; satire/use of labels/rhetoric; and peacebuilding/conciliation. In the end attempts will be made to compare findings and link them to theories that were equally identified as appropriate for reference to in the discussion. To this end the socio-cognitive model of van Dijk (2001), Hallin and Mancini's (2004) media systems theory and framing theory (De Vreese, Peter & Semetko 2001) among others, will be featured in the discussion and such headings as regional cleavages, enemy framing, misinformation and peacebuilding will be used to present the discussion. The themes under which analysis will be presented were dictated by the data (reading and re-reading of newspaper reports), while the headlines for discussion also emerged during the same process and specifically after categorising reports under themes.

4.4   CDA ANALYSIS OF *THISDAY* REPORTS AND ARTICLES

In the four weeks under study news reports, editorials, articles, opinions and letters published by *THISDAY* newspapers will be analysed under five main themes constructed for the purpose of this analysis. These themes are: aggravation/finger pointing; indifference/lack of concern; satire/use of labels/rhetoric; pessimism/exaggeration; and peacebuilding/conciliation.

4.4.1 Aggravation/finger pointing

Following the outbreak of the sectarian crisis in Jos on November 28, 2008 one of the newspapers that consistently reported it was *THISDAY*. Its front page lead story of Saturday November 29, 2008 had the caption 'Dozens Killed in Jos LG Election Riots' and two bullet points titled 'Govt imposes dusk to dawn curfew' and 'FG, ACF condemn violence'. Reading through the story one noticeable feature of the report is what appears to be the use of conclusive and subjective language and the pointing of an accusing finger at one party, while corroborating statements by the other without clear evidence of independent check. In that report both topics and macropropositions, as suggested by van Dijk (1985, 2001), seem used. For example the report alleged that supporters of the opposition party, All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP) became violent after it was speculated *"that their candidate, whom they said was leading the PDP candidate was about to be declared the looser"*. This statement appears to be in breach of the rule of neutrality as the paper was subjectively pointing an accusing finger at one party while the conflict was still going on and did not cite any official or clear independent sources to back its story but relied solely on what it referred to as an eyewitness account. The governor of Plateau State, Jonah David Jang, was also quoted later in the report blaming the crisis on some thugs that allegedly took the law into their hands and warning of dire consequences like 'security details' being under instruction to return 'fire-for-fire' and 'drastic sanctions' for those further disrupting the peace. There seems, in the governor's statement as reported by *THISDAY*, the use of local meanings to polarise the conflict and hyperboles/litotes to overplay or downplay the problem depending on how one sees it. The paper also gives the impression of providing a platform for promoting an interest in conflict with another interest, giving it undue advantage over the other or what van Dijk (2001) calls local context.

The next day *THISDAY*, November 30, 2008, had the headline 'Death Tolls in Jos Riot Rises to 350'. The story opened with a statement by Gov Jang in which he continued to blame thugs and gave a 'shoot-on-sight' order to officers of the Nigerian Army, Air Force and Mobile Police Unit to kill anyone found causing trouble or disobeying the curfew he had imposed the previous day. It also quoted the governor warning of his readiness to battle thugs trying to wreak havoc on innocent citizens. Like the previous day's story it mainly portrayed the government's view and kept quoting state government officials to confirm facts or figures, without independent checks. For instance, the newspaper only mentioned the number of deaths it had earlier reported in its headline after paraphrasing the governor's warning to the people. Even then it quickly followed with another statement by the spokesman of the governor, James Mannok, claiming that 500 men, suspected mercenaries, had been intercepted on their way to Jos. The statement or claim suggests the use of words and labels or local meanings to further polarise the crisis and create an impression or manipulate the recipients.

There were conflicting statistics on the number of deaths recorded and in the report at least three versions were mentioned. The first, 350, was in the headline which the newspaper gave without stating where it came from. There was another *from Agence France Press (*AFP) saying that 381 corpses had been taken to the central Mosque and also from the Nigerian Red Cross Society quoting 150 remains taken to the same Mosque. In all three cases, apart from the mention of the Mosque that suggests the victims were Muslims, nothing further was said about them or how they died. The report quoted two Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) officials, Most Revd Ignatius Kaigama and Eng. Samuel Salifu, counting their losses and blaming it on the other. The paper also spoke to leaders of the main opposition parties, ANPP and Action Congress (AC); both of whom are Muslim were

quoted berating the Plateau State government for its poor handling of the crisis. *THISDAY*'s third publication on the crisis was in the form of a report and an article in which its reporters attempted, in the first case, to appease the opposition by mentioning them without getting a reaction from the government of Plateau State, and, in the second case do analysis of the crisis by looking at evidence from one side – the Plateau government. For example, in the analysis the author referred to both Governor Jang and his deputy, Pauline Tallen saying the polls were an improvement compared to the ones that were previously postponed.

THISDAY's reportage on December 5, 2008 of the crisis dwelled mainly on the same issues raised earlier: lack of balance and over-reliance on a single source without double checking. In this respect three headlines are considered here: 'Senators Speak on Solution to Jos Riots'; 'How the Plateau Became a Tinderbox of Ethno-Religious Strife'; and 'Another Agonising Reappraisal'. All three were articles analysing the crisis from the newspapers point of view, and in all three there was hardly any positive representation of or input from the other party/group. In the case of 'Senators Speak on Solution to Jos Riots' the reporter paraphrased three senators from one of the sides in the crisis and they were all of the same religion, accusing the other side of causing trouble and proffering solutions from their own perspective. For example one of the senators stated: *"...you would realise that the party that has always been violent is the ANPP. I have no doubt about that."* Again, in 'Another agonising Reappraisal' the author quoted the same statement to buttress a position. The other article 'How the Plateau Became a Tinderbox of Ethno-Religious Strife' regurgitated the same ideas and the author, as suggested by repeated statements, hardly refrained from being one-sided. For example, the author wrote:

> *During the gubernatorial election, the Hausa-Fulani never gave their backing*
>
> *to Gov Jang, whom they felt would attempt to wrestle their political hold and*

would be chased away from the area. Instead they voted for the ANPP

candidate, Hon Victor Lar from the Southern Senatorial Zone. But

unfortunately for them their candidate lost to Jang. Jang, however, during his

campaign, had promised not to chase the Hausa-Fulani away as long as they

behaved themselves...he gave the Hausa settlers a level playing ground to

freely contest for any position in the area. But the Hausas felt that with his

power of incumbency as the governor of the state they were going to be short-

changed.

Further statements in the article reveal what looks like the writer's immersion in the piece. For example, the author wrote that:

The clergy of most of these Churches, most of whom lived within the Church

premises were murdered. Other Christians living among the Hausa-Fulani on

Bauchi Road, Angwa-Rogo, Ali Kazaure, Nassarawa areas of the city, who are

predominantly Yorubas, were also attacked and murdered.

The writer made no mention of casualties suffered by the other side nor was any attempt made to speak to the other party or include views that differ from the ones expressed in the writer's opinion. Recalling van Dijk's (2001) earlier warning of the use of topics and local meanings, it appears the author was trying to achieve this by appealing to the sentiment of readers and using hyperboles and litotes to play up the blame game.

On December 6, 2008, of the reports and articles *THISDAY* published at least three or four are important for this analysis. They are 'The Jos Carnage', 'Presbyterian Church Condemns Jos Violence', 'Group Seeks End to Sectarian Crises', and 'NASFAT Frowns at Jos

Riots'. The reason for beaming the light on these four is that all had headlines that directly fall under van Dijk's (2001) 'topics' as they create an immediate impression; one paints a grave scenario (of carnage), the other three complement by saying no to it by concurring the situation (the violence) is severe and unacceptable. But the comparison ends there. In three 'The Jos Carnage', 'Presbyterian Church Condemns Jos Violence', 'Group Seeks End to Sectarian Crises' they seem to be playing the victim on behalf of their side in the conflict. For example in 'Group Seeks End to Sectarian Crises' the president of Nigeria Christian Graduate Fellowship Dr Iheanyi Uwaoma accused the media, specifically the Hausa language services of the *BBC* and *VOA*, of bias by projecting only the views of Muslims, arguing that the crisis was pre-planned and *"was only a ruse to carry out well planned attack on Christians."*

The next day *THISDAY,* again, had a story with the title 'Clark, Daniel, NACOMYO Condemn Jos Mayhem' and like the previous day, the story was about religious groups either pointing accusing fingers or trying to be seen to call for peace. The striking thing about this one is that NACOMYO – the National Council of Muslim Youth Organisation – called on *"...journalists to always balance their stories while reporting conflict..."*

THISDAY report for December 8, 2010 was like previous ones and quite like those of December 5 in which it was earlier observed that the authors had immersed themselves in the story. On that day the headlines were 'Plateau Relaxes Curfew' and 'Jos North and Its Seed of Crisis' in both of which the authors seem sympathetic to the government and appear to have bought the government's story that they were overwhelmed even though they had done everything to ensure violence free polls. In 'Jos North and Its Seed of Crisis' the reporter referred to one side as 'settlers' at least three times, in the opening and concluding paragraphs of the article analysing the crisis. It also appears that the same ideas

that were previously used had been recycled and used again. Again, it seems a very small effort had been made to get the other side's account or reflect their view in the article. In 'Plateau Relaxes Curfew' the reporter only rewrote a press release by the state government claiming normalcy had returned and the curfew had been relaxed without verifying the information.

THISDAY's report on December 11 with the title 'Plateau: Aliero Faults Call for Emergency Declaration' is important in this analysis too particularly due to a bullet point accompanying it, entitled: 'As Church leaders demand compensation'. The reports follows the trend previously seen where religious groups were increasingly given audience on the pages of newspapers. For instance in this case the Evangelical Church of West Africa (ECWA) was demanding *"full compensation for what it described as losses it suffered from the recent Jos crisis",* according to the report. It came at a time several others, including individuals had incurred losses and peace was yet to fully return to the city. Here also, we see the use of both 'topics', 'hyperboles' and 'local meanings' in the report. There was also a report, the following day, in which a powerful body, Academic Staff Union of University (ASUU*) "came down hard on the political class for allegedly sponsoring the recent post council poll violence in Jos*." The importance of this report is that it lends support to the theory that such violence are the handiwork of invisible hands at the top, manipulating the idle, unemployed youths to achieve their objectives. Another report was the one in which some Nigerians in the Diaspora condemned what they called *"the cowardly, mindless and unprovoked attacks on unsuspecting and defenceless citizens"* by those the group said were the *"elements of the Muslim Hausa-Fulani Community."* This appears stereotyping and demonising one side in the conflict but published without any reaction from the accused to give a picture of

balance. And, there is the use of local meanings to polarise, and rhetoric and language to undermine (litotes).

On December 18, 2008 *THISDAY* published a story saying that a delegation sent to Jos by the wife of the president had disrespected the office of the governor of Plateau State when they visited the latter's territory without even paying him a courtesy visit. The report with the title 'Turai's Delegation Visits Jos, Shuns Jang' made it look like it had been planned in such a way that the governor would be humiliated and there are two issues one could deduce from the story: first, there's the use of topics in the headline and the story to draw sympathy for the 'bullied' or disrespected governor; and, second, the story seems to apply further polarisation and painting a picture of the victimised and victimiser (refer to Fairclough's (1995) representation, identities and relations).

The Human Rights Watch (HRW) report published by *THISDAY* is the highlight of the reportage on December 21, 2008, as it (HRW) claimed it had documented evidence showing those behind the killings during the clashes between Muslims and Christians in Jos between November 28 and 29, 2008. In the report the HRW called on the government to investigate and prosecute those behind "the killings, mostly of young Muslim men and from the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group." Despite a headline 'Jos Mayhem: Rights Group Alleges Arbitrary Killings' that seems cautious the reporter did not balance the story by speaking either to the police or government officials or someone in a position to react on the side of those against whom the allegation was made. In a different report on the same day, however, the governor of Plateau state, David Jang, was quoted by the paper describing the violence as 'madness' that should not have occurred in an age of civilisation if only previous governments in the state had implemented past reports/recommendations on similar crises.

Another story nearly as important as the HRW report was the one in which foreign mercenaries were said to have been apprehended fighting on the side of a party in the crisis. The story '50 Foreign Nationals Arrested over Jos Riot' looks, like most other ones, one-sided and unchecked. The governor stated in the report that *"foreign nationals were caught in Nigerian military and police uniforms, and were armed with guns."* This further suggests both polarising and hyperbolising, like the use of mercenaries by 'them' to overwhelm 'us' and escalate the conflict.

4.4.2   Indifference/lack of concern

While the state government was apportioning blames and ordering police and military personnel to *"shoot-on-sight anybody fomenting crisis or defying the curfew"* it imposed, government at the centre was mute. Again Plateau State Government (PLSG) was accused of gross insensitivity for releasing results of the disputed elections. Opposition Action Congress (AC) National Publicity Secretary Dr Lai Mohammed argued the PLSG decision was a show of sickening thoughtlessness given that even the disputed result in Jos was released amidst serious violence and huge loss of lives and destruction of property. In *THISDAY*'s publication of December 1, 2008 there was a banner headline 'Pope Condemns Jos Violence' and bullet point 'Sultan sues for peace'. The significance of the report is that it highlights the condemnation of the crisis in strong terms by prominent religious leaders, Pope Benedict XVI and Sultan Muhammadu Sa'ad Abubakar III, representing both religions. This was a bold attempt to balance the story as political leaders, Senator David Mark, a Christian, and Hon. Dimeji Bankole, a Muslim, were also quoted asking the warring parties to sheath their swords. However, there was still no strong reaction from the presidency.

THISDAY's report on December 2, 2008 was a complete deviation from previous reports of the crisis. For example one of the reports was a news story titled: 'Jos Crisis: Opposition Asks Jang to resign', and a bullet point 'Yar'Adua stops governor's move to inaugurate new LG executives'. In the story opposition parties were unusually given enough space to criticise the handling of the violence by PLSG. However, the President, who appeared mute all along, came out in this report stopping Governor Jang's plan to inaugurate the Local Government Chairmen including the one whose election sparked the crisis. President Umaru Yar'Adua was said to have been angered by Governor Jang's *"insensitivity as to contemplate inaugurating the councils in the face of the crisis and with the tension yet to die down."* There was, however, no attempt to speak to PLSG or FG to ascertain the veracity of the story. In the same story it reported the Minister of Youth Development, Senator Akinlabi Olasunkanmi condemning the killing of three corps member while not saying a word about other victims, like the teenage pupils who died when they were attacked in school. It quoted the minister saying *"If anything, a corps member epitomises a united Nigeria and deserves the protection and support of all at all times."* The main observation here is polarisation and the use of language to undermine the effort of the governor and then the attempt to make the case of slain youth corps member more important might be seen to create a division of 'us' and 'them' since all the corps members were from the South.

The next day *THISDAY* attempted correcting its one-sided story of the previous day as it reported that Gov Jang had addressed newsmen to deny he planned swearing-in the LG bosses. In the same report the paper quoted HRW stating that the crisis was fuelled by the state govt's discriminatory policies against settler communities as opposed to the provision

of the country's constitution. *"These discriminatory policies relegate millions of Nigerian to the status of second-class citizens and fuel the flames of ethnic and religious violence,"* HRW Africa Director, Georgette Gagnon, stated in the report. The impact of this HRW statement is immense in indicting the state government and suggests the use of context, as suggested by van Dijk (2001), or setting to give the allegation some weight. *THISDAY* columnist Kayode Komolafe appears to lend support to the indictment as he accused the governor of insensitivity in an article 'Jos Again?' Another *THISDAY* columnist, Yusuph Olaniyonu, blamed both Governor Jang and the Nigerian government for allowing the 'sponsors' and 'foot-soldiers' in the crisis to go unpunished and, therefore, giving them the incentive to continue to *"perpetrate this evil act because each time they strike, there is seldom repercussion."*

Simon Kolawole, a *THISDAY* columnist, wrote on December 7, 2008 also blaming the Nigerian state for all that happened on the Plateau. The headline 'Nigeria Fails Us...Yet Again' clearly speaks for itself in this regard. Further in the article he explained that the crisis was an accident waiting to happen. He stated:

> *I covered the 2003 general elections in Plateau State. I toured Jos North while voting was in progress. What I saw and learnt was scary. The atmosphere was polluted with tension...I realised a weapon of mass destruction had been firmly planted in Jos North for decades.*

He went on to explain how the 'us' and 'them' divide was a ticking bomb waiting to implode, while no one did anything pragmatic to stop it from happening or prevent its escalation after it occurred. *"In summary"*, he wrote, *"...therefore, we had a potential Armageddon in our hands in Jos but pretended it was not there."*

4.4.3   Pessimism/Exaggeration

In *THISDAY*'s publication of November 29, 2008 Governor Jang's response to the crisis depicts a show of more force than necessary in containing the violence. For instance, the paper quoted the governor's broadcast in which he said *"the security details are under instruction to return fire-for-fire"* to those he had earlier in the speech branded thugs who had taken the law into their own hand and therefore deserving of the sternest response from the state (use of hyperbole, local meanings). This trend continued as *THISDAY*'s report the next day, despite mentioning 350 lives in the headline, opened the story with an order from the governor to security personnel to open fire on anyone found either causing trouble or disobeying the 'dusk to dawn curfew' he had imposed.

Another report under this category was the one of December 12, 2008 titled 'Jos Crisis: Opposition Asks Jang to Resign'. The suggestion, coming from politicians, could be seen as an attempt by politicians to use people's misfortunes to outsmart each other and score political goals. Another report that could be seen as an exaggeration was 'Jos Crisis: Yar'Adua Shuns Jang' which sounds like a sympathetic story in favour of the governor who had been unfairly treated by the president. *"President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua may have stylishly shunned Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang as he refused to grant the governor audience yesterday,"* wrote the paper. It suggests both the use of topics, to draw attention and create relevance, and local meanings, to polarise the crisis, while painting a picture of an incompetent governor.

An analysis by a *THISDAY* correspondent in Jos also attracts one's attention owing to the choice of words in the headline. It was titled 'How the Plateau Became a Tinderbox of Ethno-Religious Strife'. Particularly, the use of the word 'tinderbox' appears to portray the

people as prone to violence, based on a sort of passion or nature, and potentially dangerous. It does not take into cognisance the peculiar situations provoking the violence and the fact that the people had lived in peace together for many years. Another story with similar traits is one by the same author titled 'As Peace Elopes From the Plateau', which seems to give no hope especially when some sentences in the article are considered. For example the author stated:

> *There is also mass relocation as a result of the crisis. The few Christians who narrowly escaped death in Muslim-dominated areas had begun to relocate for fear of either another outburst or some silent attack at night. They would prefer to live among people of similar faith. The Muslims who dared to live among the Christian indigenes too needed not be told that it's high time for them to begin to relocate.*

The writer concluded the article with cynicism writing that:

> *One would wonder if Jos can ever know the peace it had paraded in the past. There is certainly a sharp contrast from (sic) the Jos that was a home of peace and tourism and the Jos of today.*

In an article on December 8, 2008 published by the newspaper, the author described the violence as *"premeditated carnage skilfully planned and neatly executed...probably to propitiate blood thirsty deity."* There was also an opinion article by a contributor from outside titled 'No doubt NYSC is a Waste', in which the writer blamed the FG and called for the restructuring of NYSC[33] to prevent further incidents like the one in which the three corps

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[33] NYSC has been explained in Chapter One. Also refer to http://www.nysc.gov.ng/history.php to read more about it. Accessed 4 June 2011.

members were killed. There was another article 'Stemming the Tide of Bestiality' from an outside contributor in which the author compared people to animals (use of label or enemy image).

4.4.4   Satire/use of labels/ rhetoric

Despite mentioning that dozens of lives had been lost in the violence *THISDAY*'s report said it was *"owing to skirmishes"* as if downplaying its seriousness through litotes. In the same report the word was used twice, suggesting the reporter's choice of word was deliberate. After reporting that the death toll was approaching 400 *THISDAY*'s report of November 30, 2008 quoted Governor Jang saying his *"government was on top of the situation*." These two do not appear to reconcile, rising number of death and a claim that situation was under control. Also in another report on December 02, 2008 the paper stated that the crisis was provoked when *"hundreds of youths from a particular party in the state took to the streets to protest an alleged attempt to rig the election in the local government."* This appears stereotypical as the paper relied on certain claims and unverified information.

In *THISDAY*'s report of December 3, 2008 there was what looks like the use of slant or interpretation that may not be exactly correct as the reporter wrote *"President Umaru Musa Ya'Adua may have stylishly shunned Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang as he refused to grant him audience yesterday."* It was in this report that the newspaper first used the word "settler" to label the Hausa who are Nigerians that originate from other parts of the country but residing in Plateau State. In an article on the same day columnist Kayode Komolafe used the words "indigenes" and "settlers" in quote to show his resentment for such labelling. Yusuph Olaniyonu, another *THISDAY* columnist, used the word 'local terrorists' to describe the perpetrators of the violence in Jos and compared them to those

behind the Mumbai attacks in India – perhaps, use of topics, hyperbole and local meaning to exaggerate and create a negative impression.

In an article by *THISDAY*'s correspondent in Jos titled 'How the Plateau Became a Tinderbox of Ethno-Religious strife' words that are capable of stereotyping and creating negative frames of the other were used at least 20 times, for example settlers, indigenes. In another article by the same correspondent the next day there was the use of similar pattern of reportage and labelling. Labels were used at least 12 times to describe both sides in the conflict. In a commentary by *THISDAY* on the same day, although a background was established using phrases like *"predominantly Christian Berom indigenes"* and *"Muslim Hausa-Fulani settlers"* the rationale for using such divisive labels was questioned by the paper as it wrote *"...should our politics still be defined in terms of indigene/non-indigene dichotomy?"* Simon Kolawole, another columnist with the paper, analysed the context in which labels are used and the wider implications of such use as well as its role in the conflict on the Plateau. The columnist identified other labels linked to such stereotyping like 'hosts' in reference to 'indigenes' and 'expansionists' in reference to 'settlers' and in the wider Nigerian context the 'majorities' and 'minorities'. He blamed the Nigerian state for failing to protect its citizens and for allowing the use of such sentiments to polarise the country.

4.4.5 Peacebuilding/conciliatory effort

It seems to this researcher that *THISDAY* columnists did not just apportion blame or offer criticisms but also tried to proffer solutions to the problems. All this is shown in Kayode Komolafe, Simon Kolawole and Yusuph Olaniyonu's articles. Komolafe, in his 'Jos Again?' looked at the problem from the failure of the leadership and security apparatus to foresee the problem with the precarious nature of Jos, in particular, and Plateau State, in general.

For instance, he wrote: *"The governor ought to have been more sensitive at this period of the crisis. The action of Jang...smacks of unpardonable indiscretion."* As a way forward the writer suggested tracing the root of the problem, penalising anyone indicted and removing incentives for similar crises in the future like poverty and unemployment.

On his part Yusuph Olaniyonu in his 'The Tragedy of Jos' similarly blamed the government and security failure for the crisis. He called for the institution of *"High powered enquiry"* to determine what happened and that those that played one role or the other should be exposed and appropriately punished and to find a permanent solution in order to prevent reoccurrence. However, the one that stood out was the article titled 'Nigeria Fails Us...Yet Again' by Simon Kalowole. From the onset the writer, although a Christian, refused to align himself with any side and repeatedly blamed politicians for using religion as a weapon to set the suffering masses against each other. He also refused to see it as an isolated problem in Northern Nigeria but drew examples from other parts of the country where such ugly happenings had occurred or could occur. He was also objective and pragmatic in proffering solutions. The headline itself is a positive use of van Dijk's topics and macropropositions to put a clear meaning and weight to his message.

Apart from articles there were news reports focusing on calls for peace particularly by some religious groups and political and religious leaders. There were, thus, headlines like 'Jos: Senate Demands Past Inquiry Reports', 'Senators Speak on Solutions to Jos Riots', 'Leadership Tussle responsible for Jos Crises', 'Group Seeks end to Sectarian crises', 'Presbyterian Church condemns Jos Violence', 'NASFAT Frowns at Jos Riots', 'Cleric Tasks Nigerians on Peace', 'Clerk, Daniel, NACOMYO condemn Jos Mayhem', 'Aliyu: Crisis Hinders North's Dev', 'NIPR, Youth Parliament Flay Jos Killings', 'Plateau: Aliero Faults Calls For

Emergency', 'Jos Violence: ASUU Seeks Prosecution of Sponsors', 'Nigerians in Diaspora Task

Yar'Adua over Jos', 'Hunger, Poverty Cause of Jos Crisis', etc. The irony in some of these

headlines is that they are misleading as the stories inside are anything but a call for peace.

4.5   CDA ANALYSIS OF DAILY TRUST NEWS REPORTS AND ARTICLES

Here also news reports, editorials, articles, opinions and letters published by *Daily Trust*

newspapers will be analysed under five themes. The themes are: aggravation/finger

pointing;   indifference/lack   of   concern;   satire/use   of   labels/rhetoric;

pessimism/exaggeration; and peacebuilding/conciliation:

4.5.1   Aggravation/finger pointing

The Trust publication on November 29, 2008 was a *Weekly Trust* cover story running

through a number of pages including the front page and consisting of news story/analysis

and interviews. The story focused on how the crisis started following suspicion that the

results were about to be manipulated by the Plateau State Independent Electoral

Commission (PLASIEC) to hand victory to a candidate despite what the paper claimed was an

"unassailable lead" by another candidate. It also mentioned attacks on places of worship

and schools, categorically naming Al Bayan Islamic School as one of the damaged properties.

The report also examined Plateau State Governor David Jonah Jang's broadcast in which he

said he had kept his promise of a free and fair Local Government Council election and the

trouble was started by *"disgruntled elements testing the will of the administration"*. It said

that the governor claimed the riot started at Ali Kazaure and that police had been ordered

to *"return fire-for-fire".* It also reported conflicting number of casualties ranging from three

and four (official or government account) to 100 (eye witness). The report also quoted

Reuters, which put the number at 20, based on figures they obtained from a Red Cross

official. In the report the newspaper quoted a ruling PDP official saying it was too early to ascertain the number of casualty on their side. But one thing about the report is that it appears presumptive and judgmental in line with van Dijk's (2001) local meanings. And there is suggestion of the use of labelling by the governor, 'disgruntled elements' to describe the protesters and the use of excessive force following the governor's shoot-on-sight order to security personnel. The newspaper also featured two interviews, one with Plateau State Information Commission Nuhu Gagara and the other with ANPP Secretary General in the state, Muhammed Ahmed Nazif; an attempt to strike a balance and give each side a chance to be heard. But each of the interviewees tried to defend their side and to portray the other as the culprit by appealing to certain sentiments. Again, this shows the use of local meanings, polarisation, and litotes by the interviewees to undermine the other, using the paper as a platform (context).

The next day *Sunday Trust* made a follow-up to the previous day's reports with a bold headline 'Death Toll Hits 400' (kicker) and 'FG deploys more troops', 'Gov Jang declares 24-hour curfew', 'Security alerts in Kano, Katsina and Kaduna', and 'Sultan, Gowon call for restraint' (riders). Like *Weekly Trust, Sunday Trust* devoted its front page and a number of inside pages to reporting the crisis. It began with an assessment of casualties and quoted its correspondent in Jos saying he counted nearly 400 corpses with bullet wounds, suggesting they were shot dead by security probably trying to contain the situation but excessively used force. It also quoted *Radio France International* (RFI) correspondent corroborating the claim in a report by *Agence France Presse* (AFP). The *RFI* correspondent said: *"I was at the Central Mosque this afternoon and counted 378 dead bodies but just as I was about to leave, more bodies were brought in."* What was significant about this report is that it does not only suggest that most of the victims were Muslims but it also, by saying the corpses were put in

the Mosque without elaborating or explaining why, gives the impression that there was an attack on the Mosque leading to the deaths. The implication takes us back to van Dijk's (2001) earlier warning that the use of topics and local meanings, as seen here, could leave an impression on the minds of the recipients with grave consequences. The newspaper quoted the country's Inspector General of Police Mike Okiro claiming the situation was 'overwhelming' for his men, therefore they needed the help of the military suggesting it was like war. This was exaggeration/overreaction or hyperbole that had found the media a willing medium to transmit or give the impression that there was a war-like situation warranting a much tougher handling.

There was also a report that the Chief of Army Staff of the country was sending an envoy to assess the situation, so as to deploy troops; further confirming or supporting the police chief's claim that they had been 'overwhelmed'. *Sunday Trust* also had in its report the Chief Imam of Jos (Muslim leader) confirming death toll (of Muslims) and a Christian clergy saying the streets were littered with dead bodies (but did not say whether they were Christian corpses). All these paint a picture of a very grave situation, capable of creating tension in other parts of the country and the active use of topics and macropropositions, local meanings and hyperboles. For example, a report titled 'Victims recount ordeal in the mayhem' was a particular story that's very likely to provoke reaction or even violence elsewhere. In the story the newspaper stated:

One of the most pronounced of the victims of the violence...one Alhaji Muhammadu Mai Gwanjo and 20 members of his family, who were said to have been burnt to death inside their house at Rikkos, Jos.

In separate interviews with Muslim political or community leaders the common trend in the newspapers was the purported gang up against Muslims/Hausa/Fulani by the

Christian/Berom. In one of the interviews the interviewee said the crisis was a *"deliberate and coordinated plan to massacre, maim and destroy the Hausa community",* while in the second interview with an MP he said *"every Muslim had been sacked from Tudun Wada"* (an outskirt settlement where Christians are in majority). In both interviews there is the use of hyperbole (to exaggerate) and local meanings (to polarise) and at least one of the reporters exhibited professional naivety by asking leading questions like *"Does it mean that rather than bringing the situation under control, the police are making things difficult?"* In order to demonstrate neutrality he should have simply asked: "What were the roles played by the police in containing the situation?" Or, if it's a follow up question to clarify a previous answer the reporter should have asked *"How were the police making things difficult?"*

Daily Trust reportage of the crisis the following day was further devotion of a number of pages including two front page lead stories: 'Jos mayhem: FG deploys more troops' and '426 victims get mass burial', both capable of sending the wrong signal to readers elsewhere. *Daily Trust* also published an opinion article from outside tracing the violence to an attempt to implement a tribal agenda. The author used words like 'carnage', 'anarchy', 'explode' and 're-ignite' to stress his points, again painting a war situation. There was also an eyewitness account of a Christian man describing how Muslim youths attacked Churches, killed four pastors and how Christians decided to go for their own pound of flesh. *Trust* also featured stories on Al Bayan School, where five pupils were killed in attacks, and the destruction of 1000 cars in a car sale company owned by a Hausa/Muslim man.

The next day reports followed similar trend with the paper writing a front page comment in which it condemned in strong terms the violence using words like 'carnage', 'ignoble', 'condemnable', 'regrettable', 'callous' etc to describe it and its handling, finally blaming Governor Jang and PLASIEC. On December 3, 2008 Mohammed Haruna (a columnist

with *Daily Trust*) wrote an eloquent article, in which he traced the whole crisis to Governor Jang and his attempt to impose a Berom ethnic agenda and to dislodge the enterprising and economically better placed Hausa/Fulani. He also called it a massacre and blamed the Southern media for looking the other way. For instance he wrote: *"However...we cannot hope to end the ethnic and religious bigotry that has bedevilled our politics if our media persist in telling only one side of a story."* Haruna appears in this article one-sided by using topics, local meanings, hyperboles and contexts.

Just like Mohammed Haruna's piece the *Trust* newspapers published three more heavily pro-Hausa/Muslim articles titled 'Jos and Epidemic Insanity (I)' by Adamu Adamu, *Dear "son of the soil"* by Bala Muhammad and another by Dr Kabiru Mato (all of them Muslim). None of them thought there was any serious fault with their side and how it contributed to the crisis. For example Adamu wrote:

> *Jang's plan for genocide, reportedly hatched several months ago, had recognisable steps. First, Jang shelved and cancelled the March 2008 election that Aminu Baba, the All Nigeria People's Party candidate, supported by the Hausa-Fulani majority, was on his way to winning by a landslide...And as if to prove it again, at the rerun of the election on November 27, the same Aminu Baba won with a wide margin of more than 30,000 votes; but as arranged, Jang had Baba's opponent, Mr Timothy G Buba, declared the winner.*

The columnist, however, made it clear in the article that the entire Berom people should not be blamed for the sin of a few, stating that:

The culprits are not even the Berom people that most people will blanket-condemn...The real culprit is David Jonah Jang and his gang and unless they are tried and punished the dust raised will never settle.

Weekly Trust of December 6, 2008 had a number of mixed reports – some were really provocative, while some were quite heart-touching human interest stories. There were headlines like 'Dear son of the soil' by Bala Muhammad, 'Jos: Inside story of a tragedy', 'Hausas are settlers in Jos', 'Blood on the Plateau: A timeline of carnage', 'The failures of Jonah Jang' by an academic and *Trust* columnist Dr Kabiru Mato and so on. 'Dear son of the soil' and 'The failures of Jonah Jang' are articles written by in-house columnists and those of Hausa background and were naturally seen to be biased. For instance Bala Muhammad seems, in 'Dear son of the soil', more furious over the death of Hausa than other victims. Muhammad stated:

What happened last week in Jos is beyond belief and beyond coincidence. The Federal Government as well as the security agencies have no excuse to have allowed it happen. They are all culpable. Of homicide. Punishable by death. The same death visited on the 'settlers'.

The writer also kept using words and phrases like 'settlers' and 'son of the soil' with inverted comas at the beginning and end of each, suggesting either ridicule or disbelief. Muhammad appears also one-sided and views the situation from the perspective of indigene-settler hate, with the indigene being the culprit and the settler the victim. On their part Dr Kabiru Mato did not use as many labels or as much satire as Bala Muhammad, albeit the writer sounds also furious at Governor Jang and his Berom tribe as the following suggests:

...indeed a lot of Josites did nurse the fear that the possible election of Jang was dangerous to the peaceful co-existence of the peoples in the state especially in Jos North an area, whether Jang or any other Berom pseudo-nationalist likes it or not, inhabited by the so-called settlers more than those who claim to be indigenes.

Weekly Trust's interview with Dan Manjang, Special Assistant on media matters to the Governor of Plateau State sounds equally provocative. For instance, in the headline phrased by *Daily Trust* 'Hausas are settlers in Jos' attributed to Manjang, it would be assumed by readers that Manjang, despite all that happened, is adamant and unsympathetic. Yet he did not phrase the headline, the newspaper did. But in the interview text, itself, there is a part in which he made such statement and possibly the headline was taken from that part. For instance he was quoted thus: *"...I cannot go to Lagos, Katsina or even Bauchi and then say the fact that my forefathers have been there for 1000 years means I am an indigene of that state...the Hausa community in Jos are non-indigenes."* Again, this is capable of deepening the cleavages. The newspaper, however, did what looks like a more balanced approach in its 'Jos: Inside story of a tragedy' in which it covered experiences of people from both sides. It had a Muslim boy of 12, recounting his experience in the hands of what was suspected to be a Christian mob; there was also the story of a Christian woman whose home was invaded by rioters and how she narrowly escaped. The highpoint of this story, which was downplayed and buried down in the report, is the role played by neighbours, both Christian and Muslim, in saving their distressed neighbours from death.

The *Sunday Trust* of December 7, 2008 had in it two reports on the case of the slain Youth Corp members from the South whose corpses had been returned to their families for

burial. The first report 'Jos Riot: Wailing as Oyo NYSC takes delivery of dead bodies' and the second 'Jos killings: God will revenge, Anglican cleric declares as slain youth corper is buried'. Both of those are good human interest stories in spite of the lack of enough reporting of the other side's plight by the *Daily/Weekly/Sunday Trust* papers. *Daily Trust* of December 19, 2008 published a human interest story 'Jos refugees want their children to sit WEAC, NECO', in which those living in camps requested that their children be allowed to sit the yearly exams for pupils in their last year in the High School. This story was reported during the wife of the president's delegation visit to the camp. But the contradiction is that while *THISDAY* only reported that the delegation shunned Governor Jang it did not have this angle of the story. And in the case of the *Daily Trust* it was silent on the issue of shunning Jang and reported that it was Mrs Turai Yar'adua that visited not her representative.

Like the previous week the temperament in the newspaper house could be measured by the number of articles by its columnists and the tone in each, thereby portraying van Dijk's (2001) 'subtle' formal structures. There were write-ups that included: Bark Byte by Garba Deen Mohammed titled 'Plateau Genocide: It will happen again, unless…'; Issa Aremu's 'Jos crisis or crisis of governance'; Adamu Adamu's 'Jos and Epidemic Insanity (ii)'; Muhammed Al-Ghazali's 'Dreams of our Plateau'; Mohammed Haruna's 'Still on the media and the genocide in Jos'; 'Jos killings: Failure of politics and leadership' by Is'haq Modibbo Kawu; and Adamu's concluding part of 'Jos and Epidemic Insanity'. A common ground for all of these apart from their overwhelming leaning to one side is that every one of them is an eloquent and highly influential writer. Each of the headlines seems quite suggestive of the writer's point of view in the article. Here too, there is the use of topics (suggestive headlines), local meanings (polarisation), subtle formal structures (rhetoric and

tone) and hyperboles (emphasis). Of the seven headlines only 'Dreams of our Plateau'
appears moderate, although it strikes one like another show of artistic use of satire or
metaphor to undermine the other. For example, the author wrote:

And last weekend when the gory details of the wholesale genocide in Jos

began to filter in I found myself dream that what I saw and heard were simply

not true. I found it hard to believe that even in this internet age cavemen could

still be in charge in the government house in Jos scene of the atrocities.

One other thing is that for the first time Bala Muhammed explained their use of
Hausa to denote all non-Berom, non-Southern victims. According to him: *"The very sad fact*
about the Jos crisis is that Hausa in Jos means Hausa, Fulani, Kanuri, Nupe and all other
Muslim types. In fact in a crisis like this Christian Hausa – by association also become victim."
Another very relevant piece was a rejoinder to Mohammed Haruna's article in the *Daily*
Trust of December 19, 2008, in which a veteran journalist Jonathan Ishaku took on him. In
the article 'Re: The media and the genocide in Jos' Ishaku appears to show similar venom as
he attacked Haruna and even accused him of being a 'religious jingoist'. He said Haruna
published, during the Kafanchan religious crisis of 1987, an *"incendiary advertorial by a so-*
called Council of Ulama calling on Muslims all over the world to take up arms" against
Christians.

Like *THISDAY, Daily Trust* published on December 20, 2008 a report by the US-based
HRW in which it said it interviewed eyewitnesses in Jos and established 133 cases of extra-
judicial killings in which all but two of the victims were from one tribe, mainly
Muslim/Hausa. It said the killings followed the governor's shoot-on-sight order to security
personnel. Unlike *THISDAY,* it was *Daily Trust*'s lead story and entitled 'Police killed 90

youths in summary executions'. It was tied to a story in which the police headquarters had ordered mass redeployment of its staff from Jos.

4.5.2 Indifference/lack of concern

Daily Trust's story 'Yar'adua refuses to see Jang' of December 3, 2008 - a reference to the president's fury over the governor's attempt to inaugurate council officials at the wrong time - has two implications; that the president did not take the governor seriously due, perhaps, to his show of 'insensitivity' and poor handling of the crisis, and further backlash over the governor's lack of concern which the paper uses to ridicule him. Another story is 'FG ignored my warning over Jos' in which a former police chief was quoted saying he'd previously advised the Federal Government to do something to prevent crisis from erupting on the Plateau but it refused. Again, the story exposes government's lack of concern over the plight of the people.

In another story on December 22, 2008, the paper reported that the governor was planning to swear in the elected LG bosses despite previous warning from the president and the fact that the situation was still unstable. Although the newspaper claimed no official of the state was ready to be quoted in the report, it said one of the elected officials told them they had been invited to be sworn in. There is a sort of show of lukewarm on the part of the governor and journalistic carelessness on the part of the paper since it said the story was a speculation and no single source could be openly identified. There was a response to this report the following day as PLSG refuted claims it planned inaugurating the elected chairmen. The paper quoted an official of the state saying it would amount to insensitivity to do so, given the mood in the state. This suggests *Daily Trust* probably worked on

speculation when it published the previous report. This also shows the use of local meanings.

4.5.3   Satire/use of labels/rhetoric

The most prominent issue on this day, December 2, 2008, as reported by *Daily Trust* was how the president stopped the inauguration of LG bosses. The headline 'Yar'adua orders Jang: Don't swear in Jos LG boss' employed both topics and macropropositions and metaphor to give weight to the story and ridicule the governor, as if saying *"He was ordered like a small boy by his boss*." The story stated:

> *Attempts by Plateau State Governor Jonah Jang to hurriedly inaugurate the*
>
> *state's new local government council chairmen whose elections sparked off an*
>
> *orgy of violence in which 500 people died in Jos were yesterday halted by*
>
> *President Umaru Yar'Adua...*

Another headline by *Daily Trust* titled 'How crisis began, by two sides' was either deliberately so improperly coined or it was the job of inexperienced or careless reporter and reviewing editor(s). Reading through the story one would find Gov Jang and one of his commissioners contradicting each other on the genesis and causes of the crisis. In his article of December 6, 2008, Bala Muhammad, wrote in the *Weekly Trust* using satiric words like 'son of the soil'. In fact the headline 'Dear son of the soil', with the son of the soil written in between inverted comas suggests ridicule. Again, being an eloquent writer the columnist employed words that could be described as labels either in mockery of the other or in mockery of how the other group perceives his people, like son of the soil, settler, indigenes and others. Dr Kabiru Mato in his *Weekly Trust* column of December 6, 2008, like Muhammad, employed the use of labels, perhaps in mockery of the other. For instance he

used the phrase 'pseudo-nationalists' to describe the Berom, but unlike Muhammad refrained from continuously using words like 'indigene', 'settler'. *Daily Trust* of December 19, 2008 had in it Jonathan Ishaku's rejoinder to Mohammed Haruna's 'The Media and the genocide in Jos' in which he used labels like 'irredentist' and 'religious jingoist' to describe Mohammed Haruna. For example he said: *"What a self-righteous pontification from a man who has made a life-time career as a religious jingoist!"*

4.5.4   Pessimism/exaggeration

Just as *THISDAY* reported *Daily Trust* had a report in which it quoted the Gov of Niger State Dr Babangida Aliyu saying *"Jos could soon become a ghost town"*. Although he sounded quite pessimistic and was probably exaggerating (use of hyperbole), the reality on ground was that people were getting fed up with incessant instability and might look elsewhere for peace and safety, especially people from other places.

Another story in which the paper might be seen to have gone a bit too far was the one titled 'Yar'Adua refuses to see Jang', which began thus: *"Gov David Jang of the crisis-torn Plateau State got an unusual taste of President Umar Yar'Adua's anger when he arrived at the State House, Abuja, yesterday to brief the president..."* The story appears biased and presumptive because of its claim to a source that was not named. Even the headline suggests bias against the governor and an opportunity to ridicule him after he had been shunned. Apart from stereotyping the story of December 6, 2008 by the newspaper appears to further complicate the problem by incensing tempers. It was titled 'Hausas are settlers in Jos' and credited to one of the governor's aides. His claim that even if one lives in a place for one thousand years it does not make one an indigene of the place sounds exaggerated and provocative. 'The mess called Plateau council polls' was an article by *Sunday Trust*

(December 7, 2008) correspondent and it tends to be one-sided and exaggerated. Other headlines with similar undertones included: 'Blame Jang, police for Jos crisis, says MSS' – a story in which the Muslim Student Society of Nigeria accused the governor and police commissioner in Plateau State of complicity and features use of topics, local meanings and contexts. Also, the headline 'Police Killed 90 Youths in Summary Executions – Report' published on December 21, 2008 seems conclusive even though it was only a report by a neutral organisation documenting eyewitness accounts that were either accurate or inaccurate. The newspaper should have presented it as an allegation that needed to be proven.

4.5.5 Peacebuilding/conciliation

In *Weekly Trust*'s report 'Jos: Inside story of a tragedy' there were stories of lucky escapes from death by people who were saved by their neighbours. One Christian woman told of how she and her daughter were saved by a Muslim man and his in-laws. Another person, a Muslim, recounted how their neighbours for 20 years saved them from the jaws of death by keeping them in a safe hide-out until soldiers took them away to a safer place. But stories like these ones are often given less prominence compared to those likely to provoke negative reactions.

In the week beginning December 7, 2008 *Daily Trust* published a number of pro-peace reports, adverts and articles like 'Jos Mayhem' by National Council of Muslim Youth Organisations (NACOMYO), putting its weight behind calls for peace and positive use of topics and context; 'Nigerians in US set up committee on Jos crisis', which was a positive move from those abroad to contribute to the reconciliation and rehabilitation process; 'Council visits victims of Jos crisis', a visit by Plateau Council of Ulama to victims, whom they

urged to remain calm and peaceful; 'Jos crisis: We don't crave vengeance, says Yoruba Northern council', was a move towards healing and forgiveness despite their losses; and 'Sultan wants end to communal, religious crises in Nigeria', another bold effort by the clergy to ensure a move to end the violence.

4.6 DISCUSSION

This section is concerned with discussing the findings in the analysis in this chapter and relating to theories that are connected to the themes analysed. For this purpose four headlines, regional cleavages, enemy framing, misinformation and peacebuilding have been constructed through which the discussion will be presented.

4.6.1 *Regional Cleavages*

In this section two reports by each newspaper will be discussed, using the model developed by van Dijk (1985, 2001). The stories are 'Dozens Killed in Jos LG Election Riot', 'Death Toll in Jos Riot Rises to 350' (by *THISDAY*) and 'Plateau: Scores killed in council polls violence', 'Death Toll Hits 400' (by *Daily Trust's stable-mates Weekly and Sunday Trust*). All four stories were earlier discussed briefly in the analysis but will be discussed in more detail here. A common trend identified in the entire reports studied over the period chosen was the tendency by each side to promote their interests over and above the collective or national interests and public good. In order to properly understand how this developed over the period the crisis was reported it is essential to draw our attention to some meanings of news. Babalola (2002: 404) has defined news *"as any fresh thing reported in the various fields of human endeavour."* While Stephens (1988: 9) says news is *"new information about a subject of some public interest that is shared with some portion of the public, or, in short, what is on a society's mind."* The second definition brings out the issue of public interest,

which is of essence in this discussion. And Rosen (1993: 53) describes public (interest) journalism as *"a theory and a practice that recognised the overriding importance of improving public life."* Mano (2005) also sheds more light on sociological discussions about the role of journalists in either sticking to serving public interest or not. Expounding argument about their (journalists) obvious contribution in the transformation of their society Mano (2005; citing McNair 1998) posits that the journalism profession is critiqued within the sociology of journalism through two concepts: the competitive and dominance paradigms. While the competitive is linked to *"a more normative approach, an idealistic concern with how the media ought to be"* (Mano 2005: 57), he argues that the dominance paradigm is more interested in the gaps between what is and what ought to be in journalism (that is real and ideal). Although Mano (2005) posits further that both schools overlap and are combined in reality, their main argument relevant to this discourse is the enunciation that journalists are servants of public interest by the competitive paradigm, while the dominance school sees them as representing the interests of the dominant, private, selfish interests of a society divided on the basis of class, gender and ethnicity among other issues. (Mano 2005: 58). Having these perspectives on mind it is essential to return back to how news/reporting was handled in the crisis.

 As was mentioned earlier our analysis revealed how both newspapers seemed to have played into the cleavages in the society, allowing them to reflect in the news they reported during the crisis. For example *THISDAY's* first report on the crisis (November 29, 2008) was titled 'Dozens Killed in Jos LG Election Riots' and stated:

> *Dozens of people were feared dead yesterday owing to skirmishes in the Jos*
>
> *North Local Government Area of Plateau State over the result of the council*

polls widely believed to have been won by the candidate of the People's

Democratic Party (PDP), Barrister Timothy Gyang Buba.

It is instructive to note the phrase "*polls widely believed to have been won*" despite attempts by the writer to hide their immersion in the story. The phrase, based on van Dijk's (2001) model, suggests the use of both local meanings (to promote polarisation), 'subtle' formal structures, (to disguise the author's immersion), and local context, consenting to or providing a platform for propaganda, (on behalf of a party in the conflict). This is so because a party had complained of manipulation of the polls result leading to protest, and all opposition parties had corroborated the claim. But the report, by implication, had denied all this. In the same report the paper wrote that the crisis was started by supporters of the opposition All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP) because they realised "*that their candidate whom they said was leading the PDP candidate was about to be declared the looser.*" Again, apart from uninterrupted immersion in the story the reporter took side by, without an independent check, concluding who the aggressor/aggressed was. The paper mentioned an 'eyewitness account' as its source; the fact that it was a single source i.e. there was no further corroboration or police report on the allegation or reaction from the opposition party made the claim more suspect. This part of the story also appears to embed 'topics' (by drawing attention to), as well as polarisation and exaggeration (use of hyperbole).

Daily Trust (*Weekly Trust* November 29, 2008) also carried the same report but had its own version. According to the paper in its cover story titled: 'Plateau: Scores killed in council polls violence':

…trouble began at the counting centre when it became apparent that a

candidate of one of the three major parties has secured an unassailable lead.

At this point, a representative of one of the parties who thought his candidate

was losing the election announced that results from Tudun Wada ward was on

the way but others protested, saying all results were in.

Like *THISDAY, Daily Trust'*s reporter was already part of the story from their use of such phrases as 'it became apparent' and 'an unassailable lead'. They both suggest the reporter was convinced the candidate's lead was irreversible and unquestionable. Yet, they did not mention a single credible source to support their claim nor did they mention doing an independent check but merely said *"Weekly Trust gathered"*. There appears to be the use of topics and macropropositions, (suggesting manipulation of polls results), local meanings, (polarising the conflict) and local context, lending itself to being a platform for propaganda. But unlike *THISDAY's* this reporter did not attempt to veil their immersion in the story as the use of such strong words as 'apparent' and 'unassailable' arguably show. In the same cover story the paper, although they tried to balance by mentioning that both Churches (and Christians) and Mosques (and Muslims) were victims, emphatically used the example of Albayan Islamic school, which it said was attacked by rioters and many pupils affected. It is also pertinent to note that this is a Muslim school and by stressing its case the paper was both immersing itself and polarising the situation, like Muslim versus Christian.

THISDAY's story of November 30, 2008 'Death Toll in Jos Riot Rises to 350' needs to be discussed here too. The report began as follows:

The Plateau State Government has ordered security operatives comprising

men of the Nigerian Army, Air Force, and Mobile Police to 'shoot-on-sight'

anybody fomenting crisis or defying the curfew order imposed on the state

capital. The order was the government's latest response to end the riot in Jos,

which death toll, as at yesterday evening, had risen to 350.

The first thing that might come to a reader's mind is the high level of casualty i.e. death reported in the headline but missing in the opening sentence showing it was of less importance compared to the order by the government to use more brutal force to quell the riot that had cost hundreds of lives in a space of two days. The headline, itself, suggests the employment of van Dijk's (2001) topics and macropropositions to quickly summarise the content, which although downplayed (litotes) in the intro, immediately draws the attention of a reader. The state government, through its response to the crisis, seems to also hyperbolise the entire picture and overreact by such a massive use of force as if full scale war had erupted and it needed to deploy the military (the Nigerian Army and Air Force – with armoured tanks and jet fighters) and Mobile Police force to mow down the perpetrators (enemy). *THISDAY* wrote further that the state government said *"it would not sit back and watch thugs wreck (sic) more havoc on innocent citizens."* This part of report suggests both the government's attempt to polarise the crisis (local meanings, labels) by drawing a battle line between the government (on behalf of the innocent, good citizens) and the defaulters (thugs) and justify their action, suggesting the society was better off without those thugs. In another part of the report the paper stated:

> *THISDAY also gathered that security operatives yesterday intercepted about*
>
> *500 men armed with weapons on their way to Jos. THISDAY could not however*
>
> *independently verify the figure…The arrest was a sign that the warring groups*
>
> *are regrouping.*

Here again three main features of van Dijk's (2001) model appear present: local meanings (presupposition), specific linguistic realisations (use of hyperbole) and local context (promoting propaganda). The paper perhaps, by saying it gathered without disclosing an independent source (other than later mentioning the Governor's Director of Press James

Mannok, who's an interested party) consents to being used as a platform for propaganda. It also appears to help in exaggerating the situation by reporting the interception of *"about 500 men armed with weapons on their way to Jos"* although it confessed not independently verifying the figures (not the story), which implies it was sure of the veracity of the story. The use of the word "intercept" (like capture) has a military undercurrent and could exaggerate as if saying an enemy or a missile had been intercepted. It further shows a possible immersion in the story by stating, as if absolutely sure, that *"The arrest was a sign that the warring groups are regrouping."*

In the case of *Daily Trust* its story of November 30, 2008 titled 'Death Toll Hits 400' started thus:

> *At least, 400 persons, most of them yet to be identified, have been killed as the violence over local government elections in Plateau State last Thursday entered its second day yesterday.*

Although the introduction appears not to be subjective the same may not be said about later parts of the report like *"…several eyewitness reports put the figures at well more than 400 persons who were killed from gunshots,"* and *"Our correspondent…in Jos, yesterday, said, he counted* close to 400 bodies deposited at the Jos Central Mosque." In both cases, unlike the introduction, it appears that the sort of neutrality earlier demonstrated was beginning to give way to subjectivity. For instance the paper mentioned several eyewitnesses saying most of the victims were killed by gunshots without elaborating. It did not say who shot them, thus, leaving the reader to assume either the conflicting parties had access to guns with which they fought each other or one side had been armed to carry out the killings or a third party, maybe military and police officers, had in the process of trying to

control the situation used excessive force as the report by HRW of December 21, 2008 had suggested. In the other statement identified the report seems to suggest that, by claiming its reporter counted nearly 400 corpses put in the Mosque, the victims were either killed in or around the Mosque or they were all Muslim, although in the opening paragraph it had claimed most of the victims were *"yet to be identified".* This also reveals the possible attempt to draw meaning and polarise. In both quotations there appears the use of local meanings (vagueness, omission and presupposition), topics and macropropositions (drawing conclusions) and local context (acting to promote one side's interest or position). In another part of the report the paper wrote:

> *Sunday Trust gathered last night that as a result of the scale of violence, the Inspector General of Police Mike Okiro confessed to President Umaru Musa Yar'adua that his men were overwhelmed and sought the intervention of the military.*

While the above statement confirms the earlier suggestion that the situation was overpowering (very serious) it also gives credence to the argument for a robust handling warranting the deployment of the military as if it was a war situation. It, thus, appears to also hyperbolise, and by saying it gathered, the paper was omitting something and making the report questionable. Like *THISDAY* the paper mentioned that *"about 500 persons have been arrested in connection with the crisis,"* and *"some of the suspects were arrested in fake military and police uniform"*, but it contrasted *THISDAY* by saying its source was the Plateau State Commission for Justice Edward Pwajok, an executive member of the state and a likely interested party. There was no independent check. It did not, unlike *THISDAY,* mention the issue of arms allegedly found in the suspects' possession. The implications are either of the

two or both papers are either exaggerating or peddling misinformation or concealing information or aiding the achievement of all three.

Recalling our earlier definition/explanations of news/journalism it is essential to ask, based on the analysis of these two newspapers' reports, whether the qualities mentioned have been satisfied. In respect of furnishing the audience with fresh information, one might be able to say yes based on the regular updates provided. But given the issues raised it is difficult to say whether the information provided in all cases were accurate or factual, thus the test of objectivity and public interest journalism becomes suspect here. It is essential to also observe that Hallin and Mancini (2004) have argued that a feature of the media is their link to political parties or reflection of the divisions in the system. They have also asserted that *"no analyst would argue that journalism anywhere in the world is literally neutral"* (Hallin & Mancini 2004: 26). Based on the discussion in this section and, particularly, the illustrative quotes from each of the papers' reports it is deducible that the positions of both *Daily Trust*[34] and *THISDAY*[35] newspapers can be explained in terms of their links to and reflection of the cleavages in Nigeria. Each was, probably, trying to defend the region/tribe and religious faith of its proprietors and audience and, despite attempts to be balanced, the cleavages were often obvious as was analysed in the discussion. In the process little efforts were made to satisfy ethical provisions (like objectivity and public interest journalism).

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[34] *Daily Trust* has been variously mentioned in this thesis as a newspaper belonging to Northern/Muslim proprietors and based in the North, and therefore seen as defending the North and Islam.

[35] *THISDAY* is owned by a Christian from the South of Nigeria and considered protecting the interest of the South and Christians.

4.6.2   Enemy Framing

In furtherance of the argument that the media cannot be totally neutral, as advanced by Hallin & Mancini (2004) and explained in various ways by van Dijk (2001) and Fairclough (1995), there will be attempts to explain how neutrality might have been jettisoned, leading to the possible use of enemy images and stereotypes. Two articles, one each by *THISDAY,* 'How the Plateau Became a Tinderbox of Ethno-Religious Strife', and *Daily Trust,* 'Dear son of the soil', will be discussed. They had both been mentioned briefly in earlier analysis. In the meantime, the terms enemy images[36] and stereotypes[37] will be explained briefly. Enemy images consist of painting a meek picture of a rival party's *"motivations in both substantive and normative terms,"* (Alexander, Brewer & Richard 1999: 78). Also, Green (1993: 327) explains that once the enemy is constructed as an outsider, they are then imagined as devoid of humanity, more of an animal clothed in human skin. Lippmann (1922; cited in Hall 1997: 258) explains that stereotypes:

> *…get hold of the few simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped, and widely recognised characters about a person, reduce everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development to eternity.*

In order to comprehend the use of both terms in this discussion articles/reports by *THISDAY and Daily Trust* will be analysed here too, bringing out specific use of manipulation in each case using van Dijk's theory. First, *Daily Trust* columnist Bala Muhammad's 'Dear son of the soil' (*Weekly Trust* December 6, 2008) began with:

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[36] Enemy images are to be used in more detail in discussions in Chapter Seven.

[37] Stereotypes/stereotyping are also explained in detail in Chapter Seven.

Last week in Jos, as 'sons of the soil' marauded around Gangare and Dilimi

downtown on a murderous rampage, they were communicating with each

other in Hausa, the language of their victims, the 'settler'. Again, listening to

the rulers of Plateau State, speaking in almost fluent Hausa on the media, the

massive irony of it all is lost only on the most naive.

In that opening statement, including the headline, at least four of van Dijk's features could be noticed. There appears the use of topics and macropropositions (reference to marauders), local meanings (presupposition, labelling and polarising), hyperbole (marauding, murderous rampage), litotes (using stereotypes to demean) and formal structures (rhetoric, uncontrollable mood/opinion). As was earlier mentioned, it was an excellently written article in which satire was used with precision, yet the mood and tone of the author could still be noticed. The headline, itself, suggests a degree of mockery and labelling, since the 'indigenes' often used the Hausa term 'dankasa' (literarily meaning son of the soil) to refer to themselves, although it means indigenes or aborigines. So, the term was used in the piece to possibly label and mock them. The word 'marauded' must have been coined from marauder (meaning a raider, looter or an intruder - enemy images) to paint a negative picture of the 'son of the soil'. It therefore seems both degrading and hyperbolising. There was stereotyping as the entire people were presented at murderers, raiders intent on raiding and, perhaps, exterminating their victims, the Hausa. The hallmark of it all is that the article could easily polarise and leave a deep impression (negative) of the other. Following a complete analysis of the article it was realised the author used negative terms in the forms of labels/enemy images/stereotypes etc 41 times. They are as follows:

son of the soil (9), settler/settled/migrant (24), rulers (1), so-called Middle Belt (1), indigene/indigenous (6).

As for *THISDAY* the article authored by its correspondent in Jos on December 5, 2008 will be discussed in the same way here. Under the headline 'How the Plateau Became a Tinderbox of Ethno-Religious Strife' three separate quotes are considered below:

> *Mercenaries from Kebbi, Katsina, Sokoto and Niger Republic turned out in large numbers to kill citizens of the state...*

> *Over eighty houses...belonging to the Igbos and other citizens were razed down.*

> *...and members of the PDP who felt that the Hausa-Fulani had no locus standi, as they are not originally from Jos-North, and indeed not from Plateau State.*

In this case too there were the use of topics and macropropositions (mercenaries, kill citizens), local meanings (labels, not original, no locus standi), 'subtle' formal structures (uncontrollable feeling/tone), hyperbole (mercenaries in large number), litotes (not original, no locus standi) etc. The headline appears intended to create a grave picture and the use of hard enemy imaging like 'mercenaries' helps in making a success of that. There is also veiled stereotyping of people from Katsina, Sokoto and Kebbi States and neighbouring Niger Republic as they are presented as persons willing to be rented to carry out mass murder. In the same way there is polarisation as the author presented one side as the aggressor and the other the aggressed. The use of the term 'no locus standi' (Latin word) to refer to Hausa appears patronising as it is a legal term to mean having no ground or credibility or right to something. Hyperbole, it seems, is also applied in the claim that mercenaries were imported

to give a picture of an invasion or a raid, just like Bala Muhammad's use of 'marauded' in his article. On the whole the author used enemy framing, polarising or stereotyping words at least 20 times in the article. These words include indigenes/indigenous/citizens of the state (8), settlers/settlement/settle (7), migrants/migrate (1), originally (1), mercenaries (1), other Christians/other citizens (2).

Referring back to Hallin and Mancini's (2004) theory explaining the tendency of the media to be partial and reflect the divisions in their society one might be able to argue at this point, based on the few examples cited in the above discussion, that enemy framing through labels or images and stereotypes aimed at shaping attitudes as both van Dijk (2001) and Hackett (2003) have warned seems to have been used by both newspapers. And, as was previously explained, the background of the two papers might have been influential in helping to coax them into being tribal/regional propagandists and cheerleaders rather than promoting the common good or public interest. Furthermore, Green (1993) has explained the manner in which an enemy image is created, as one devoid of humanity, like an animal pretending to be human. Both writers (in *THISDAY* and *Daily Trust*) were cited trying to paint dehumanising pictures of the other for example using such terms as 'marauders' and 'mercenaries'.

4.6.3   Misinformation

In our earlier analysis there were a few occasions when certain information/news appeared to be not only one-sided but misleading. In the attempts to expound this argument further there is a need to refer to framing theory which argues that journalists acting under the influence of *"frames sponsored by multiple social actors, including corporate and political elites, advocates and social movements"* turn news stories into a forum for frame contests

wherein those actors struggle to define political issues from their own perspectives (Ryan, Carragee & Meinhofer 2001: 176). It is also essential to consider the De Vreese, et al (2001: 108) suggestion that: *"The central dimension of a frame seems to be the selection, organisation, and emphasis of certain aspects of reality, to the exclusion of others."* And, very importantly too, is the position that: *"Omission is the most powerful source of distortion"* (Davies 2009: 37). Again recalling our earlier explanation of what news and public interest journalism are, there is a need to look at how certain forms of distortions were allowed to go unchecked by both newspapers. In the light of this it is imperative to consider Davies' (2009: 51) statement that:

> *Journalism without checking is like a human body without an immune system.*
>
> *If the primary purpose of journalism is to tell the truth, then it follows that the*
>
> *primary function of journalists must be to check and to reject whatever is not*
>
> *true.*

To discuss the above assertions further *THISDAY's* report 'Turai's Delegation Visits Jos, Shuns Jang' of December 18, 2008, and *Daily Trust's* story 'Jos refugees want their children to sit for WAEC, NECO', published December 19, 2008, will be applied. The two stories were also mentioned in the analysis. First, on December 18, 2008 *THISDAY* reported the visit by a delegation of the wife of President Yar'adua to Jos to distribute relief material to victims of the crisis who were camped in refugee camps in Jos. But the paper introduced the report both in its headline and opening paragraph by suggesting the delegation had disrespected Governor David Jonah Jang of Plateau State. The headline 'Turai's Delegation Visits Jos, Shuns Jang' is catchy and suggestive on its own. It immediately draws one's attention to the plight of an embattled governor, following the violence in his state and the lack of sympathy from the federal government, now facing another humiliation from

representatives of Mrs Turai Yar'adua, wife of the president. This whole scenario, as the headlines tries to capture, seems to depict the use of local meanings to make an assumption and topics to draw attention to the main point, later put across by the opening paragraph of the report. According to the introduction:

> *A delegation of the Nigerian First Lady Hajiya Turai Yar'Adua, yesterday visited Jos, Plateau State capital to distribute relief materials to the victims of the November 28 riot, in which many lives and property were lost, and many people displaced. The delegation, however, either deliberately or otherwise refused to visit the governor of the State, David Jonah Jang.*

The above quote suggests the position of the writer (and paper) was one of sympathy to the governor, since courtesy demands that a delegation as important as the one despatched to the state by the president's wife should have paid the governor a courtesy visit. But by concluding they had refused to do so without explaining why seems to imply taking the sympathy a bit too far. The opening paragraph explains the headline clearly and summarises through topics and macropropositions the supposed intent of the report, projecting one side's view and polarising the situation. The report also stated that *"a delegation of President Umaru Musa Yar'Adua…had also shunned Jang during an earlier visit,"* further confirming what might be perceived as a well planned gang-up by the president, his wife and their representatives to disgrace the governor. There was no point in the report that any mention was made of contacting someone in a position to refute or react to the allegation before going to press. Thus, apart from the paper working on assumption to arrive at a conclusion, it appears, there was nothing else to back its report or make it look balanced or satisfy the test of credibility.

In contrast to the above story *Daily Trust's* version, 'Jos refugees want their children to sit for WAEC, NECO', published December 19, 2008, reported that the visit was by Mrs Turai Yar'adua and not by a delegation on her behalf. The report did not even mention the refusal of the delegation to pay the governor a courtesy visit. It took a different angle as it stated:

Refugees in Plateau State have appealed to the Federal and Plateau State governments to help facilitate how their children who missed the November-December WAEC and NECO exams because of the Jos crisis will sit for the exams.

This is a clearly different perspective from the one offered by *THISDAY.* Mention was made of the First Lady in next sentence that:

The refugees made the plea yesterday at the Plateau State Police Headquarters before the First Lady Hajiya Turai Yar'adua who was in Jos to distribute relief materials to the victims of recent crisis.

In this report too one might notice the subjectivity of the reporters as they tried to show as much sympathy as they could to the refugees, many of whom are from their own side. This might probably explain why they were silent on the issue of the governor's humiliation raised by *THISDAY.* But the main issue this researcher finds with this report is that it came a day later than the one published by *THISDAY* on the same event, suggesting the reporters were late in sending the story to the paper's editors in Abuja or for some reasons the story failed to make it the previous day and was eventually published two days after it happened. If the report was stale, as this researcher suspects, then the paper or

gatekeepers (editors) should have changed the date mentioned in the story (yesterday) to the correct date. The second issue is the claim that Mrs Yar'adua was in Jos herself, which contradicts the first story by *THISDAY,* making it difficult to tell which of the two stories could be trusted. While this story by *Daily Trust* also seems to play into the divisions in the conflict by its show of sympathy to one side and refusing to mention where the other had been unfairly treated, that is shunning of the governor, the two cases of misinformation cited make it difficult for it to pass the credibility test. Nonetheless, it remains quite difficult to prove which side of the story regarding who visited Jos to distribute relief material is true. One might conclude here that there might have been an attempt to peddle falsehood by either of or both papers. There might have been, as such, acts of omission, which Davies (2009) has described as the biggest form of distortion, while, in line with De Vreese, et al (2001) suggestion, there seems to have been attempts to use frame to select, organise and emphasise certain information and exclude others.

4.6.4   *Peacebuilding*

Although the issue of the transformation of the conflict to peacebuilding will be adequately dealt with in latter discussions in Chapter Seven attempts will be made here to look at how the two papers tried to provide a platform, in spite of their connections with the divisions, for some aspects of negotiation. It is pertinent to understand that in the event of war it is usually peace that becomes the first victim and truth the second (Lynch & Galtung 2010). The most practical way of dealing with the difficult experiences of and getting past any conflict is through reconciliation and healing the wounds or damage done based on the offering and acceptance of forgiveness (Staub & Bar-Tal 2003; Noor, Brown & Prentice 2008). In discussing the roles played by *THISDAY* and *Daily Trust* newspapers in the process two reports/articles by each will be discussed. These are *THISDAY's* 'Jos Again', of December

3, 2008 and 'Nigeria Fails Us…Yet Again', of December 7, 2008, as well as *Daily Trust's* (*Weekly and Sunday Trust,* respectively) publications 'Jos: Inside story of a tragedy', of December 6, 2008 and 'Jos Mayhem', of December 7, 2008.

First, *THISDAY's* publication on December 3, 2008 titled 'Jos Again', which in spite of its rather gloomy headline has suggested pragmatic solutions. The author Kayode Komolafe wrote: *"The tragic events of last week were a confirmation that the basis of the conflict is yet to be removed. It requires deft political engineering to remove the cause of the conflict."* It is particularly impressive that the writer thought that unless the problem was uprooted it would happen again. And to achieve that there was a need for a clever effort by leaders. In our previous study of the causes of violent conflicts several issues were identified, some of which might be similar to those in Jos. Komolafe's suggestion that unless they were dealt with thoroughly the problems will only temporarily disappear to resurface again is quite valid. This thorough solution will, therefore, depend on how leaders are able to skilfully, genuinely and seriously administer solutions, some of which the writer suggests as: a proper investigation into the underlying causes of the conflict; ensuring that perpetrators do not go unpunished to deter would-be trouble makers; reviewing the conduct of the troubled LG elections; and tackling the material basis of the crisis, like the rising rates of poverty and unemployment. Tackling the material causes is very essential as a major cause of organised violence is perceived inequality in the society (Bellamy, et al 2008). In the second article, 'Nigeria Fails Us…Yet Again' by Simon Kalowole, the writer argued there were plenty early warning signs of the crisis that were ignored until it happened. According to him:

You can actually worsen it when you ignore the real problems and the undercurrents. People don't just wake up one day and start butchering their neighbours if there had not been a latent factor.

The writer therefore advocated a resolution of the underlying problems by means of dialogue as he stated: *"I believe strongly in the power of negotiation and mutually-designed, mutually-agreed roadmap to peace."* Kolawole, thus, urged the government to broker reconciliation while ensuring the protection of lives and property across the country; the entrenchment of citizenship while de-emphasising 'indigeneship'; and the accommodation of *"minorities in our midst."*

In 'Jos: Inside story of a tragedy' *Weekly Trust* did a thorough investigative reporting and analysis of the crisis and even interviewed some victims on both sides. A Christian woman who was saved by a Muslim man said: *"It is high time for us to stop drawing a line between our differences and learn to respect other people."* What that woman, perhaps, meant to say was a need to de-emphasise differences and respect each other's culture, so as to promote better understanding and harmony. Another survivor, a Muslim, told of how they were saved by a neighbour, stating: *"We stayed with them until the following day when soldiers came and took us out of the area."* The second publication, 'Jos Mayhem' was, in fact, an advertisement by NACOMYO condemning the crisis while advocating a mutual resolution and bringing the culprits to justice. In the advert the group called on Muslims and youths *"to remain calm and show understanding in accordance with Islamic Injunctions as the highest Muslim leadership and Christians have shown concern and have taken up the matter."* Although appealing to Muslims and youths, the missive is clear: a call for peace. It is essential to note that all the examples cited here suggest genuine calls for the transformation of the conflict and the positive use of both topics and local context to highlight that. The whole process, that is the calls for calm and peace, lays the basis for the 'resurrection' of peace, which Lynch and Galtung (2010) say is the first victim in any war or violent conflict. It also paves the way for reconciliation and healing and a possible

transformation of the crisis, if everyone genuinely and responsibly offers and accepts apologies, as Staub and Bar-Tal (2003) and Noor, et al (2008) have suggested.

4.7   CONCLUSION

In the analysis in this chapter 160 news reports, articles, comments, opinions and letters (to the editor) published by two Nigerian newspapers from November 29 to December 26, 2008 were analysed through critical discourse analysis. From the analysis it was realised that the newspapers were linked to and promoted the divisions in the polity. In order to be able to discuss this further four headlines namely, regional cleavages, enemy framing, misinformation and peacebuilding were constructed. In the discussion that followed van Dijk's (2001) model was extensively used to analyse the use of language and various theories relating to each theme was used to guide the discussion.

It is imperative to state the following findings: (a) both newspapers differ on how they perceive and report news; (b) their links to the cleavages which polarise the country, as explained in both Hallin and Mancini's theory and Framing analysis, often determine news values and the perspectives from which they are reported; (c) the crisis escalates by feeding on the fuel provided through media propaganda even though journalists or the media might not directly have ignited the crisis; (d) journalists in both papers do not appear to think of objectivity as essential as they appear to show preference for immersion in the story; (e) editors and publishers, being part of the divisions (and perhaps agenda), allow stories to be planted and published without checking; (f) politicians are aware of the links the media have to the cleavages and exploit this weakness; and (g) although certain factors might have influenced all this, especially conformity on the part of journalists, they might be understood after the collection and analysis of field (primary, interview) data.

Against the above backdrop this researcher has also argued that the analysis serves as a sort of springboard to a comprehensive primary field research to answer some aspects of the research questions. In the next two chapters primary data obtained through semi-structured and focus group interviewing will be analysed using interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) in attempts to finds answers to unanswered questions.

CHAPTER FIVE

Analysis of Semi-Structured Interview Data and Findings

5.   INTRODUCTION

In this chapter data collected by means of semi-structured interviewing in Nigeria are analysed. In all, 16 semi-structured interviews were conducted with respondents in Jos and Abuja. Among the respondents are 5 senior reporters/correspondents (2 bureau chiefs and 3 political correspondents), 3 editors (two serving editors including a female, and one ex-editor), 2 publishers[38], 2 columnists, 2 General Managers of newspapers, 1 Human Rights activist and commentator, and 1 policy maker and commentator. They represent both religious and regional divides which are the most important yardsticks for understanding sides to which the media and their audience belong. The interview questions, as earlier discussed, were formulated following a study of the news contents of two major newspapers in the country by means of critical discourse analysis (CDA). The newspapers studied were *THISDAY* and *Daily Trust*. The analysis followed a discussion of the interview processes like places/venues, manner of interviews, duration and even transcription. The analytic process is explained, bringing out how key (superordinate) and minor (sub) themes were arrived at, based on the dictate of the data.

5.1   RESEARCH PROCESS

It is essential to explain the manner in which the interviews were conducted. The choice of Jos and Abuja was because of the importance of the two cities as places where most

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[38] Both publishers are regular columnists. One writes for their own paper, while the other, whose magazine is now defunct, writes for a couple of Northern and Southern newspapers.

mainstream media are based in Nigeria, apart from Lagos. Although Lagos was initially listed among places to visit and conduct the study but for reasons that would be explained in Chapter Eight (Limitations of the Study) the idea was eventually dropped. Nonetheless, representatives of key newspapers in Lagos were accessed and included in the study in both Jos and Abuja. In Jos six of the interviews were held and in most cases they were conducted in offices, except in the case of R7, who requested that it should take place in their home; it was both for their convenience and safety reasons and the researcher had no problem with agreeing to do so.

In the case of the other five there was only one major problem particularly with visiting R5's office in one of the riskiest parts of the city. There was a particular concern for the research assistant who would be easily identified as a stranger and he might be attacked. So the researcher went on that occasion alone and in an attire that conformed to the situation of the venue (community). And since the researcher was alone things like monitoring the recorder, which was usually taken care of by the research assistant, had to be done by him. There was also a minor issue with visiting R11's office because it was a time when they (MPs, one of whom R11 was) were at loggerheads with the state Governor and the atmosphere was charged. So, the researcher had to endure waiting and made several repeated visits before finally getting them to talk for 45 minutes. In all other cases the atmosphere was mutually conducive and interviews were quite smooth and lengthy. On all occasions (except R5's) there was a research assistant to help with monitoring recorder and other minor needs (with the consent of interviewees). At least on three occasions there was a request that research assistant should briefly leave the room while participants made important (confidential disclosures), given that they had been reassured of maximum

confidentiality. As such, on all occasions the interaction was a direct one between the researcher and the researched. The information disclosed was sensitive and important for the study. The researcher realised that as he tried to make sense of the experiences of the researched they were also trying to make sense of the role played by the researcher in the process. This, perhaps, explains the rapport established between the researcher and the researched.

In Abuja 10 interviews took place. In all cases but one they were done in offices where the researcher was alone with the interviewees, except on two occasions where they were happy to allow research assistant and one time when an interviewee requested junior colleagues to wait and observe. Interviewer did not have any problem with any of these requests, given that none of the observers tried to influence (directly though) the pace or pattern of the interview. The most difficult of the interviews was the one the researcher waited eight hours before the participant became available. The interviewee later apologised to the researcher and explained he had a very busy programme. But it was one of the most rewarding interviews and well worth the wait. The only interview conducted in a private home was the one with a former publisher; it was originally scheduled for the next day but brought forward because the participant had a new plan that took up the initially agreed time slot. It was quite convenient for the researcher as they felt there was no risk involved. It also turned out to be clearly an important interview!

In terms of duration most of the interviews lasted between 45 minutes and one hour 15 minutes; in fact, all but one (R11's) lasted one hour or longer. Since the researcher was expecting participants to relay their experiences (phenomenology) the questions were structured to kick-start the process and let them go on talking while the researcher

observed, including body language, and threw in follow-up questions where necessary. For instance, as Storey (2007: 53) suggests the researcher had to do this to *"strike a balance between ensuring that the issues specified on the interview guide/schedule are covered and allowing the participant to identify and pursue issues relevant to the research topic"* that the researcher had, somehow, omitted while compiling the guide/questions. What the researcher found really impressive was the mutual confidence that had been built with the researched from the time of first contact by telephone/email to the actual interview. This has reflected quite well in the transcript, as they spoke openly and with passion about their experiences.

Transcription had been expected to be the most difficult key stage in the entire process. But the researcher was able to bring their previous journalistic experience into play here. A strategy initially planned but failed due to the failure of transcription software/equipment was to transcribe each interview on the same day; since it was fresh in researcher's memory they had hoped to easily do it in a short space of time. But transcription was left until researcher was back in the UK in mid September, 2010 and was done usually very late at night or early in the morning to avoid any form of distraction. This hugely reduced the length of time it took to complete it; on average it took much less than the usual four hours it takes to transcribe a one-hour interview. Despite a few health issues the entire transcription was completed by late October, 2010. As will be seen in the analysis participants have been represented with the codes R1-16 (R meaning Researched) for the purpose of confidentiality.

5.2 ANALYTIC PROCESS

Following transcription of interviews data were saved in a word document for reading and analysis to commence. Like most qualitative studies the researcher was concerned with understanding and making sense of the subjective experience (phenomenology) of the researched and not necessarily wanting to impose preconceived variables or meanings (Willig 2001: 9; Storey 2007: 51). The researcher had intended interacting with the researched to effectively understand and interpret the experiences of the researched from their own points of view (Grbich 2007). During the process of initial readings the researcher tried to identify through IPA key issues in the data (like superordinate themes). Since it usually involves an iterative process of reading and re-reading a transcript in order to have a good feel of the interviews and identify such themes that would sum-up the main ideas (Storey 2007: 55) the researcher chose to trust the data to lead the way. But the researcher was also concerned about their personal experience coming in the way as they might identify with some of the emotions of the researched. Grbich (2007) has explained phenomenology as an exploratory research that avoids one's bias and the notion of bracketing, setting aside one's experience and taking a neutral view of the phenomenon to avoid a personal bias (Moustakas 1994; Husserl 1981) was considered essential here too. Based on this the researcher was able to overcome their initial reaction to some suggestions like the use of the carrot/stick tactic to cajole journalists into conformity and other factors compelling compromise that they had also experienced as a journalist. During the initial readings/analysis notes were made in the left-hand margin of the transcript sign-posting issues or questions that arose at certain points. For instance some of those appeared confusing or contradictory although they kept resonating in the views of different participants. An example was when R1 mentioned that:

All the time journalists are in a matchbox except that it is a very big matchbox

in the sense that it is not like you either toe this line or get fired. They give

them some leeway so long as their own bottom line is not threatened…in any

case there is no where you find absolute freedom. (Lines 228-233)

It was difficult understanding how someone in a matchbox, no matter how big it is, could be expected to be objective especially where there was a choice between public good and the interest (a bottom line that might be threatened) of an employer who 'pays the piper'.

With notes as sign posts the researcher returned to the transcript for further readings but this time to also make more sense of the transcript and produce themes in the right-hand margin. At this stage there was a great caution to identify relevant themes only from the data (participants' words, experience) and link to theoretical underpinnings but also ensuring there is a clear connection between the two; the data actually dictates the emergence of the themes and use of theories. Storey (2007: 55) describes the process of analysing participant's phenomenology through theoretical constructs as an analytical progression that takes the researcher a step beyond a journalistic summarisation of the interview transcript. To achieve this using IPA it was suggested in discussions on two occasions with the researcher's supervisor (after reading the transcript) that the researcher should identify some themes from the data and separately apply theories when discussing the findings resulting from the analysis of participants' experiences at a later part or section of the chapter. Again, it was meant to prevent the theories from influencing the analysis in an overt manner. Thus, the researcher identified a number of potential theories to be used and made sure the choice of such theories was dictated by the data. For instance many of the participants argued the crises were not due to religious reasons and the media took sides because they are owned or controlled by people who happen to be on either sides of

the conflict. In line with this explanation realistic conflict theory was considered a suitable theory here. It was also based on this explanation and other similar views that a conclusion was reached on the adoption of nine superordinate themes that include: public interest journalism; publisher interest; corruption in the media; economic causes of the conflict; social causes of the conflict; biased reporting and peddling of falsehood; the creation and maintenance of enemy images; attempts to fight corruption in the media; and recommendations for transformation.

The themes were eventually connected, merged and collapsed into six to avoid duplications while those that could not stand as superordinate were transformed into sub-themes. Against this background the final themes adopted are: public interest journalism; causes of the conflicts; the North/South divide; the creation and maintenance enemy images; ideal versus reality; and recommendations/peacebuilding. The next stage was the attempts to produce a summary table of themes, including illustrative quotes. Thus for the superordinate Theme One, Public interest journalism, are sub-themes that include publisher interest, corruption in the media, and conformity pressure. An example of illustrative quote: *"…one other thing that makes that difficult is your employer. As much as you try to represent public interest you get frustrated when your editor suppresses a story."*

Theme Two: Causes of the conflict. Sub-themes are: religion as a badge of convenience; economic factor; group formation; and media maintaining the conflict. An example of quotation: *"One fact about Nigeria is that even those that claim to defend ethnic or religious interest are only fighting to preserve or promote their commercial interests."* Theme Three: North/South divide, with sub-themes like regionalism, biased reporting and misinformation/ignorance. A quote cited as an example is: *"The media are taking ethnic*

lines, Northern journalists work for Northerners newspapers and Southerners work for Southern newspapers." Theme Four: The creation and maintenance of enemy images. Sub-themes include stereotyping and creation of enemy images, while illustrative quote is *"It's rare that you'll find journalists that would acknowledge if there's a wrong on the side of those they support…whereas all the time they try too often to demonise the other side."*

Theme Five: Ideal versus Reality has sub-themes like clientelism/corruption in the media and personal safety. An illustrative quote is: *"Journalists collected the money and did the bidding of the government. One thing that comes to one's mind is why should any credible journalist collect bribe to kill or downplay a story? But again we need to ask whether journalists are properly remunerated?"* And finally, Theme Six: Recommendations/Peacebuilding. Sub-themes include education, inter-group contact and open access. An illustrative quote is: *"I will advocate for cultural training for journalists and cultural exchanges so that reporters can work in different newspapers across the country and foster linkages."*

5.3 PRESENTATION OF ANALYSIS IN NARRATIVE FORMAT

A presentation of the IPA analysis of the transcript is made here in a narrative form, bringing together themes and related quotations. It is important to note that this presentation was not done in the order in which the data were recorded or transcribed but in a way to demonstrate analytic coherence, beginning with a superordinate theme, then using illustrative quotes to support each sub-theme, followed by a brief interpretation.

5.3.1   *Theme One: Public Interest Journalism*

This theme presents discussion of how the respondents perceive the news produced and retailed to consumers. And at various points they express their views about the interests that are represented at the expense of the public good:

5.3.1 .1   Publisher interest

Although there are some attempts to practice public interest journalism in Nigeria, in reality this has been difficult. Often publishers, editors and other bosses are fingered for arm-twisting reporters into doctoring reports to suit their taste or interest. A journalist, R3, reporting for a South-based newspaper argues that both newspaper proprietors and editors work in collusion and constitute a major stumbling block to public interest journalism. R3 states:

> *…one other thing that makes that difficult is your employer. As much as you try*
>
> *to represent public interest you get frustrated when your editor suppresses a*
>
> *story.*

R3's frustration is in reference to situations whereby while working for a Christian publisher any negative report against people of the same religion as the publisher is not published. It is a similar picture in most other media organisations, including those owned by Muslims, as certain interests are protected in violation of journalism ethics and to the frustration of journalists.

To buttress their point on publisher interest dictating what gets reported the reporter adds that bosses instruct reporters to write reports and leave them to choose what to do with them:

>*The management has made it clear to us to send stories the way they are and*
>
>*they decide whether or not to publish it (sic). It lies squarely with them.*

The above instruction implies that reporters or even bureau chiefs do not have the power of discretion. The probability of reports filed from bureaux to be published depends on what the reviewing editors at the head office decide. As such an important story that is considered unfavourable to their interest might end up in the trash bin.

Quite a few times the saying *"he who pays the piper dictates the tune"* was invoked by interviewees to drive home their point that publishers decide what is published or binned. R1, a former publisher and editor who is now a columnist with a number of newspapers in Nigeria recounts that on a few occasions attempts were made to censor their articles:

>*On one or two occasions a newspaper has done that – there was a time I said*
>
>*things that would put their publisher in a bad light and they edited it and I told*
>
>*them it was the last I would take it from them. Since then they have not edited*
>
>*my work.*

R1's reputation in the profession and the possibility that publishers are aware of the cost of losing a writer of R1's standing probably helped them in standing their ground successfully. Not many journalists are able to do the same. And many would rather succumb to censorship in the hope that at least their income might not be tampered with.

R2 is a publisher from Northern Nigeria. R2's newspaper is one of the most respected in the region, although it is only a few years old. The publisher explains they subscribe to internal censorship due to the sensitive nature of the environment where they publish. This seems to suggest it is not always publishers' interests that determine what is published:

It is not everything that we publish here. I don't know what happens

elsewhere. But we see others carrying such stories that we choose not to. This

is because as we publish in the North we have developed certain reflexes and

are aware of the effect of our publication.

There were crises that reports by the media were directly accused of fuelling, like the

'*THISDAY* crisis'[39] (2002). Perhaps this is one of the reasons why R2 thinks there's a need for

them to be cautious.

R6, a former female editor corroborates the above position, saying they are mindful of what

they publish in spite of their in-house guidelines:

We have editorial policies definitely; there are things we don't toy with, there

are things we don't over identify with.

R6's newspaper is perceived by non-Muslims and Southerners as too pro-Islamic and anti-

South. Its owners, although claiming to be independent of Northern politicians, are accused

of supporting 'anything' North including the controversial rotational presidency or zoning.[40]

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[39] The conflict referred to as the '*THISDAY* crisis' followed an article by *THISDAY*'s style writer, Isioma Daniel. Daniel had reportedly lived in Britain and was probably not quite aware of the sensitive nature of religion in Nigeria. In a bid to advance arguments to support the hosting of the Miss World Beauty Pageant the journalist wrote in the article that even Prophet Muhammad (SAW) would not mind taking one of the contestants as a wife. Most Muslims saw it as very derogatory and offensive. But hoodlums took advantage to unleash mayhem. The newspaper's office in Kaduna was torched and many lives were lost too.

[40] In Nigeria, Southerners widely believe they are politically dominated by the North, as 9 of the country's 15 presidents (both military and civilian) were from the North. In 1999, as a return to civil rule was discussed following nearly 20 years of military rule politicians under the aegis of the largest political party in the country, PDP, agreed the rotation of major political positions, including the office of the president between the North and the South. But following the death of a Northern president and succession by his Southern deputy, an attempt by the deputy to contest the next election was opposed by Northerners. *Daily Trust* was accused of championing this opposition because it is a Northern newspaper.

An important reason for publishers' seeming overbearing influence in deciding what is published and what is not might be their commercial interest. In explaining this, a reporter says: *"But often newspapers cast headlines to attract readers and sales."*

A Human Rights activist and stakeholder, R7 adds that some newspapers go as far as selling false stories to please their audience so as to make them part with their money:

> *It has become business in Nigeria and you only sell your paper when you fabricate a story or publish falsehood or when you blackmail and backbite.*

R7's position is in line with the respondent's experience in the Plateau conflict, where they claim stories are deliberately fabricated or exaggerated to arouse emotions.[41]

R8, who is a young bureau chief working for a North-based newspaper, suggests that there is a strong desire to fulfil financial interest while professional ethics suffer and this is a general phenomenon:

> *Every media is out to make money and often when there is a choice between attracting sales and public interest journalism what usually prevails is that urge to make money through readers.*

R8 further argues that some newspapers are founded to portray certain viewpoints:

> *…I think in the Nigerian context if you look critically at the ownership pattern you will find out that some are established to protect certain views and certain interests.*

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[41] Following the outbreak of sectarian violence in Jos, Plateau State on 17 January 2010 the then Plateau State commissioner of police was said to have addressed the press claiming that the crisis was due to an unprovoked attack on Christian worshippers by some Muslim youths in Jos. The statement was reportedly broadcast by Plateau Radio and Television (PRTV) and some newspapers without editing it. And this was said to have provoked violent reactions the next in some parts of the state leading to a high number of deaths and destruction. CP Greg Anyantin was relieved of his position as a result of this.

The pattern R8 refers to in the statement above could mean a number of things, like newspapers being regionally owned or religiously inclined.

R15, a journalist and media commentator, posits that the main problems are the media ownership pattern pitting the North against the South, and overreliance on blame game:

> *It's been difficult for newspapers in Nigeria to demonstrate a sense of public interest in their coverage largely because of the ownership structure of most of the newspapers and the dichotomy known as the Lagos-Ibadan axis press against the others. Emphasis has been placed on reporting blames, 'who killed who' and the casualty figure of the different divides rather than focusing on the value of life and emphasising on uniting both divides.*

R15 in the statement above re-echoes earlier positions that the media face undue pressure even from within.

Publisher interest could be taken a step further to vent anger on even old foes. R4, an Abuja-based journalist that has worked with both Northern and Southern newspapers recounts their experience:

> *I worked with the Punch and was once told never to write anything positive about IBB[42], and that was because there was a conflict between the Chairman of the paper and IBB and it was under IBB that the paper was shut down. So your editor doesn't allow you to write anything positive about this man even if it is the truth.*

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[42] IBB is General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida (retired) who was Nigeria's military ruler from August 1985 to August 1993. He is noted for brutal press censorship characterised by the closure of media houses, arrest and detention of journalists using military decrees to gag the press.

The issue R4 refers to above was the proscription of some newspapers, including the *Punch*, during the military regime of General Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida 1985-93. IBB, being a Northerner, was perceived as anti-South although he was more interested in protecting the interest of his junta.

On some occasions the interest of the publisher and the government may be the same and opposed to the public interest. When this happens the issue of who pays the piper dictates the tune again comes into play as this reporter, R9 suggests:

> *A colleague was recently forced to change her story headline because her reviewing editor was not comfortable with publishing something that would embarrass the government even though it is the truth.*

The above statement adds weight to earlier arguments that some newspapers have links to individuals and groups, including powerful government officials. Reports critical of the government or its officials are suppressed, while those favourable are sometimes manufactured.

Sometimes politicians found complicit in religious crises are given a leeway and the press, maybe because of their connection with such politicians look the other way. This R13 explains in the following way:

> *Very rarely do newspapers subscribe to public interest journalism because of the influence of politicians who are often involved in the crisis or they hijack it for certain reasons and media practitioners find themselves taking sides and eventually colouring reportage most times for the worst.*

R4 paints a picture of overt pressure on proprietors or editors to compel reporters to quash a story that someone finds uncomfortable:

…in some cases as soon as you begin a story and you are trying to get more fact by talking to someone highly placed he suddenly gives your editor or publisher a call and you are forced to kill the story.

Publishers are not to blame alone for this lapse. The editor of an Abuja-based daily, R12 suggests reporters and the system that produces them share as much blame as editors in some cases:

It boils down to the kind of training people have, because we are really constrained and people don't have the necessary exposure and reviewing editors are not doing their jobs well.

The issues raised in R12's statement relates back to the case of *THISDAY*'s writer, Isioma Daniel, earlier mentioned. The writer had little experience writing in Nigeria and when the article they wrote passed through gatekeepers they (the gatekeepers) either by means of commission or omission allowed it to pass through, and it provoked violence.

But R12 also adds that some publishers deliberately violate ethics to protect their interests:

Some of the censorships are due to the nuances of the owners who deliberately censor themselves due to certain interest they want to protect.

Perhaps agreeing with R12's argument that there is something wrong with journalism practice in Nigeria a broadcaster and newspaper columnist, R16, thinks reporters don't

understand what public journalism means. At the same time bosses and proprietors take advantage to give it the definition that suits their interest:

> *If you were to ask "What is public interest journalism" to ten journalists you are unlikely to get half of your respondents correctly defining what public interest journalism is. Public interest is quite subjective and is defined by the owner or editor (or both).*

5.3.1.2   Corruption in the media

Despite the presence of rules like the Journalists Code of Ethics and attempts by the Nigeria Union of Journalist to discourage its members from involvement in corrupt practices corruption amongst journalists is believed to be rampant. Various reasons have been advanced for this, some of which might be linked to the clientelistic culture of the society in which they operate or certain beliefs hitherto alien to journalism, as this statement attempts to explain:

> *There is this trend now, citizen journalism, where you are supposed to immerse yourself in the issue at the same time as you report. You can debate these issues but the thing is whatever form of journalism you practice there are guidelines as to fairness, as to objectivity, as to being accurate.*

Although the above quote from R1 does not imply that by being part of the story citizen journalists are corrupt or accept some form of inducement, it nonetheless suggests that this brand of journalism seeks to justify emotional attachment to the story and by extension unfairness.

Apart from the issue of non-neutrality, a major problem in Nigeria is that journalists are either underpaid or unpaid by their employers. In some cases they are even encouraged to depend on bribery for survival. R1 states:

In practice some newspapers don't even bother paying their reporters at all, they encourage them to use their business cards and that's why we have this so-called brown envelope syndrome, which is just a metaphor. It goes beyond collecting some little money in brown envelopes…

The brown envelope syndrome is a metaphor for bribery. Journalists are offered money in return for a favourable report. Politicians are believed to be the biggest beneficiaries of this corrupt practice, although many others are said to be involved.

R2 explains that although they are aware of its existence, there is little they can do to prevent corruption in the media:

…as far as professionalism is concerned there isn't much anyone can do stop people from using their sentiments or collecting brown envelopes. But we monitor them to make sure it is not allowed to happen.

Supporting the above view R3 argues that some reporters find it difficult to decline inducement in the course of their professional duty because their wages are unpaid for months and people are willing to offer them money to influence their reports:

There are times salaries are delayed for up to a month or two and then it is eventually paid all at once. At times people try to get me to suppress a story in various ways, like asking me to come and get their own version or reaction as

they call it, with a promise that if it is published I will be rewarded. It will be

really tempting not to accept it.

R4, however, opines that employers have no basis for asking reporters to shun corruption when they have failed to fulfil their own part of the bargain, like ensuring wages are paid promptly and improving employee welfare:

It is a 24-hour job but one is hardly well paid… Some publishers tell their

reporters that 'they have given you an ID card and do what you feel like doing

with it, but you don't get paid salary at the end of the month.' There is no

moral justification to ask a reporter not to accept gratification (sic) when he

has not been paid his wages.

R3's position comes against the background that only a few proprietors pay reasonable wages and at the appropriate time of the month.

Although equally blaming employers and non-payment of wages, R5 thinks imposters infiltrate the profession and complicate the problem:

But even all those that break all the rules of journalism in order to get money

are mostly fake journalists, every day you hear about fake journalists being

apprehended.

Apart from the menace of impersonators R5 supports the view that journalists are not well looked after by their employers which forces many to resort to corrupt practices in order to survive:

But if a journalist is not paid for four months even their families would be asking them what public interests are you defending when you have not been paid for four months or when your children are at home when other children are in school. This is one of the regrettable things about Nigerian journalism.

R8, citing the Jos violence of November 2008 as an example, opines that politicians easily take advantage of the poor welfare of journalists to influence stories by bribing them:

On the day the crisis of November 2008 broke out, early in the morning on the 29th, government officials came with a lot of money to the NUJ press centre and shared money to journalists to make sure the story was downplayed so that the federal government would not intervene. Journalists collected the money and did the bidding of the government. One thing that comes to one's mind is why should any credible journalist collect bribe to kill or downplay a story? But again we need to ask whether journalists are properly remunerated?

There is a need to take seriously the questions raised by R8 in the above statement if any meaningful progress is to be made in the fight against corruption in the media. For instance we need to know whether journalists are well paid and if not what is the ideal pay that would make them shun corruption.

R8 explains further that many fraudulent publishers employ unqualified reporters with the intent of not paying them wages. They encourage them to demand bribe and accept fictitious stories:

…many of those parading themselves as journalists here are not even qualified or credible journalists; they have been employed by dubious proprietors who don't even pay them any salary and they are asked to fend for themselves by filing all sorts of reports. There are some media houses where their reporters allow stories to be planted through them and the stories get published.

This probably might explain why there are many stories published by newspapers that turn out to be false but nobody takes the pain to do a proper check.

R16 does not think all the blames should be apportioned to employers for low or unpaid or delayed wages. Rather, the focus should be on the society and the kind of orientation journalists grow up with:

Pay is important, but it hardly ever helps to disabuse the mind of someone whose stereotyping of other people is ossified in his brain and whose circle of friends holds the same point of view.

This statement takes us back to the questions earlier raised by R8 and poses further questions whether journalists would be at peace with their conscience, knowing full well they'd allowed themselves to be used in peddling falsehood, perpetuating injustice and fuelling violence that led to the death of thousands of fellow humans, and whether anyone would blame a journalist whose wages are not paid and now resorts to corruption in order to survive.

5.3.1.3   Conformity pressure

Apart from the problem of corruption caused partly by poor remuneration of journalists in Nigeria most of the respondents have also suggested that the society imposes certain constraints on journalists and the media:

R2 thinks some journalists always have their minds pre-made on what to write or report:

…columnists in newspapers stoke these problems. There are some papers in Nigeria that some columnists believe only one side is wrong. Let's face it, the media can reduce or stoke the problem. But very few have risen above these sentiments of religion. And they continue the problem. In 95 per cent of the time they just can't.

R1 also believes some of these reporters' minds are made to malign one side at all times.

They peddle stereotypes and so on and so forth. Once there is a riot the first thing especially the Nigerian media, which is dominantly Southern and anti-Islamic, they already take the position that the guilty party must be Muslims. They don't go deeper than that to see the issues that are at the bottom of all that.

The use of sentiment in reports may not be unconnected with the lopsided distribution of newspapers between the North and South of Nigeria, R3 opines:

…there are so many newspapers that emerged in the South like Punch, Guardian and the North felt marginalised so the New Nigerian and later Daily Trust came up to represent the Northern interest. You don't blame them, the

owners of the other newspapers were probably not giving their region enough attention so they had to provide their own voice.

Explaining how the North/South, Islam/Christianity divides affect reportage in Nigeria, R3 says reports are usually not published when considered critical of the religious group publishers seeks to protect:

If I report against the indigenes, because my publishers are Christians like the indigenes, it is sometimes not reported and it dampens my morale. I know of reporters who write reports against the Muslims and because their publishers are Muslims such stories are not published.

Although the reports are seen to portray the North versus the South or Islam versus Christianity divisions, R4 argues that the main issue is poverty and the struggle for survival among the people and in Nigeria even the media are recruited and used to promote cleavages:

"I am also from Zangon Kataf where the Hausa live and they have prospered and this is the bone of contest – their prosperity is seen at the expense of the native who are quite poor. The Hausa are seen as oppressors. The truth is that people fail to understand the cause of their poverty and religion is used. The media are seen as defending certain interests. The South-West newspapers are seen as sympathising with Northern Christians, while the New Nigerian Newspaper is seen as defending the Caliphate and seeking to Islamise the North. There are certain interests that often ensure their line of thinking is portrayed.

Journalists belong to the same society where these conflicts consistently arise and are seen to be promoting the views of one side or the other as R5 attempts elucidating:

It is a very difficult task for journalists to report religious crises because even though they try to be neutral sometimes the environment prevails and in a way shapes their perspectives on the issues involved in the crisis either because they belong to one of the contending groups either they are Muslim or they are Christians…

Such sentiments, R5 adds, easily manifest due to the sort of sources journalists are able to reach for comments or to support their stories with their views during violent conflicts:

… because of, probably, their in-built bias trying to defend or being seen as defending a particular religion it beclouds their objectivity and also other environmental issues involving their community, they begin to ask questions from people they know or they have access to and invariably they become accessible to people of their own religion and because of that they project this view more than the other side.

R6 claims journalists do not do their homework and end up reporting falsehood or exaggerate facts.

I don't think some of them go out of the way to ensure two things. One is a very emotive issue so you have to be as close as possible to report what is closer to fact than fiction. But unfortunately what happens is because most of them report on their religious bias.

In the Plateau crises R7 posits that the media got involved to the extent that they are openly identified with groups in the conflict:

…the media were divided on the basis of certain sentiments like saying these are my people and I don't care about the others. So the warring parties could only make their plight known to the world through the relationship they have with a particular section of the media.

R8 believes that by continuously and openly immersing themselves in the story the media have confirmed their complicity. Thus, R8 states:

The media are part of the society they have not been able to remove themselves from these accusations.

And that such bias may not be unconscious as earlier argued because they appear to deliberately want to be seen defending their religious faith. R8 also adds:

They are aware of the implications of their reports but often they want to be seen defending their religion than not doing anything because they fear other journalists who are of different religious faith may take advantage and project their view as the right one irrespective of the adverse implications like bloody conflicts and so on.

R13 lends support to the position that the intent to allow sentiments dictate the pattern in which reports are packaged could be due to poor research:

Some journalists do not really go out of their way to research the cause of the crisis and understand the socio-political mood of the place so at the end of the

day they sensationalise and report things that are not true. And the

consequence is that they hype tension and emotions in other parts of the

country and there are instances where that has led to the outbreak of conflicts

in other parts of the country as well.

In the following quote R16 attempts to explain that bias is inherent in humans and often

perfected over the years and put into practice if one eventually becomes a journalist:

By the time people 'graduate' to become journalists, their habits are formed,

their stereotyping is already entrenched, so they just go out and live and write

what they have been brought up to believe in.

5.3.2   Theme Two: Causes of the Conflict

Generally, respondents are of the opinion that religion may not directly be the cause of the

conflict but often used as a tool of convenience:

5.3.2.1   Religion as a Badge of Convenience

R3 suggests that religion is easily manipulated in order to swell the ranks of those in conflict

and that each side is guilty of that:

Now, from this if there is a conflict you see the Hausa man appealing to his

Muslim brethren, claiming this is happening to him because of his religion. And

the Plateau man would also appeal to other Christians by claiming that the

Hausa man is here to wage a jihad. Even though it was originally not religious

it now takes that form and people buy into it.

The main reasons for the abuse of religion in this manner are to swell the ranks of those in

conflict and also because religion is easier to manipulate than ethnicity or any other

identity, as R1 buttresses: *"People use religious identity because it is more amenable to manipulation."* R7 also argues that religion only comes in because those fighting are adherents of the two main religions in the country and use that platform to draw the sympathy of their brethren across the country.

> *People hide under the cover of religion to attract sympathy and therefore use religion. But when you give it closer look you find out all the reasons that make it not religious are there. The only thing is that the people fighting against each other belong to two different religions.*

R4 suggests too that some Nigerians use either religion or ethnicity to promote their own economic gains:

> *One fact about Nigeria is that even those that claim to defend ethnic or religious interest are only fighting to preserve or promote their commercial interests.*

R8 explains that because religion and ethnicity can be easily linked it results in ethnic issues interpreted as religious: *"Most crises often start as ethnic problems and because people easily connect the two it ends up as religious".*

5.3.2.2 Economic Factor

R5 argues that the struggle for scarce resources is a major fuel to the violence seen in the North of Nigeria:

> *I have heard people say poverty contributes to violence and I agree with that completely. If you look at the mass poverty in the North you will see it is one of the attributes or a major cause of the violence.*

But instead of seeing it as an economic conflict, R3 thinks Nigerians are too blinded by religious fanaticism to realise they are dragged into economic conflict in the name of religion: *"Nigerians are too fanatical about religion and they allow themselves to be dragged into such conflict, which is originally economic."* R1, arguing along the same axis says religion is dubiously used in fighting for economic gains:

> *Personally I think they are just ostensibly religious. In other words, people just use religion as a cover, but deeper down it is just an economic thing. This is my belief.*

R1 further posits that in the attempts to garner for themselves as much of the scarce resource as possible people use every means fair and foul, including religion and ethnicity, which they dress up in the garment of religion:

> *At the bottom of it all I think it's economic, it's material. It is the struggle for what people think is scarce resource so now people fall back on the ethnic group or their religion to try and grab as much as they can for themselves.*

R6 also agrees with the argument that poverty is responsible largely for the conflicts in Northern Nigeria, saying that the same people who lived peacefully as neighbours for several years have now turned to killing each other because there is massive poverty and survival of the fittest becomes the main focus:

> *It is better to call it socio-economic than political and ethnic. People have been living together for decades, long before these crises became recurrent phenomenon. And I remember when our people were living in relative*

prosperity; by this I mean we still had a few wealthy merchants but the majority of the people were not living in abject poverty as we see today.

And in a bid to survive at all cost, with no hope for the future, R6 adds that youths are manipulated and used to cause havoc:

But now if you look around our towns and cities you see the hopelessness among so many young people…And I think that degree of economic alienation – there is no future for you, there is nothing to look forward to – is what makes it easy for all these boys who take up arms and to be brainwashed.

With respect to the crisis in Plateau State R7 opines that it is difficult to pin-point one single cause of the violence, despite poverty being a major factor:

The crisis we have in Nigeria, especially on the Plateau, is very complex. Sometimes when you think it is the failure of leadership it fits into the description of political crisis. But when you look at the way people are impoverished and because many of the populace are illiterates and maybe as a result of that 70 per cent or more live below poverty level minor things ignite serious crisis among the people.

5.3.2.3   Group formation

Another dimension to the conflict, according to respondents, is the influence of politicians who use their position to manipulate and unite sections of the society against others and encourage them to take to violence, using religion and or tribe as an excuse. Debunking the factor of religion R2 states:

They become religious even if they were not at the beginning. The Jos crisis was not religious. The governor is known to be tribalistic even among the various groups in the state, even in his normal life he is known to be tribalistic.

The Zamfara State violence following the introduction of Sharia[43] was another instance when politicians manipulated sentiments to their advantage irrespective of the looming danger. The editor of a weekend newspaper in Abuja, R14 explains:

…the religious crisis in Zamfara State due to the implementation of Sharia law which many people opposed but the governor insisted on implementing because he campaigned on it and got elected…but actually it was not about religion but politics.

Politicians are again blamed. A journalist based in Abuja, R10, says they usually fall back on ethnic and religious support when they fall out of favour with the political class:

People have been impoverished by politicians so whenever a political leader falls out with the political class he comes back to tell the people that he is being marginalised because of his ethnicity or religion. And with some little mobilisation, like peanuts, you'll see an army of idle young men unleashing havoc.

Religion and ethnicity have been successfully used and people have bought such explanation almost too willingly. R8 argues that this is because the structure of the country creates a thin line between religion and ethnicity:

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[43] Following his election in 1999 Governor Ahmed Sani Yerima introduced the Sharia legal system in Zamfara State in Northern Nigeria. This was in spite of protests from the non-Muslim minority population in the state. This galvanized other states in the region to follow suit. But it became clear after a few years that it was a political scheme as the policy was marred by allegations of injustice.

In Nigeria it is very easy for the ethnic factor to come into religion because the geo-political divide is such that you demarcate and say this is where people of certain religious affiliations are. For instance you can say Southern Nigeria is predominantly Christian, while Northern Nigeria is predominantly Muslim. In Plateau State for example you can say the Berom are predominantly Christian while the Hausa are predominantly Muslim.

5.3.2.4 Media maintaining the conflict

The media are seen as part of the conspiracy as R5 claims, positing that while people struggle to control resources using religion and ethnicity, newspapers provide a platform for fighting such battles:

Virtually everything in Nigeria is a kind of struggle, including appointment in federal departments. It is reduced often to a thing or religion or ethnicity and when you look at the things newspapers report in Nigeria they are less mundane things and project religion and ethnicity virtually in everything. That is why even in the best of times when you read newspapers in Nigeria it seems there is war going on between the religions and the ethnic groups.

R13 argues that the kind of situation explained by R5 above happens due to careless reporting and poor knowledge of an issue and eventually the wrong information is relayed, on which others act and unleash havoc:

Some journalists do not really go out of their way to research the cause of the crisis and understand the socio-political mood of the place so at the end of the day they sensationalise and report things that are not true. And the consequence is that they hype tension and emotions in other parts of the

country and there are instances where that has led to the outbreak of conflicts

in other parts of the country as well.

Another editor in Abuja concurs with the above position and adds that crises like the one in Plateau State are made to look religious because of the religious beliefs of the parties in conflict and the failure of journalists to investigate independently:

So clearly, it is well known that the recent crisis in Jos is not religious but

because the parties are from the two main religions and also because most

journalists are not aware of the situation and have not researched it, they sit

far away from where it is happening and tell you this is religious.

Also blaming the media, R15 suggests that they have failed to live up to their role of impartial reporting and promoting harmony in the society:

In the real sense, if one looks at the facts that the issues plaguing the nation

have no ethnic or religious colouration, one might understand that it is also

because the media have not played a better role in their reportage which

ordinarily should have been more on mediation, resolution and peace building.

R2 agrees with the suggestion by R15 that the media amplify the problem and particularly points accusing fingers at newspaper columnists:

I have also found out that columnists in newspapers stoke these problems.

There are some papers in Nigeria that some columnists believe only one side is

wrong. Let's face it, the media can reduce or stoke the problem. But very few

have risen above these sentiments of religion. And they continue the problem.

In 95 per cent of the time they just can't.

R7 posits that the crises continue to happen because journalists have allowed some people to use them to achieve certain goals:

> *In fact if not for the way they do the reporting many of these recurring crises would not have been recurring. Perhaps they are used by politicians to achieve their goals.*

5.3.3   Theme Three: North/South Divide

Nigeria is divided along regional and cultural lines into the North and South.[44] This structure plays into news reports especially on politics and religion and largely determines audience perception:

5.3.3.1   Regionalism

In explaining the impact of the lopsided development of the media on practice journalism in the North, R2 says there is still a shortage of quality journalists from the region: *"In the North we don't have enough qualified staff"* and they normally rely heavily on those hired from the South.

The above position is elaborated by R4, who thinks in addition to the shortage of manpower in the North there is also the tendency for journalists to feel more comfortable working for publishers from their own part of the country. According to the reporter:

> *The media are taking ethnic lines, Northern journalists work for Northern newspapers and Southerners work for Southern newspapers. But the North needs manpower while there is too much of it in the South.*

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[44] In Chapter One Nigeria's history was discussed and divisions along regional and religious identities were highlighted.

In a bid to fill up the vacuum created by the wonky media ownership in the country, R3 says some newspapers have emerged to provide a platform for the North's 'marginalised' voice to be heard.

> *…there are so many newspapers that emerged in the South like Punch, Guardian and the North felt marginalised so the New Nigerian and later Daily Trust came up to represent the Northern interest.*

This division between the media in the two regions is portrayed by the manner in which some newspapers present their reports, particularly aimed at defending their sectional and other interests, R4 suggests:

> *The Tribune was established by the Awolowo family, but it goes to every length to defend the interest of the South-West. Here in the North the Daily Trust is seen as the emerging strong voice of the North, but then it is still seen as pro-Islamic, it promotes Islamic interests. But every newspaper is protecting certain interest and they all have certain agenda.*

R5 supports the argument that the defence of regional/sectional or ethnic interest is one of the things some newspapers attempt to do or are doing:

> *…there are many newspapers that are set up with very specific objectives and interests that they set out to defend. Sometimes it is not emphasised but at all times it is their undercurrent. We have newspapers like the Tribune, of course we know they project the Yoruba interest[45], Daily Trust protects the Northern*

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[45] In Chapter One the *Tribune* was mentioned as a newspaper organisation belonging to the family of Chief Obafemi Awolowo. Due to its ownership and South-West location it is seen to be projecting those interests.

interest and the Islamic perspective. The Standard was established to give a

voice to Northern minorities[46] in the early 70s.

While not denying their regional link, R6 insists that their newspaper is fair to all and often go the extra mile to ensure balance in their reports:

We are even referred to as a regional paper by some people who claim we

champion anything North. But we still go out of our way to ensure that we are

not stereotyping. Some people see us as thoroughly Northern, thoroughly

Islamic but we know that when it comes to practising the ethics of journalism

as it should be, even by international standards, we can hardly be beaten in

this country.

But R4 dismisses claims of links to ethnicity or religion as the determinant of some newspaper reportage as just speculations:

For example the Leadership newspaper was seen as a voice for the Northern

Christians but it is not true, because without the Caliphate the paper can't

survive. So, one has to be very careful. Caliphate controlling the media is just a

perception.

On the contrary R7 does not think claims of ethnic bias are just speculations given that South-based newspapers hardly see anything wrong with their region and North-based ones also think everything is well with their own part of the country:

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[46] In the Middle Belt part of Nigeria the ethnic groups there are considered minority although they are categorised as part of the North. They claim being marginalised by the Muslim majority ethnic Hausa/Fulani and the *Standard Newspaper* was founded in the early 1970s by the Governor of the defunct Benue Plateau State the late Commissioner of Police Joseph Gomwolk to give the Northern Christian minorities a voice.

Well, it might be my own perception, but with the happenings around they are

not just perceptions. One does not have a choice but to conclude that they

have agendas. Even in the country generally you see that while some papers

only report positive news about the South, some equally do so, on behalf of the

North and nobody is doing anything about this.

R9 does not see newspaper's link to a religious group as an aberration:

Like the Daily Trust is often accused of propagating Islam and speaking for the

North. But even then you cannot totally delink religious sentiments from

reports; at least even in the faintest manner there is bound to be such

sentiments.

R10, while also concurring, points out that some newspapers claim of a national outlook is false and that many journalists present fiction as fact because they have no access to first-hand information about the people or places they write about:

Many of those calling themselves national are actually not national and

support even militant groups. Daily Trust is termed a Northern newspaper

because it came at a time the North needed a voice. Some people who have

never been to the North sit in Lagos or somewhere in the South to write about

the North.

R6 believes the audience/readers get a wrong picture of people from other parts of the country because their knowledge of others is shaped by what they read in newspapers:

Those in the South have a very negative impression of the North and this is due

to what their papers publish. Some Southern reporters who have never been to

the North just sit down there and write a lot of negative reports about the

North, but it will change the whole situation if they come and see for

themselves and get positive reports about here, which will in turn reduce the

whole prejudice they have for the North.

The division highlighted in this North/South media dichotomy in Nigeria is also blamed for the erosion of public interest journalism, as R15 argues:

It's been difficult for newspapers in Nigeria to demonstrate a sense of public

interest in its (sic) coverage largely because of the ownership structure of most

of the newspapers and the dichotomy known as the Lagos-Ibadan axis press

against the others.

With such degree of polarisation R7 posits that one is only able to know the exact truth about happenings in the country by reading newspapers from both divides and make one's own deduction:

Each is protecting the interest of those behind it and where they come from.

They are neither neutral nor objective and to get the true picture you have to

read papers from both parts of the country and find out which is telling the

fact.

5.3.3.2 Biased Reporting

With the ethno-religious violence in Plateau State as an example, R1 explains how, in their opinion, sides are taken and parties demonised or defended:

Like the November violence, even though Muslims were the victims they made

it look like it was the Muslims that started it. Even when there were hundreds

of Muslims that were killed they focused on a few Southern victims like the

NYSC boys. They had intensive interviews with their families.

The media are accused of bias because they hardly try to hear from both sides before rushing to publish, according to R11, a policy-maker and commentator in Plateau State:

They often rely on one side's information without verifying and this is why they are often accused of bias. In Plateau we have been given a bad name irrespective of religion due to the reports written about us.

R14 also supports the argument that newspapers are generally biased especially when reporting religion:

It is often one-sided toward Islam or Christianity depending on the region from which the newspaper comes.

R6 cites a case from one of the Plateau violence where the media downplayed the case of a victim simply because of the victim's ethnicity and religion to support their claim that religious and ethnic sentiments contribute largely to bias:

A very wealthy relatively known Hausa man lost the warehouse in which he displays cars. Everyone knew he was the victim. All the Southern newspapers published pictures of the burnt warehouse but they were attributing it to the activities of Muslims that attacked Christians.

In the same vein R2 argues that journalists fuel the crisis by failing to be neutral: *"There are some papers in Nigeria that some columnists believe only one side is wrong."* And R8 also points accusing fingers at newspaper columnists, adding that, usually, their articles are tilted

towards their own opinion: *"Whenever we are accused of bias it is usually not our reports but the columnists from outside that are cited as examples."*

But R3 tries to make a distinction between those who are fair and those who choose to immerse themselves in the story, arguing that not all of them are the same:

> *It is not fair to make a sweeping statement that newspapers are not balanced. Of course there are those that allow certain sentiments to clearly show in what they report but it is not the case with all of them.*

The environment, R5 suggests, also plays a major role in creating the problem of objectivity:

> *It is a very difficult task for journalists to report religious crisis because even though they try to be neutral sometimes the environment prevails and in a way shapes their perspectives on the issues involved in the crisis either because they belong to one of the contending groups either they are Muslim or they are Christians…*

R5 also blames proprietors for such a bias, citing the examples of two newspapers defending specific, sectional interests:

> *So whereas the New Nigerian projected the Northern and Islamic point of view the Nigerian Standard projected the minority and Christian point of view. So you can say that part of the influences or in-built bias comes from the ownership per se.*

R8 agrees with R5 that ownership plays a significant role in tailoring reports, particularly those affecting religion:

> *For example if a newspaper is owned by a Muslim the reports tend to paint*
>
> *rival religions in bad light and the same thing happens if the paper is owned by*
>
> *Christian proprietors.*

Sensational headlines, according to R12, are used by owners to ensure that they achieve the objectives that suit the publishers:

> *Some of the newspapers really tend to take sides, depending on the group they*
>
> *belong to you see sensational headlines, depending on what suits the owners*
>
> *of the media organisations.*

In a bid to achieve their aim of promoting certain interests, R5 argues that some publishers make sure they employ only people with similar mind-sets to do the job according to specification:

> *You can hire people as you want and sometimes you seek people with certain*
>
> *viewpoints to appoint as columnists because you think they are projecting your*
>
> *point of view. So they have no qualms about balancing their story, they have*
>
> *no qualms about fair play and all manners of people are joining…*

But R6 also thinks reporters have their own bias which shapes what they report:

> *I don't think some of them go out of the way to ensure two things. One is a*
>
> *very emotive issue so you have to be as close as possible to report what is*
>
> *closer to fact than fiction. But unfortunately what happens is because most of*
>
> *them report on their religious bias.*

R16 adds their voice to the opinion that journalists allow their biases to infiltrate news reports even subtly:

The average reporter/editor reflects his/her religious or ethnic bias either overtly or covertly in their reports. It is not difficult to pin-point the exact cleavage of most reporters or medium as you pore through the pages.

R12 believes that journalists are influenced by their own background and the religious and cultural background of their publisher, which affect the way they report:

…our nuances, our cultural and religious backgrounds tend to affect the way we do things and since you have a newspaper or a broadcast station set up by somebody from a particular religious background, occasionally you find out that people tend to allow personal sentiments to overwhelm the professional thinking when they do their jobs.

However, R16 opines that some reporters try to win the confidence of their editor or publisher by ensuring that a certain bias is maintained in reports:

Largely, reporters gauge the ethno-religious allegiance of their editors/publishers and tailor their news gathering and subsequent reportage to what they perceive would be acceptable.

On the contrary, R7 views the problem through a different prism, blaming the government, the media and even journalists as well as the environment.

The government and the media are taking sides. People are not sincere and are biased. People who work in the media are people like us and come with

their prejudices which they allow to reflect in their work. Responsibility as

journalists is secondary to promoting religious and ethnic interests.

Just as it has been observed a number of times by interviewees, 'he who pays the piper

dictates the tune', and it is on this note that R10 thinks the media succumb to being used in

biased reporting because they are owned by politicians, who pursue their own interests.

There are only a few newspapers that are not owned by politicians in this

country. So the agenda is already set. The media are gullible and protect

ethnic, tribal and religious interests.

Although blame has been apportioned to different parties, one thing worthy of note is the

quality of journalists producing news for the audience/readers' consumption. R13 thinks

they lack sufficient knowledge and should be apportioned a huge share of the blame:

There is a lot of bias in the reporting of religious conflicts and essentially it is

partly because there is a lot of misunderstanding of the situation by journalists

before they are reported.

Although it seems that neutrality or fairness is quite an issue in the Nigerian media, R4 tries

to look at the situation with some hope, that one day fairness will prevail:

I am looking forward to media (sic) that would provide level playing ground on

which all people are allowed to play equal roles.

5.3.3.3 Misinformation/ignorance

The lack of adequate reliable information is a major factor contributing to fuelling conflicts

in Nigeria, especially in the North. Often people rely on rumours and even the media retail

rumours as facts. And R1 argues that Nigerian journalists often do not make effort to understand a situation before reporting through stereotyping:

Once there is a riot the first thing especially the Nigerian media, which is dominantly Southern and anti-Islamic, they already take the position that the guilty party must be Muslims. They don't go deeper than that to see the issues that are at the bottom of all that.

Rumours usually begin with some people making false insinuations and getting others to accept their story and further spread it. R3 explains that a conflict which begins as ethnic is easily manipulated and sold to others as religious in order to recruit supporters.

…if there is a conflict you see the Hausa man appealing to his Muslim brethren, claiming this is happening to him because of his religion. And the Plateau man would also appeal to other Christians by claiming that the Hausa man is here to wage a jihad. Even though it was originally not religious it now takes that form and people buy into it.

Further using stereotypes fiction is sold to the audience as fact as R4 explains:

To the South-West media the Hausa/Fulani are generally seen as the bad guys even when they are not and the impression has been created on the minds of their readers. When you keep on repeating something that is not true it comes to be accepted as the truth.

R6 also paints the same picture, claiming that a story is exaggerated and blown out of proportion until it leads to violence:

For instance when they say something has happened in an area which is predominantly Muslim, newspapers owned by Christians will go out of their way, even if a Church is not destroyed, and say Muslims have destroyed Churches in so and so place. And this adds to the trouble because others in other areas will pick up their arms and avenge…

R6 adds that conflicts are amplified by the media when they violate codes of practice: *"…the way they easily abandon the ethics of the profession is really what fuels and make religious crisis a recurring phenomenon especially in Northern Nigeria."*

The media are also accused of writing negative reports to suit the taste of certain readers, eventually causing bitter divisions in the society and fuel or intensify conflict, as R7 suggests:

They have done very well in promoting divisions and problems between and among people as people rely on the media to get information and they take advantage of this. The papers only write what their audience like, like the Southerners wanting anything negative about the North and vice versa. All these reports also amplify the crises as people often act on the basis of what they have read, like the violence of 2010.

5.3.4   *Theme Four: The Creation and Maintenance of Enemy Images and Stereotypes*

The use of enemy images to create stereotypes, encourage prejudices and fuel conflicts is common in Nigeria:

5.3.4.1   Stereotyping

Stereotyping, R1 argues, begins at the point where journalists rely on the information provided by one side to conclude who the erring party is:

They peddle stereotypes and so on and so forth. Once there is a riot the first thing especially the Nigerian media, which is dominantly Southern and anti-Islamic, they already take the position that the guilty party must be Muslims. They don't go deeper than that to see the issues that are at the bottom of all that.

According to R1 journalists always do not think the side they support is fallible:

It's rare that you'll find journalists that would acknowledge if there's a wrong on the side of those they support…whereas all the time they try too often to demonise the other side.

In one of the violence in Plateau State journalists were said to have taken sides by failing to see that a party that had been previously attacked was retaliating. R3 was among journalist that reported the crisis and notes that:

…when we hear about the attacks on Dogo Na Hauwa village we jump to conclusions and fail to look beyond the surface. But have we asked ourselves what happened previously? Fulani were massacred in Kuru Karama and the killings in Dogo Na Hauwa were reprisals for the killings of Kuru Karama.

The violence R3 refers to above caused a huge uproar within and outside Nigeria, especially the Dogo Na Hauwa attacks.

R10 explains that a section of the media has successfully created an indelible negative picture of others:

To the South-West media the Hausa/Fulani are generally seen as the bad guys even when they are not and the impression has been created on the minds of their readers.

This negative campaign, R7 says, cuts across the media in both divides as each sees things from their regional perspective.

If you read a paper owned by Southerners they never say anything good about the North. And if you read one that is owned by Northerners they say negative things about the South.

R6 claims religion also plays a role in the use of stereotypes as some people are negatively branded due to their religious beliefs:

…nothing good is reported about Muslims…Even Southern Muslims are getting the same treatment. It is like if it is a Muslim don't celebrate him. In that respect you see that stereotype phenomenon.

The media seen to be defending each religious group are accused of creating or reinforcing stereotypical sentiments either by underplaying or overplaying certain reports. R8 states:

If there is a crisis, newspapers take advantage of what happens during the period to portray the other side negatively… If it affects your religion you emphasise, otherwise you de-emphasise it.

R10 claims the South-based journalists deliberately create stereotypes about the North even without adequate knowledge of the North or Islam.

Some people who have never been to the North sit in Lagos or somewhere in

the South to write about the North. There are many that are anti-sharia but

have never been to Zamfara.

Regardless of one's religion stereotypes are used to negatively present one. R11 claims that

this affects everyone but adds the media should not be entirely blamed given the spate of

violence in the state.

In Plateau we have been given a bad name irrespective of religion due to the

reports written about us. But also we can't blame those that have a negative

impression of us when often you see people in 100s killed.

5.3.4.2   Creation of Enemy Images

Name-calling and labelling are common in the media especially newspapers in Nigeria. R4

says metaphors are negatively used to refer to people based on what they are thought to be

or represent:

There is the use of names that paint a bad picture. Like the Hausa/Fulani seen

as metaphor for political domination. And there are words like militants, area

boys and all these are negative reference to create an image of violent

persons.

Just like the above position R5 explains that the use of enemy images contributes to

reinforcing prejudice against certain people and increases the possibility of violence towards

them, as they are seen through the picture painted of them:

You have already demonised some people when you say Fulani people just

think of Dogo Na Hauwa and see all Fulani as people who kill women and

children. Or when you say Berom some people link them to people poisoning ponds to kill cattle or attack Fulani in their hamlets. If you continue to report it that Berom attack or Fulani attack you are just piling hatred or perpetuating violent behaviour against certain groups.

The audience/reader's opinion is shaped by the media and journalists need to exercise more caution in practising their profession, R6 counsels:

This is why the longer you stay in this profession the more you realise that we actually mould opinion. The things we do impact on people's lives more than we think. This is why we need to practice the profession bearing in mind the ethics of the profession. A single report can make a lot of difference to the ordinary reader and sometimes even to policy-makers.

R8 claims that the impact of such pictures, particularly those painted by contributors from outside, is so negatively enormous that innocent people's lives are put at risk when they travel to other parts of the country:

…some of our columns or opinion articles have caused people to be prejudiced towards certain people, like the Beroms to the point that when government officials or representatives of Plateau State, even sport people, travel out of the state they fear that they could be mistreated on the basis of what people read about Beroms.

5.3.5   Theme Five: Ideal versus Reality

Despite pointing accusing fingers at journalists for compromising ethics it is essential to ponder the opinions of many participants that the biggest problem faced by most journalists in Nigeria is that they are underpaid or unpaid, in addition to numerous other risks:

5.3.5.1   Clientelism/Corruption in the media

Corruption among journalists is a major issue. Newspaper owners claim they are addressing this huge problem, although the brown envelope issue cannot be totally prevented. This, according to R1, is because reporters are hardly paid wages by their employers:

> *In practice some newspapers don't even bother paying their reporters at all, they encourage them to use their business cards and that's why we have this so-called brown envelope syndrome, which is just a metaphor, it goes beyond collecting some little money in brown envelopes…*

Agreeing with the above opinion, R5 adds that delay in or non-payment of wages encourages corruption as journalist struggle to survive:

> *This hits at the heart of journalism practice in this country because if you don't pay journalists or you don't pay them at the right time you end up having them doing all sort of things to get food for their families at the end of the day and to get the roof over their head. It gives rise to the journalism of the pocket.*

There is also pressure from the society, rife with corruption, on journalists to accept gifts and comprise professional ethics. R3 says people try to get them to write stories that would favour them and be compensated:

> *At times people try to get me to suppress a story in various ways, like asking*
>
> *me to come and get their own version or reaction as they call it, with a*
>
> *promise that if it is published I will be rewarded.*

But measures taken by some newspapers are ensuring that corruption in the media are at least reduced and controlled, as R4 suggests:

> *I have seen those in Punch, Daily Trust and here. You don't accept money, you*
>
> *must balance and must be fair and objective. You cannot bring a one-sided*
>
> *story and expect the editor to accept and publish it.*

R2 also says they have introduced rules to regulate behaviour and prevent such fraudulent acts:

> *…we have code of conducts. They are normal rules that apply elsewhere, like*
>
> *people must not collect money to influence their reports. But we sack here a*
>
> *lot, people talk about it.*

There have also been efforts by journalists' umbrella organisation, Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ), to tackle the problem but R5 laments that there is still not enough attachment of importance to professional rules.

> *…indeed the NUJ in Abuja conducted training for journalists for three years*
>
> *and there were many campuses across the country. They did this to make*
>
> *practising journalists aware of the ethics of the profession and yet there is no*
>
> *evidence that there is little professionalism.*

In-house training is another measure to deal with the problem, as explained by R6, and that experienced journalists are used to mentor new and inexperienced reporters. But the effort sometimes is unable to yield the desired result:

> *We have gatekeepers over the place and we keep training people to know the potential for libel in what we report and the potential for causing havoc. Yet, once in a while you get a very careless editor who only cares about getting a scoop for a sensational headline.*

In some media organisations employees are paid reasonable amounts in wages and at the appropriate time so as to discourage incentives for requesting or accepting bribe. R6 elaborates:

> *Our pay day is usually the 25th of each month and inevitably whatever happens they get paid on that day. And for that reason people are happy that they get paid, unlike in some media houses that owe salaries months-on-months. The issue now that followed was what salary they get paid to make them comfortable, something that would discourage the brown envelope syndrome, or asking to be paid before they report a story. A decision was therefore made to make the package more attractive.*

While some pay reasonable wages and at the appropriate time some don't. R8, while confirming that politicians bribe journalists to get favourable reports, wanted to know why journalists would not solicit and accept money to influence reports if they are not paid wages.

Journalists collected the money and did the bidding of the government. One thing that comes to one's mind is why should any credible journalist collect bribe to kill or downplay a story? But again we need to ask whether journalists are properly remunerated?

5.3.5.2   Personal safety

Due to poor welfare package journalists are hardly willing to take risks or go the extra mile to do their job. It is against the above backdrop that R3 tells of their experience on one occasion when there was a need to be out in the field checking a story but could not take the risk because their safety could not be guaranteed:

Journalists also need to be insured. For instance I was to cover a violent aspect of the Jos crisis but I was very hesitant travelling to Riyom where I risked being attacked by hoodlums. I should have gone to investigate and come back with first-hand information but I had no insurance and didn't want my family to lose me.

R3 adds that such handicaps make it very difficult for them to meet up the challenges of their profession.

Sometimes it is not easy to even investigate a story properly in a chaotic situation like this, for instance when hoodlums were stopping vehicles and attacking and killing innocent travellers.

R2 also explains that in the crises in Plateau State they were accused of bias because their reporter, fearing for their safety, could only speak to one side and report their version, and based on that the reporter could not balance reports:

In the last crisis in Jos I was accused of being against the Christians. I actually

found that because we took one reporter and there was tension he could not

go around freely for fear of his life and was covering the views of one side. We

balanced by sending a Christian to the other areas.

5.3.6   Theme Six: Recommendations/Peacebuilding

Participants' responses reveal a need for not only resolving the crisis but also ensuring

peacebuilding:

5.3.6.1   Education

The use of education in reorientation is paramount in that previously held negative

impressions/beliefs might be discarded or corrected. R1 believes that journalism training in

Nigeria is currently up to standard and does not contribute to the problem of practice. But

the main problem is that journalists do not practise what they are taught during training:

I don't see anything wrong with the way journalism is taught in the country.

These are universal guidelines on how people should report. That is how they

teach it everywhere. It is the practice that is always the problem. All too often

we practise our journalism in breach of all those things we learn in the

classroom, which is to report accurately, talk to both sides, don't use abusive

language…

But education can be useful in enlightening people on how to avoid being manipulated by

politicians who're bent on using them to cause religious or ethnic violence, says R1: *"The*

followers should not allow people to come along and exploit their prejudices and this is

where the education thing comes in." R2 also does not think poor training is to blame for the

low quality journalism practice in Nigeria, but people's attitude to work: *"No, it is not*

training. The quality of people is low. It is because people are not serious. It is a general thing."

However, in order to widen the horizon of journalists R5 recommends cultural training, a situation whereby journalists can study other cultures to help them have a better understanding of the people they write about.

> *I will advocate for cultural training for journalists and cultural exchanges so that reporters can work in different newspapers across the country and foster linkages.*

R6 also suggests cultural education as a way forward, saying that journalists who understand why certain things are done in certain ways in some places and in different ways in other places would be able to appreciate the differences:

> *A journalist, who has studied in Kano, even if he is not a Muslim or Northerner, will understand why a woman who passes through prayers in Mosque is told to go back. But a journalist who has never been to the Mosque would dismiss this as extremism.*

Against the above backdrop R6 adds that adding on courses on culture in Mass Communication studies might be able to reduce the chances of stereotyping in the media:

> *In Nigeria for example, it will be quite important if a Mass Communication student from Kano is made to understand the cultural and religious ceremonies of the Yoruba and Igbo. In this way we will know and appreciate our similarities and differences, which will prevent stereotyping.*

On the contrary R7 does not see journalism training or practice as the main issue but faults the system in which journalists are brought up and where they practice their profession:

In my opinion what we need to overhaul is the way the society is, generally, and then we will live better and happier. The journalists here are only reflecting the picture of the society that produces them. So they are easily able to grow up with certain prejudices and allow those to influence their professional life.

Perhaps due to reasons that suggest some journalists are more interested in things that could divide rather than unite the country, some suggest the inclusion of courses that would educate them to be more committed to putting the nation first:

I will want a course like patriotism to be introduced as part of journalism training and every journalist should be made to have certain level of journalism training.

A reporter admits that more training is needed to improve their journalistic skills: *"We also need more training to enable us properly report sensitive issues like politics, religion, culture etc."*

Rather than producing journalists who won't be able to relate theory to praxis a respondent suggests the inclusion of more practical courses in journalism training:

There should be pragmatism in journalism training. Graduates need practical experiences so they can do things like differentiating news from opinion/view. The syllabus should be widened to include practical.

Abiding by professional ethics is very crucial to resolving this problem of poor journalism practice. But this can be achieved through improved education, R11 opines:

Journalist should strictly abide by the ethics of their profession. They must learn to balance their stories and avoid exaggeration. There should be better training for journalists.

R12 believes most journalists do not have sufficient knowledge of news values and more training is needed to improve this situation:

We need serious trainings on news values, accuracy and national security implications. We need workshops to enlighten us on these and how to be mindful of passions our report might inflame.

In spite of the huge importance of training and further training to improve skills of practising journalists, R13 says less prominence is attached to this by the media: *"I think there is a need for training and retraining, which most newspapers or media organisations hardly pay attention to."*

Expanding the curriculum to include emphasis on corruption-free, responsible journalism etc. is essential, R14 suggests:

We need to be more morally responsible and a more rigorous training that would emphasise doing away with corruption. We need to highlight the good more than the bad even though the two are bound to exist side-by-side. And all this needs to be included in the curriculum for journalism training in Nigeria.

In the same vein R15 recommends a minimum training that would emphasise specialism, professionalism and cultural awareness:

> *I would suggest a basic education that requires a working knowledge of one's area of reportage, the culture, beliefs and norms, an understanding that promotes fairness and objectivity in reportage.*

In addition to improved journalism training in Nigeria, R16 suggests compulsory study of religions and cultural exchanges:

> *It won't stop at journalism schools or its curricula; it would start at civics and perhaps a compulsory course in inter-religious understanding and inter-ethnic visitation.*

5.3.6.2 Inter-group contact

From the discussions in the previous sections, there appears to be a general lack of sufficient knowledge about each other's culture amongst the people of Nigeria. Journalists, being part of the society, are caught in this contradiction too, which affects the way in which they do their job. One way this problem can possibly be dealt with is through inter-group contact. And a respondent believes improved journalism practice will need this to suffice:

> *…we need to encourage unbiased reporting, create dialogue in which all sides talk, and let people have the true perceptions of victims and aggressors. Allow people to come with ideas and say it openly and media to keep to objective reporting.*

The use of workshops and talk-shops has been highlighted by R6 who believes the media can organise such a round table whereby people from both divides can be brought to sit down, dialogue and chart a new course:

> *…apart from reporting we can even go out of our way to create workshops and talk-shops where the media can organise forum where Hausa and Berom youths would sit in Jos and say we have made up our mind that no matter what anybody comes to tell us we will not take up arms against each other.*

While not overemphasising the relevance of formal journalism training for would-be-journalists R6 suggests the addition of cultural inter-links and exchanges:

> *…it will be quite important if a Mass Communication student from Kano is made to understand the cultural and religious ceremonies of the Yoruba and Igbo. In this way we will know and appreciate our similarities and differences, which will prevent stereotyping.*

In the same manner R13 opines that given that some journalists write about people or places they know very little about there is a need for them to make their reports/stories more credible by learning more about others before writing or reporting:

> *Sometimes we write about people without knowing them or checking the facts. But learning about other cultures before writing about them will make our jobs easier and more acceptable. It will build more confidence.*

Graduates of tertiary institutions in Nigeria are required to take part in a one-year mandatory corps service, NYSC. R16 thinks there is a need for pre-NYSC orientation to enrich young people's understanding of other cultural beliefs and how to easily mingle:

Before NYSC, we should ensure that pupils have cultural exchanges that would enrich their world-view and help them treat others as they would want to be treated.

R16 observes that people's knowledge of other religious beliefs is very poor and needs to be substantially improved:

Most Christians know next to nothing about Islam and most Muslims know next to nothing about Christians and I think this affects our perceptions of each other. If we can learn more about not just each other's cultures but also religions it will go a long way in mitigating the problem.

5.3.6.3 Open access

The use of the media or their hijack by religious interests or groups might lead to the suppression of information about other religions or groups. R7 says this happens where either of the religions enjoys a majority:

If you are in minority you are always dominated by the other religion in terms of access to the media, whereas the constitution allows equal access.

Corruption also plays a role in restricting access to the media. R7 further argues that people's views are hardly reported unless they are of interest to the media:

They always require money from you or they never report what you say. They only come to you when they have something general to ask you but not when you need your opinion to be sent across.

This trend, according to R1, portends danger as the failure to report people's views or expose social problems could mean sweeping majors issues under the carpet rather than resolving them:

> *Personally I think when you suppress it you are fuelling a terrible situation because it has happened and when you drive information underground you won't be able to find solution to the problem.*

As a way forward, R1 opines that ensuring information is made available about an issue or a problem could help in providing answers to the questions it raises:

> *But put it out there so that people will know the extent of what is happening, how bad it is so that responsible leaders will be able to take the appropriate action.*

Another solution is since the media, especially electronic media, are in government's control, there is a need for deregulation to enable easy access by the people, R7 suggests:

> *…the government can do better by making the media more accessible to the people and not exclusively in their control. The private media are equally expensive and therefore out of reach, but the government need to look inward and make it more accessible to the people.*

5.4   CONCLUSION

In this chapter data collected by means of semi-structured interviewing were analysed using IPA. In all 16 respondents participated and quotes from them were used during the discussion to explain issues earlier raised. For instance the main objective was to find out whether the media (newspapers) were involved in the manipulation of their audience

through the use of negative reporting, the reasons for this and how this might have caused or acted as a catalyst in causing religious violence in Nigeria. And the religious conflict in Plateau State, Northern Nigeria was used as an example on a number of occasions. In Chapter Four, following newspaper analysis through CDA a number of findings were made, like the roles the media played in stoking the problem. Yet, at the end of the analysis it was realised that some issues, like some of the reasons might not be fully understood without analysing interview data.

On the whole the analysis here has contributed to the construction of six superordinate themes that included public interest journalism, causes of the conflict, North-South dichotomy, the creation and maintenance of enemy images, ideal versus reality factors, and recommendations/peacebuilding. Each of these superordinate themes was analysed using sub-themes that equally emerged from the data. Our analysis of interview data has helped in more discoveries. For example, although journalists/reporters often get blamed a number of factors contribute to the problems the media are perceived to be causing. While some of these issues are within their control some are not; certain society and workplace pressure compel journalists/media to conform and be involved in retailing negative/false reports.

Although it has been discussed previously and at various times in this thesis this analysis reinforced the claims that the media are regionally based and this determines to a large extent how they see news and report it. It is also important to note the various roles owners and politicians play in determining the impact of regional influences since they (politicians and media owners) are regionally inclined. The same applies to religious and other factors, but it also appears the media are not directly the cause of the crises although

they're used as a platform to maintain them. Chapter Seven will, therefore, be devoted to discussing the meanings of the findings and relate them to a number of theories identified through the dictate of the data. But in the next chapter the same technique will be used to study data collected during the same field study but by means of focus group interviewing.

CHAPTER SIX

Analysis of Focus Group Interview Data

6.   INTRODUCTION

As was the case in Chapter Five, this chapter seeks to analyse the data collected during field research in Nigeria in the cities of Jos and Kano[47], two flashpoints for sectarian violence in Nigeria. But in contrast to previous analysis this one focuses on focus group interview data. In all, two separate focus groups will be analysed and the participants in Jos and Kano (Northern Nigeria) were groups of six and four respectively. In both cases attempts were made to make the groups as diverse as possible to enable contribution of wide range of ideas. The focus group in Jos had equal number of Muslims and Christians and one female. The Kano focus group comprised of one Christian participant, but lacked female participation. In both cases the participants were taken from the media audience, newspaper readers from different professions who originate from different parts of Nigeria.

At the beginning of each group discussion a verbal consent of every participant was sought, which was recorded alongside the discussion. The main criterion for the selection of participants was their personal experience with religious violence, although other issues like gender and religion were important. The researcher wanted to avoid ethical issues so children (and vulnerable adults) were not included. All these were clearly spelt out to the research assistant and others that helped out in various ways and the researcher checked to

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[47] Kano has been quite peaceful and in the last eight years there was no case of sectarian violence. However, following riots over the outcome of the April 2011 presidential elections it was one of the 10 Northern cities in which violence erupted, leading to a number of deaths and destruction of property.

ensure the guidelines were adhered to. The researcher wanted to ensure some degree of moderation or articulation of a female perspective in the discussion in each group by including women. But it did not work out exactly that way as there was only one female participant in the Jos focus group who did not present a strong feminine argument in the discourse; while in Kano no female participant could be recruited. In Jos, men still dominated the group particularly because they were in a clear majority.

Generally, perhaps due to the sensitive nature of the issues under discussion, it was very difficult getting women to take part. Again, in Kano there was a major difficulty in ensuring even representation of both religions. Two participants withdrew at the last minute. But the researcher made sure no side was unfairly attacked, and the only Christian participant in the Kano focus group was quite articulate. In the end all the participants expressed what the researcher considered were their sincere views through which their phenomenology was interpreted.

The questions were also phrased after the analysis of newspaper contents of two major Nigerian newspapers that actively reported the November 2008 violence in Plateau State, Northern Nigeria. However the questions presented in this technique were slightly different from those applied in the semi-structured technique. Again, the analysis followed a discussion of the interview processes, including places/venues, manner of interviews, duration and transcription. The analytic process will also be discussed, explaining how and why superordinate and sub-themes were constructed, allowing the data to lead the way.

6.1   RESEARCH PROCESS

In this case the decision to conduct focus groups in two cities in Nigeria was originally planned at the early stage of this study based on their position as flashpoints for conflict. Jos

was the first choice while Lagos or Kaduna was pencilled as a second option. The idea of Jos was almost dropped given the security situation there but following further checks it was agreed to go ahead with the visit although a new strategy for safety was adopted. Initially it was quite difficult recruiting participants as the first week was spent doing a pilot study in which it was impossible getting sufficient number of participants. The main problem was making people agree to a venue outside of their own communities. It is necessary to mention here that Jos has been so polarised that segregated residential style is now prominent in the city; Muslims live in mainly Muslim areas, while Christians live in areas that are considered Christian only. In the end somewhere that seemed neutral was considered and the choice of Nigerian Film Institute, Jos was pondered. With the help of the research assistant and an old contact who is a lecturer at the institution six participants were recruited. A room in the institute was used as a venue. It was most convenient for all participants as they felt they were quite safe and comfortable. The interview lasted nearly three hours and at a point every participant became quite excited and actively contributed to the discussion. The researcher continued to come in with follow-up questions in order to strike a balance between making sure the original interview guide was adhered to and allowing the interviewees identify and pursue new but relevant issues that had been omitted, as recommended by Storey (2007).

The researcher realised that the interview also provided the participants a rare opportunity to discuss the tense situation in Jos and other parts of Plateau State and issues they ordinarily would not discuss with people outside their own communities or comfort zones. Given the composition of the group, three Muslims and three Christians from various parts of the country, they saw it as a perfect opportunity. The fact that the issue of

confidentiality had been emphasised by the researcher gave them more confidence to open up. The presence of the research assistant did not affect their passion as the discussion progressed.

It had been realised that setting up a focus group was a phenomenal task and with Lagos being quite far away from Abuja or Jos it was expected to be more challenging. The idea of Kaduna was also replaced with a visit to Kano, which had previously been a flashpoint. An old contact was linked up with in Kano who agreed to assist in setting up a focus group. The researcher travelled over 200 miles to Kano and spent a day making sure all participants were readily available and willing to participate. Although six people had been initially contacted and had agreed to take part, only three finally turned up. One person was brought in at the last minute and agreed to participate. Venue was not an issue as Kano is not as risky or as polarised as Jos. One of the participants agreed to provide a courtyard in their home where mats were spread on the ground, on which all participants and researcher sat. The serenity and cultural opulence of the place made everyone even more at home and open-minded, even though there were moments they disagreed on ideas. The interview lasted two hours and a quarter, although some of the participants wanted to go on relaying their experiences. As was the case with the previous focus group the researcher kicked-off the process and allowed each participant to contribute in turns and the same process was used with sub-sequent or follow-up questions. On some occasions they cut in to react to a point. Again it was a mutual experience in which everyone took advantage of an exceptional opportunity to contribute ideas to a burning issue, as the researcher observed.

Meanwhile, the idea of replicating same process in Lagos had become increasingly doubtful but the researcher continued to hope on making it happen. But as would be explained in Chapter Eight, it never was. Again, due to the stress of continuous travelling to various research venues transcription had to wait until the researcher had headed back to the UK. It was eventually done immediately after the audio recordings for the 16 semi-structured interviews in Chapter Five had been transcribed. Since the lengths of the two interviews were not the same the duration for transcription also varied. For instance, while the focus group in Jos took about two days to complete, the Kano one was done in a day and a half. It was particularly more difficult transcribing this form of audio than the semi-structured because of the number of participants and the variation in audio levels (depending on each person's ability to project their voice) and the often too many interjections to clarify or counter a point. It was also very important to make sure every point made was correctly transcribed. Codes were used to represent each person's comments. For instance FGA1-6 was to used to represent the Jos focus group participants (FGA meaning Focus Group A), while the Kano focus group was coded FGB1-4 (FGB meaning Focus Group B).

6.2   ANALYTIC PROCESS

Like the researcher had done with the previous analysis, IPA was applied in this case too. Care was taken not to squeeze the subjective experiences of the participants as the researcher tried to make sense of the data by reading and interpreting through meaning-making. It was an iterative process that was painstakingly done to bring out the main ideas to summarise the experiences of the participants. The reading and re-reading process here was even more difficult as the ideas were more dispersed than in the previous transcript. For instance there were occasions that an issue that had been earlier discussed was

revisited by a participant and a new debate sparked off. Although the researcher had some feelings for some ideas raised by some of the participants the fact that such an issue had been resolved in the previous transcript made it much easier to handle their emotion. During this process also a major issue the researcher struggled with was how to read and juxtapose ideas from the two distinct focus groups.

The initial temptation was to read them separately and interpret and generate ideas from the data separately too. Although it was done that way it did not work out well and the researcher's supervisor suggested doing and presenting the analyses together. This worked out much better. Notes were scribbled on the left-hand margin of the transcript where ideas or questions were noted. For instance two major issues were immediately identified from the data. First, there seemed some reluctance by some participants to discuss religion as they see it as very sensitive but often prone to manipulation. An example below states: *"Religion is a very sensitive issue and I do not like getting involved in anyway. But my experience is that the media tend to take sides and give the wrong picture…"* (line 387-390). There was also the question of new technology providing a platform for people (non-journalists) to circulate rumours or falsehood as news. Initially the researcher struggled to comprehend this assertion. But during the next round of reading and meaning-making the data became clearer and continued to dictate the pace and pattern of the analysis.

The next stage of the analysis was when the researcher returned to the transcript using the notes made on the left-hand margin as a sort of marker. But the researcher also wanted to let the data lead the way in further developing and linking themes to theories. Thus, on this occasion themes were noted on the right-hand margin of the transcript while attempts were made to relate the same themes to theories that would possibly be later

used in interpreting the findings of the analysis, which is the main thing differentiating a study of this nature from any other journalistic review of data (see Storey 2007: 55). The researcher was determined not to let the theories have any overbearing effect on the data and chose to do a separate discussion in which theories would be linked to themes.

Since there had been a plan to do the same with the findings in Chapter Five analysis it was also decided to do a common chapter for discussion in which findings from both analyses would be discussed and linked to theories. Unlike the case of Chapter Five analysis, there was some difficulty identifying many theories as each group had its own way of responding to the questions presented. For example while in one there was much emphasis on the causes of the crises and how religion was manipulated, the other group focused more on manipulation of the audience by the media specifically. In identifying theories, in the first case the researcher tried to look at suggestions from the data on the 'why' issues raised, for example why the crises erupted and continued to rage. This again led to the identification of both social identity theory (SIT) and realistic conflict theory (RCT) as possible theories to be applied in discussion. In the second case the researcher looked at how the data led the way on the 'how' issues for example how the crises escalated or spread, with newspapers providing fuel. Based on the data suggesting the media were involved in the deliberate peddling of falsehood or misinformation there was a consideration for media systems theory (Hallin & Mancini 2004) or framing theory (De Vreese, et al 2001) or even socio-cognitive theory (van Dijk 2001) among others. Yet there was no single theory favoured over others as the researcher kept an open mind and allowed things to emerge on their own.

In the attempts to adopt superordinate themes the researcher considered data from both focus groups. Where there were similarities a common theme was adopted; where they differed, a theme arising from the strength of its backing by the data was constructed. Eight superordinate themes were initially constructed from the data which included publisher interests, commercial gains, misinformation, causes of the conflict, stereotyping, enemy images, new technology and recommendations.

But it was realised that some of the themes appeared repetitive and might not sufficiently explain the issues as clearly as possible. Thus, some of the themes were merged to produce broader but clearer themes, while some of the themes were collapsed into sub-themes. Five superordinate themes emerged and they are: publisher interest; causes of the conflict; media fuelling the conflict; demonization; and recommendations. The researcher was concerned about the phrasing of some of the themes but after considering the sub-themes under each and the amount of data to support them the themes were allowed to stand on their own. For instance causes of the conflict, fuelling of the conflict and demonization appear similar, on the surface. However, the researcher considered the main issues raised by participants like some suggesting the violence were the direct consequence of the manipulation of religion. This was considered a root of the problem. But there were also claims that the media were aggravating the problem by misreporting it and reasons were given for that. In the case of demonization the researcher considered specific data on labelling or enemy framing that might further fuel the crises. Since in each case there were quite a few sub-themes all three were constructed as superordinate themes.

Attempts were also made to produce a summary table of themes with illustrative quotes. Theme One, Publisher interest has sub-themes that include commercial interest,

group/regional interest and corruption in the media. An example of illustrative quote: *"All the media that operate in Plateau State subscribe to the press agenda principle that says truth is not essential and are only interested in making money and generating publicity for their own people."* Theme Two: Causes of the conflict and the sub-themes are: religion as a badge; economic causes of the conflict and social factors in the conflict. Example of illustrative quotation is: *"Most of our crises are caused by sentiments and the actual participants are hardly good Muslims or good Christians and are hardly educated. They are hoodlums who wait for crisis to erupt so they can loot."* Theme Three: Media fuelling the conflict; Sub-themes are: misinformation; biased reporting; regionalism and sectarianism; and input of new technology, rumour and misinterpretation. An illustrative quote is: *"Definitely, they are biased and take sides all the time. Both the Northern and Southern newspapers are to blame for this problem."* Theme Four: Demonization; sub-themes: Enemy images and use of stereotypes. An example of illustrative quote: *"…for instance negative reports from* (sic) *Jos make us see Jos people as violent and hardly get our sympathy."* Theme Five: Recommendations; sub-themes include: education; economic empowerment; cultural education and exchanges; and patriotism/professionalism. An illustrative quotation is: *"I will canvass for creating a forum where people can meet and interact and shed negative beliefs."*

6.3   PRESENTATION OF ANALYSIS IN NARRATIVE FORMAT:

In this presentation the only order that has been followed is in a bid to present a coherent narrative from the analysis, starting with a superordinate theme and using quotations from the data to support each sub-theme, as well as a brief interpretation.

6.3.1   Theme One: Publisher Interest

Discussion here follows the audience perception of news reports, especially the main drive of the media and their backers:

6.3.1.1   Commercial interest

FGA2, a female from Southern Nigeria, argues that the media use the Plateau sectarian violence as an avenue to promote their commercial schema:

> *All the media that operate in Plateau State subscribe to the press agenda principle that says truth is not essential and are only interested in making money and generating publicity for their own people.*

The above argument comes from FGA2's belief that the reports published or broadcast by these media are not the true reflection of the situation on ground and are doctored to promote the interest of certain individuals profiting from the crises.

Lending support to FGA2's position, FGA1, another student from Southern Nigeria says: *"There is this phrase about 'Bad News Making Sales', which I think they strongly subscribe to."* FGA1 refers to the media in this statement, saying they are often more than happy to retail negative or unpleasant stories even if it does not augur well for the interest of the public. In the same vein FGA6, a student from the North reiterates the point that the mainstream media in Nigeria are, on account of their role in Plateau, promoting their interest over and above the general good: *"But again on this Jos crisis newspapers are only out to make money with their reports."*

The above suggestion by FGA6 is based on their conviction that while some interfaith groups are working hard to convince people across the country that often the conflicts have nothing to do with religion, the media make them look like religious.

FGA5, a student and filmmaker from the North, argues that exaggerated headlines create tension and send the wrong signal:

> *Newspapers may have an agenda but I don't know. The headline I mentioned means …the violence and people suffering or dying. It makes me develop hatred for the town not the people. The people are victims, irrespective of their religious beliefs.*

The people mentioned in this statement are the victims of the crises in Jos and other parts of Plateau State but who unfortunately, based on news reports end up being demonised.

However, FGB2, a business man from Kano in the North, believes the people's readiness to accept whatever the media report is partly responsible for the success of the media in implementing their commercial interest:

> *Unfortunately Nigerians believe the media a lot and the media are out to sell. So they know what the people want they just sell to them and people accept whatever is sold to them.*

6.3.1.2   Corruption in the media

FGA3, a student from the North suggests that journalists get influenced by politicians in public offices who offer them bribe to make them customise reports in their favour: *"They are being used and they are dancing to the tune of the government because of this brown envelope thing."* FGA3 uses the above statement to support their argument that the media are compromised and are not doing much to expose corrupt politicians who divert public funds meant for development. FGA6 echoes the same point, saying in the past journalists shunned kickbacks and focused more on doing their job with pride: *"In those days*

journalists were more interested in their profession and dignity than what they will get in the

form of inducement."

Journalists in the country, FGA6 notes, are hardly well paid and in the end forced to be involved in professional malpractices to survive. Many are willing to peddle falsehood or assist in planting stories in exchange for some money.

But FGA5 does not think journalists should be blamed entirely for this problem because they are underpaid despite facing professional hazards: *"Given that they face a lot of risks like death and poor welfare could account for the way they report this crisis in Jos."*

6.3.1.3   Group/regional interest

FGB1, a retired intelligence officer from Kano is of the opinion that politicians and leaders use the media to project their group or class interests: *"Newspapers as we have seen are tools in the hands of the ruling class and their publisher friends."*

In Nigeria class issues are not as pronounced as religious and ethnic differences. Nonetheless, some people still see the society as polarised between those in power who control wealth and take decisions affecting everyone on the one hand, and the ordinary people that are only useful during elections but at other times are mere spectators (Chomsky 1997; Smith 2007).

But FGA5 notes that newspapers in Nigeria have predetermined perspectives through which they view and report events in the country:

> *From what I have read regarding the Jos crisis I have come to believe that each*
>
> *newspaper tells its story from its own point of view. Journalist are not fair,*

they are biased and allow their religious or ethnic sentiments to influence their

report.

The media, according to FGA5, are seen to be divided in their bid to provide support for the parties at loggerheads. News reports and articles on the crises are usually tailored to suit the interests of the group each section of the media supports.

FGA6, stressing this division, argues that the media appear to be at war with each other in their bid to give their readers or audience what they want or what they think they want:

…newspapers in the North, although in minority, are slugging it out with their Southern counterparts in a bid to disseminate information to their target audience. This results in the slide to the use of sentiments, which doesn't help matters.

The above statement attempts to explain why some journalists do not mind being in breach of the rules of their profession and keep repeating the same thing over and over again, while publishers allow such flaws to continue.

FGA4, a participant from the South-East of Nigeria, blames newspaper columnists for failing to balance their articles while subjectively defining issues from their own point of view:

Columnists are the main problem as they often try to interpret intentions, without necessarily seeking to balance. In order to get the exact truth or the real fact I read more than one newspaper – like This Day, Guardian, Punch, Daily Trust etc.

Given the above dilemma FGA4 says they read so many newspapers and access other sources of news to ascertain the facts and avoid being manipulated.

6.3.2   Theme Two: Causes of the Conflict

This theme presents opinions of participants about the factors that have been responsible for the crises that are usually branded religious in Nigeria:

6.3.2.1   Religion as a badge of convenience

FGB1 recounts an experience during a religious crisis in which some foot soldiers were fighting a battle they either did not understand or did not believe in:

> *In one of the crisis I was stopped by a mob in Kano and asked to recite some prayers to confirm my religion and as soon as I started reciting the person ordering me called out to someone else to come and listen, so as to know whether I was reciting the prayers correctly. It was clear that he, himself, couldn't recite the prayers but he claimed to be fighting a religious battle.*

Based on their experience FGB1 opines that most of the crises are only presented as religious even though people have other motives:

> *The truth is most of what we just claim to be religious crises are not religious as such, someone ignites those crises because of their selfish interest and gives them a religious cover up.*

FGB3 who's a civil servant from the South notes that there is some sort of hypocrisy even among religious people as they might not mean exactly what they preach:

> *…in my opinion with what I have seen every religion preaches tolerance even though their hearts do not exactly mean it…The truth of the matter is that you*

do not need to know the truth for some people as they will fight for what they

believe in whether they know what it is about or not.

To buttress their point that religion is only a decoy in the crises FGB3 argues that it might be more difficult to manipulate people using religion if their standard of living is improved:

It is about giving the people what to live for and you will see if anybody will die

for any religion.

6.3.2.2 Economic cause of the conflict

Unemployment is alarmingly high in Nigeria and most young people are idle and frustrated. FGB1 believes this is a major incentive for taking part or igniting violence as it gives them an opportunity to plunder:

Ninety per cent of our youths are unemployed and there is massive poverty

everywhere with so many people just waiting for anything what would give

them an opportunity to loot. They just join the bandwagon as soon as they

hear that something is happening.

FGB2 echoes the same point, adding that those actively participating in or encouraging religious violence are merely hoping to make personal gains:

Most of our crises are caused by sentiments and the actual participants are

hardly good Muslims or good Christians and are hardly educated. They are

hoodlums who wait for crisis to erupt so they can loot.

The issue of unemployment and its role in encouraging violence is further emphasised by FGB3 who thinks if life is made more worthy of living people might think less of violence:

Many people are not employed and would easily be manipulated by any news

report even when it is not so provocative. Yes, there is a need to make the

report more pro-peace but the main issue is give people genuine hope by

getting them employed and be sure they have something to live for.

6.3.2.3 Social causes of the conflict

A major factor, according to FGB1 is the people's inherent differences that many are taking

advantage of without any consideration for others:

Tribalism and religious bigotry have always been part of our life in Nigeria.

And today people are just coming out to defend their faith or tribe without

listening to the other.

But FGA3 believes the crises are enduring because people feel neglected by political leaders

and that needs to change:

Governments need to carry all the people along. Unless there is even and fair

dispensation of the dividend of democracy it will continue to trigger bad blood.

The government are not carrying people along.

6.3.3 Theme Three: Media Maintaining the Conflict

The media have not been directly accused of causing the crises but they have been fingered

for hyping tension and escalating the crises:

6.3.3.1 Misinformation

FGA2 says some newspapers report issues that are inimical to peaceful coexistence:

Some of the print media sometimes don't disseminate the kind of information

they are supposed to pass to the public. They don't say what could actually

calm the public…

In line with what FGA2 says the media in the country are seen to be inflaming tension and causing division among the people. And the print, because they are the most vibrant, are blamed most, especially given their experience with *THISDAY* newspaper in 2002 when Miss Daniel's article[48] resulted in sectarian violence.

FGA2 adds that newspapers sometimes amplify the crisis by reporting happenings incorrectly:

> *…if there's something happening in Jos, if there's a chaotic situation in Jos, before you know some newspapers say things that are actually not true and its causes another problem.*

FGB1 concurs and suggests that such a problem arises because reporters do not take the trouble to research properly and speak to people in the right position to give an accurate account:

> *…by relying mainly on third party information. They hardly speak with security personnel. They often rely on one-side of the story without much verification and end up publishing half-truth or even falsehood.*

FGB1 further explains that what follows such a manner of reportage is an extreme misrepresentation of facts: *"When a story is reported even those who have witnessed it in reality tend to be shocked by the amount of exaggeration in it."*

FGB2 thinks the media make matters worse by sometimes using implausible sources or eyewitnesses to back a report:

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[48] Miss Isioma Daniel's articulate provoked riots in the North in 2002. This has been explained in Chapter Five.

For instance someone who finds himself a victim, say by accident, ends up being spoken to by journalists and his story is overblown and used to paint everyone in the affected area in a bad light.

By blowing the story out of proportion using an incredible source they misinform and wrongly galvanize people into taking destructive actions.

Against the above backdrop FGA5 opines that some news stories are packaged in manners that hype sentiments in order to escalate the conflicts:

Some stories are reported in such a way that emotions are triggered and I think journalists need a rethink on this so we don't continue to inflame the crisis.

On this note the respondent urges media practitioners to consider reversing the trend by being more objective.

A possible way to make reports more objective, as FGA2 suggests, is for gatekeepers in the media to make sure only the right information is disseminated:

There are some things that newspapers don't need to publish and most are even false. Editors need to investigate and consider the consequence before publishing such reports.

Similarly FGA4 calls on the country's umbrella union for journalists, NUJ, to encourage retraining schemes for journalists to enable them do their job well: *"NUJ needs to wake up and educate its members because they also need education before they can educate others."*

But FGB3 seems less optimistic and cautions with having higher expectations as the media in Nigeria are run by people whose commercial interests take priority over other things including the common good:

> *…we shouldn't expect the media to tell us the whole truth when we know they are in business and they have to make money. So we should be ready to read between the lines and use our brains to think and judge for ourselves.*

6.3.3.2   Biased reporting

FGA5 chides journalists for failing to perform their duty as professionals without allowing undue bias to stand in the way: *"Journalists are not fair. They are biased and allow their religious or ethnic sentiments to influence their report."*

By viewing happenings through the prism of religion or ethnicity as FGA5 suggests, it shows that the media are compromised and contribute towards inflaming tension in not only the restive city of Jos but also other parts of the country.

FGA6 adds that such manipulation of the media plays a role in creating tension in the society: *"They use these sentiments to get people to support them and end up polarising and heating up the polity."* FGA4 considers some journalists a threat to peace, claiming they write in breach of the rules of journalism: *"Columnists are the main problem as they often try to interpret intentions, without necessarily seeking to balance."*

In attempts to see things purely from their own perspective as has been argued above they might become more immersed in the story than they should be, and the consequence could be quite grave.

Reports or articles, especially biased ones, might have been deliberately written to have immense impacts on the audience as FGA6 has suggested: *"I once read a column that I felt was clearly biased and seeking to shape people's opinion."* And FGA2 explains that such attempts at driving a wedge hoisted on hate are successful in achieving the aims of the perpetrators: *"The information they pass across affect the audience in one way or the other, be you a Muslim or Christian."*

6.3.3.3 Regionalism/sectarianism

Nigeria's regional/religious divisions and the support supposedly lent by the media on both sides of the River Niger[49] in promoting the cleavages are phenomenal. FGA3 explains: *"They are seen as Northern newspapers. There are others that are purely Southern."*

Newspapers that are seen as Northern are the likes of *Daily Trust* and its other titles seemingly providing a voice for the Muslim North, *Triumph*, *New Nigerian*, and *People's Daily*[50] and others. In the South there are more than a dozen well established newspapers perceived to be projecting Southern and Christian opinions. The oldest and largest circulating ones include the *Punch*[51], *Guardian*, while the *Tribune* is believed to be the South-Western version of *Daily Trust* allegedly providing a voice to the Yoruba people of the South-West, the *Nation*, the *Independent*, *and THISDAY* etc. FGA6 argues that this dichotomy between sections of the media in the country depicts a picture of a lop-sided development in which a smaller side takes on a much bigger opponent:

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[49] Nigeria's geography shows its natural division of the country into the North and South by the Rivers Niger and Benue running through Kogi, Kwara, Niger and Benue States. North of the rivers are Northern States and South of them Southern States.

[50] *People's Daily* newspaper is owned by a group of Northern proprietors and is considered a breakaway faction of *Daily Trust*. It was established about two years ago.

[51] Daily circulation figures explained in previous chapters.

From the onset there is no balance in the ownership and distribution of newspapers between the North and South…what you see is newspapers in the North, although in minority, slugging it out with their Southern counterparts in a bid to disseminate information to their target audience. This results in the slide to the use of sentiments, which doesn't help matters.

In reporting issues as sensitive as religion they are said to be biased and do very little not to attach themselves to the story and, according to FGA6, media on both sides are involved in this breach of professional ethics:

…they are biased and take sides all the time. Both the Northern and Southern newspapers are to blame for this problem.

Such biases are manifested in the support they show for one religious group or ethnic nationality as opposed to others and this is why from the angle a report is written a vigilant reader can guess the religion or ethnicity of the journalist that wrote it or background of the owner of the media.

FGA3 uses the examples of Kuru Karama[52] and Dogo Na Hauwa[53] to stress their claim of biased reporting on the basis of religion:

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[52] On January 17, 2010 Kuru Karama, a Muslim settlement, near Jos was raided by people suspected to be Berom and dozens of women and children were killed and dumped in wells http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2010/01/201012333947758520.html Plateau State Commissioner of Police (then) Gregory Anyantin was accused by Muslims of inciting the raid after he claimed that Muslim youths attacked a Church service, killing Christian worshippers. His statement was circulated by the media. Accessed 7 June, 2011.

[53] On March 7, 2010 Dogo Na Hauwa, a Christian village also near Jos, was invaded by suspected Fulani herdsmen who used machetes and other weapons to crush scores of women and children to death. It was said to be a reprisal for the earlier killings in January http://english.aljazeera.net/news/africa/2010/03/20103713521482760.html accessed 7 June, 2011.

…two recent crises in Dogo Na Hauwa and Kuru Karama were not given equal coverage. While so much was said and the whole world heard about Dogo Na Hauwa, there was complete conspiracy not to say anything about Kuru Karama.

FGA3 argues that whereas in the case of Kuru Karama there was little reporting of the killings, the media channelled a lot of energy towards reporting the attack on Dogo Na Hauwa.

FGA3 argues further that such division could be a major threat to the country: *"…you see some divisive newspapers emphasising more on division than unity just to destabilise the country."* The above mentioned danger notwithstanding, FGB1 argues that divisions of such nature are endemic:

Tribalism and religious bigotry have always been part of our life in Nigeria. So, even when newspapers or media are set up they tend to take this perspective.

By being able to infiltrate the media tribal and religious sentiments have found for themselves a strong base in the heart of Nigerians given that Nigerians rely on and almost entirely trust the media.

6.3.3.4 Input of new technology, rumour and misinterpretation

In Nigeria mobile phone technology is the main medium through which people circulate rumours as news. Rumour has been identified as one of the principal causes of the amplification of violence in Nigeria, as FGB2 says: *"Our problem is that we depend a lot on rumour mongering for information and end up getting misinformed."*

In spite of the danger of rumours, FGB1 explains, the mainstream media are either out of the reach of the ordinary man or too polarised to serve the purpose and rumours through mobile phones become just handy: *"So the common man has no access to modern technology except to rely on hearsay circulated through mobile phones."*

Yet rumour mongers are not trained journalists. They lack the basic knowledge of journalism which, although journalists are also accused of being in breach of, would regulate how they share information and minimise the risk of backlash.

Interpretation, which constitutes the intent of sharing such information, is a major problem. This is so because the often crude means of interpreting the information ends up fuelling further crisis. FGB3 explains: *"The people who interpret this news send out the wrong messages to illiterates who just lose it."* To someone whose level of literacy does not prepare them to be able to ask deep questions they just accept any news as facts and act, irrespective of the consequence.

Despite the gloomy picture painted of circulating information through mobile, FGA2 thinks that this technology has its positive side as it serves as a genuine alternative to the mainstream seemingly manipulative media, especially in verifying reports. FGA2 states: *"The only other source is using one's mobile phone to contact friends for information."* Using one's mobile phone to contact friends or people in a position to confirm stories might reduce the risk of the menace of misinformation and manipulation of readers or audience of the media. But can a mobile phone be considered an alternative source of news? FGA2 thinks so and adds that it enhances one's ability to take an appropriate action: *"A different source of information helps you to decide on something objectively and fairly and make the right decision."*

Perhaps, in FGA2's view, one who's armed with information in the form of news or rumour sent through a mobile phone about violence or an accident in an area could shelve plans made to visit the place.

6.3.4 Theme Four: Demonization

The use of negative reports or labels to demonise the other is a major issue and newspapers on both sides are accused of often painting dehumanising pictures of 'otherness':

6.3.4.2 Enemy images

FGB4, an unemployed youth from the North, laments the use of offensive names by some journalists to refer to people they consider different in some ways:

> They allow some writers or contributors to use the word arna (infidels) to refer to Christians, while Christian-owned media are used to refer to Muslims as terrorists or Hausa as malo (cow or animal). This is not good at all and should not be seen on the pages of newspapers or any media.

FGB2 also cites an example of the use of labels to refer to people in the North by South-based journalists and that such references are received with a negative feeling:

> Our media hype tension by repeating bad names like someone in faraway Lagos writing about the North he or she has never been to and say we are barbaric, unrefined and too backward.

Similarly, FGB2 denounces the use of derogatory terms by North-based journalists that have never been to the South to see things for themselves to represent people in Southern Nigeria. FGB3 argues there is no basis for dehumanising people because of their beliefs:

Otherwise how can you compare someone who does not belong to your

religion to the devil or someone who has gone astray? Some Christian

fundamentalists think even if you are a Christian but don't go to their Church

you are evil. Same applies to some Muslims who refer to others as infidels.

FGB3's argument points to the fact that in every religion or tribe there are some who do not

accept others' right to be different from them and see that as an opportunity to attack them

using unfair, hateful terms.

The saddest implication of the use of such terms is they personify the target and often leave

an imprint on them, as FGA6 suggests by citing Jos as an example:

…negative reports from (sic) Jos make us see Jos people as violent and hardly

get our sympathy.

With such a picture on the mind of anyone reading about the crisis in Jos a conclusion could

be drawn on not just the perpetrators of the violence but also everyone there. Thus, similar

treatment or contempt is meted on all, without distinction.

6.3.4.2   Use of stereotypes

In the same way as the creation of enemy images, stereotypes are invented or constructed

to fit into people's description with serious repercussions. The print media, according to

FGB3, use such sentiments to cause hatred:

The use of labels by newspapers is very effective in dividing the people because

right now, it is either you are in this religion or you go to hell fire.

FGB4 also refers to the use of dubious features to represent one side while the other is

given a perfect reputation:

The media worsen the problem by trying to present one side or one religion as the truth while they criticise the other as a bad religion. They cause hatred through this…

FGA2 concurs with the above and explains that people are manipulated because they are presented one-sided information with which they judge others:

Most of them usually paint the other side negatively and ensure that the side they represent is positively painted. Everything they do is favourable to one side.

Following this pattern problems are stoked and minor issues are easily blown out of proportion as some people get blamed for the wrongdoings of a few deviants, argues FGB2:

…when there is a problem in a small portion of an area it is overblown and negative impressions are created and this risks fuelling overreaction elsewhere.

FGB1 explains that with the media, perhaps, providing a platform for spreading violence innocent people become victims and the backlash is monumental:

…as soon as crisis erupts in one part of the country and it gets reported the next thing you hear is that another part of the country, may be at another extreme, has reacted in the form of reprisals on people of the same religion or tribe as those believed to have instigated or carried out the attacks and this spreads round.

FGA6 says Muslims in Nigeria often feel particularly maligned and think the media deliberately carry out hate campaigns against them: *"Every Muslim is seen as a potential terrorist and that impression has been created on the minds of non-Muslims, except they won't admit it."* Agreeing with FGA6 that Muslims are demonised FGB2 argues that although some Muslims might be responsible for some violent happenings it is unfair to blame all Muslims:

> *Muslims are not happy with those newspapers that often equate Islam with violence. The truth is during crises those that wreak havoc are not even good Muslims…and in the end those papers reporting from afar just backlist everyone by saying Muslims have done this or that.*

Despite what some Muslims describe as negative reports against them some people give them the benefit of doubt. FGA2 expounds that a negative impression of people they had related with was once created in them by the media and it almost affected their relationship.

> *I was born and bred in Jos and have Muslim friends, but at a point, due to the sort of reports I was reading about Muslims in newspapers I said I would stop keeping Muslim friends.*

With the benefit of doubt FGA2 gave Muslim friends they said they were able to see people as individuals responsible for their own actions not as the stereotypes the media have constructed of them.

6.3.5   Theme Five: Recommendations/peacebuilding

In the above analysis various issues were raised by participants in the study, but it is also worthy of note that they proffered solutions that comprise empowerment, patriotism/professionalism, cultural exchanges and education, in order to reduce the feelings of dissimilarities and tension:

6.3.5.1   Education

Beginning with educating the educators, FGA5 suggests the NUJ should take the lead in encouraging its member to embark on more training programmes: *"NUJ needs to wake up and educate its members because they also need education before they can educate others."*

It is interesting that such an enormous challenge has been thrown at the NUJ and not media owners who might be the biggest beneficiaries. But it is also essential to mention that the NUJ operates campuses where journalism training takes place.[54]

FGB1 also calls for more education for journalists, although the participant thinks they need to be equipped with the appropriate tools to work with ease: *"Journalists no doubt need further training and more conducive equipment to carry out their duties."* Technological advancements, if sufficiently taken advantage of, could help journalists in Nigeria monitor events in real time and be able to present highly reliable reports. This will depend however on whether media owners will consider it a priority and invest sufficient funds in making it happen.

FGB4 also re-echoes the same view point on the education of journalists, arguing that it will enable them make the right decisions on what to report or write about:

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[54] Nigeria Union of Journalists (NUJ) currently runs a few institutions for the training of journalists in Lagos and Abuja, which are in addition to similar courses in some universities in the country.

I think the journalists should be trained properly to know when to avoid any report even if it is the truth that would inflame the polity. They should know when there is the likelihood of crisis and work to prevent its eruption.

Armed with the right training FGA2 suggests also that journalists could reduce the problem: *"They should be more interested in education and mitigate rather than amplify the situation in Jos."* In line with FGA2's opinion, FGA1 urges journalists to use their vantage position to enlighten their audience: *"Media need to go back to drawing board and understand that beyond just informing and entertaining how they educate people."*

And since education is an art that is learnt through training FGA1's suggestion that they acquire the necessary skills to do this is in order and could perhaps further take them and the country out of the woods, as it appears.

Another call for a serious campaign to avert further violence on the Plateau comes from FGA5: *"We need more education and enlightenment in Jos to prevent further generation of bad blood."*

With the way things have turned in Jos and other parts of the Plateau it would require a major sensitisation to get the people to put all they have gone through behind them. The media should be in the vanguard of ensuring this happens.

6.3.5.2   Cultural education/exchanges

Beyond formal education one other type of education that needs to be seriously considered is cultural education and exchanges. FGA6 is of the opinion that the media have been involved in stoking this problem and people need to relate more to overcome it:

They encourage bitterness and you end up with bad feelings, which can only change if we move closer to each other. I will canvass for creating a forum where people can meet and interact and shed negative beliefs.

The idea of making people meet to discuss issues of negative feelings towards each other is crucial in that it would be realised that much of what was thought of each other came from poor knowledge and, possibly, misinformation.

Owing to the fact that Muslims in Nigeria believe their religion has been largely misrepresented by the media there is a feeling that to address this issue further research by the media into how Islam works would suffice, as FGA5 thinks:

As a Muslim I will be quite happy if others will know more about my religion and me knowing more about other faiths and culture. Let journalists make intense research and report about the other parties.

FGA5's idea is that people should learn more about other faiths and that would help to a large extent in removing the wall of isolation erected by different beliefs and a new partnership based on understanding and tolerance would be charted.

FGA3 also thinks there is a need to reverse the trend in which journalists demonise other beliefs: *"Newspapers write terrible reports about people and cultures and they need to change."*

Although Nigerians have focused more on their dissimilarities if they channel more energy in understanding these differences positively they might realise there's a thin line between them. Perhaps this is in line with FGA6's position: *"If we learn more about our cultures we will find out just how similar they are."*

There is also a need for journalists to be, themselves, more aware of these issues to enable them respect and correctly enlighten the audience about other cultures and beliefs and their sanctity.

6.3.5.3 Patriotism/professionalism

FGA3 argues there is a need for journalists to be more interested in keeping the nation as one rather than emphasising divisions: *"We are all Nigerians and must keep the unity of our country irrespective of our tribe or religion."* FGA3 adds that journalists need to shun professional malpractices to be able to achieve a high sense of patriotism and properly do their job and the leaders need to also complement by ensuring good governance:

> *Avoid bias and ensure you gather facts before reporting. They must also avoid rumour mongering and government should carry people along.*

FGB1 suggests that journalists in Nigeria should, as a matter of priority, be able to back reports with impeccable sources:

> *In such cases if a reporter was to gather information he needs to get to the bottom and report only the fact, because people rely heavily on information provided by the media.*

This follows the earlier argument that they sometimes rely on incredible sources to file reports that end up resulting in the spread of falsehood and escalation of violence. By relying on credible sources FGB3 says they might be able to do their jobs efficiently leading to less rancour in the society: *"And if the media can also do their job properly then things will be smooth and easy for all."*

6.3.5.4   Economic empowerment

The issue of journalist remuneration and welfare is central to the problem of low quality journalism practice in Nigeria. But FGA4 opines that with better wages they would have no excuse for soliciting for or accepting bribe:

> *Journalists needs better pay and most journalists live on meagre salaries. There should be a standard salary for journalists and if they are well paid I wonder why they would accept brown envelopes so as to give the wrong reports or be biased.*

In the same vein FGA6 thinks they need better salary and be well equipped: *"They should be well paid and should be better trained."*

Making life better for journalists appears to be a prerequisite for good journalism in Nigeria and FGB1 opines that government intervention might be necessary to bring about the desired change:

> *…the government must prevail on employers to ensure at least minimum standard of welfare for employees, ensure there are incentives to encourage selfless and dedicated service and shun corruption like accepting brown envelopes even when offered.*

While there has been much emphasis on the welfare of journalists FGB3 thinks there is also a need to consider the possibility of a better life for the ordinary people who take part in the violence:

It is about giving the people what to live for and you will see if anybody will die

for any religion. Many people are not employed and would easily be

manipulated by any news report even when it is not so provocative.

FGB3's point is spot on. If any meaningful transformation is to be achieved then everyone needs to be carried along; changes must affect both news production (including those producing it) and news reception (the audience). One thing is producing and retailing news and another aspect is its reception. There is a need for them to complement each other.

6.4   CONCLUSION

This chapter opened with a discussion of the field research process explaining how the researcher went about collecting data while in Nigeria and the issues they had to deal with along the way. There was also a detailed explanation of the analytic process and the construction of five superordinate themes and how they evolved. It is important to recall that the researcher had explained that there would be no attempt to manipulate the emergence of themes or squeeze the subjective experiences of the participants. It was based on this the data was allowed to dictate the process. From several reiterative readings of the transcript all the themes later emerged and they were used as a sign post for the analysis.

Using data from the two separate focus groups issues that were discovered were discussed with illustrative quotations. It is instructive to note that although similar questions were presented to participants in the two focus groups the responses differed. While certain issues were effectively raised and addressed in one focus group, other concerns were better dealt with in the other focus group. In the end the themes were constructed to reflect those differences except in a few cases where by some coincidence similar ideas

were discovered in response to some questions. For example, Focus Group A (Jos) was more comfortable with addressing the role the media (newspapers) played in maintaining or fuelling the crises, as participants mentioned instances when they felt there was either biased reporting or misreporting of events that escalated the violence. The researcher, thus, categorised responses here as the 'how' explanations. As for Focus Group B (Kano) they tried to look at the causes of the crises although at some point mention was made of the amplification role of the media in the conflicts. Participants described both the economic and social factors in the crises which may not be necessarily blamed on the media. The researcher therefore considered responses here as the 'why' explanations. So, while one group thought the problems might not be directly from the media and could be due to other broader issues (poverty and tribalism), the other group felt the media, being part of the society, maintained the problem and were therefore to blame. However, in both cases, one can deduce that the media might have played a role of amplification/escalation more than igniting the crises; they were problems that were happening or waiting to happen and the media probably acted as a catalyst in accelerating the process.

Other important issues that arose in the analysis were the audience perception of who controls or uses the media to their advantage and to the detriment of the society; how certain societal factors like corruption and or regional interests influence reports etc. There were also attempts to understand other factors that are relatively new but influential in determining the extent and direction of the conflicts like rumours and mobile technology, through which false reports are sometimes peddled. This is also somehow outside of the control of the media, as the perpetrators, like citizen journalists, might not be trained in journalism practice. The use of enemy frames to view and represent 'otherness' also came

up and participants described how they felt it happens and what it tries to achieve. In a bid to present a glimmer of hope participants made recommendations for ways of transforming the crises. The use of education, cultural exchanges, empowerment and promotion of patriotic feelings and professionalism were mainly suggested.

The possibility of presenting a separate discussion chapter, Chapter Seven, was previously considered. Therefore, the next chapter will be devoted to discussing the findings in this and Chapter Five and efforts will be made to draw a link between theories that have been identified as appropriate for understanding the issues raised in this study and findings related to them. Again, themes that emerged from the data were also responsible for determining each theory identified by the researcher. Following the same pattern headings will be appropriately constructed, under which discussions will be presented.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Discussion and Analysis of Findings

7   INTRODUCTION

This chapter seeks to explain the meanings of the findings made in both Chapters Five and Six by linking the findings to theories. In trying to achieve this, discussions will be presented using headings that were identified during the reiterative readings of transcripts. These headings include: regional cleavages; patron clientelism; competition and interdependence; enemy images; stereotyping; and cross-cultural exchanges (and education). Using a theoretical understanding in each case, at least, the issues raised in the analyses will be linked to the Nigerian situation. Regional cleavages, for instance, will be discussed in the context of media ownership, location and use among other issues, along regional/religious divides as suggested by the data. Patron clientelism will be linked to corruption as a cultural problematic that has infected the media, despite some efforts to combat it. Competition and negative interdependence will dwell on cognitive explanations and consequences of competition. Enemy images will be discussed as a major means of misinterpreting and assigning wrong meanings to 'otherness', leading to the exacerbation of the crises. Stereotyping will also delve into issues like the post-September 11 global media framing of Muslims/Islam, which some Nigerians connect to their plight. And in proffering solutions the successful application of contact hypothesis in Northern Ireland will be briefly discussed and proposed for Nigeria, using the media as a conduit. A conclusion will then be drawn based on all that is discussed.

7.1   REGIONAL CLEAVAGES

In order to have a fairer glimpse of how the various media in the world work Hallin and

Mancini (2004) have proposed the use of political parallelism as a framework. In their study

of the media systems in Western Europe and North America, they sought to boost the

earlier work of Blumler and Gurevitch (1995) that the media environments in different

countries cannot be studied under a universally applied theory. Scholars of media studies

had been under the assumption that a single theory could be used to explain the working of

the media in all parts of the world, until these two works provided alternative perspectives.

Thus, in order to simplify this issue, Blumler and Gurevitch (1995: 61) have argued that four

main factors have to be considered for trans-border comparative analysis of the media and

these are: degree of state control over the mass media organisations; degree of mass media

partisanship; degree of media-political elite integration; and the nature of the legitimising

creed of media institutions. To further make simpler the criteria advanced by Blumler and

Gurevitch (1995), Hallin and Mancini (2004: 21) suggest four criteria as well. These include:

the development of media markets, emphasising especially the strong or weak development

of mass circulation press; political parallelism, which denotes the extent and manner of

connection between the media and political parties or the degree the media replicate the

major political cleavages in the realm; the development of journalistic professionalism; and

the extent and manner of state intervention in the media system.

This part of the discussion is specifically interested in the second issue Hallin and

Mancini (2004) mention, political parallelism. In order to understand the role of political

parallelism in the working of the Nigerian media one needs to refer to previous discourses in

this study on the background of the Nigerian media. It has been noted that the Nigerian

media were developed during colonial period and grounded on the convenience of colonial

authorities, although they were later hijacked by anti-colonial movements led by people like

Sir Herbart Macaulay and Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe[55]. As has been earlier observed the first

newspaper (indeed the country's first media) *Iwe Irohin Fun Awon Ara Egba ati Yoruba* was

established in 1859 in the South-West and located in Abeokuta (Ogbonda 1988; Olayiwola

1991; Babalola 2002; Salawu 2006). *Iwe Irohin's* equivalent in the North *Gaskiya Tafi Kwabo*

was founded in 1937-38, more than 78 years after *Iwe Irohin* and after nine other

newspapers had been established in the South. This development, which suggests

wonkiness, has led to an unending and threatening division. This principally acted as the

main impetus to the sort of relationship between the people in the two regions and the

media established in the regions. Thus, given the analysis above it is hardly doubtful that the

media would stick to regional rather than national loyalty; hence the attachment Hallin and

Mancini (2004) have pointed out in their typology, whereby the media reflect the political

cleavages in the environment. They have also contended that *"no analyst would argue that*

journalism anywhere in the world is literally neutral" (Hallin & Mancini 2004: 26).

Journalism practice in Nigeria, following the positions advanced by both Hackett

(2003) and Hallin and Mancini (2004) is nowhere close to being neutral. We have seen from

our discussions how in both studies participants clearly expressed opinions confirming this.

From these opinions one can deduce, having in mind Hallin and Mancini's (2004)

framework, that the media in Nigeria exhibit the following features: regional base; linked to

elitist groups or families; promote group or region's sectional or commercial interests; are

used as a means for the struggle to dominate; and have substantially played a role in

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[55] Early nationalism and quest for independence were championed by the media. *West African Pilot* edited by Dr Nnamdi Azikiwe was foremost in this crusade and in the regions there were such trends in which rare unity and bravery were showcased.

polarising the country along religious and ethnic divides. These shall be discussed in sub-sections.

7.1.1 Regional base

In terms of regional base it has been argued earlier on that the media are identified on the basis of where they are located and those who own them. Incidentally their reportage is seen through the same prism. The South clearly towers over the North in terms of media location and ownership as Hackett (2003) has explained and this is vexing the Muslim North, particularly, as reports are perceived as anti-North and anti-Islamic. Most of the national newspapers, news magazines and a huge number of private electronic media are located in the South. Until the founding of the Media Trust Limited in 1998[56] no privately owned newspaper in the North had survived intense competition with its Southern counterparts for long. *Weekly Trust* (and later *Daily* and *Sunday Trusts*) was the first to break the jinx, blazing the trail that paved the way for other equally Northern newspapers like *Leadership* and *People's Daily* and others. Today, although still dominated, the presence of these newspapers avails the North with an opportunity to have its voice heard. In the past they had to rely on government-owned *New Nigerian* and *Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria* (FRCN), Kaduna to present the Northern view or angle in any crisis situation, as opposed to the dozens of well-funded and firmly-established Southern newspapers like the *Punch*, *Guardian*, *THISDAY*, *Tribune*, the defunct *Concord* and *Comet*. In the Kafanchan religious violence of 1987 Ibrahim (1989: 68-69) draws attention to the roles the media located in the two divides played in projecting views sympathetic to their sides and spreading the crisis:

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[56] Media Trust are the publishers of *Daily, Weekly & Sunday Trust* as well as *Aminiya* newspapers. *Leadership* and *People's Daily* later joined the league of Northern newspapers and have been seen as purely Northern although *Leadership* owner is a Northern Christian.

The New Nigerian newspapers and the Federal Radio Corporation (FRCN) of Kaduna, both noted for their pro-Northern establishment and pro-orthodox Islamic views, played a major role. They emphasised an anti-Islamic reign of terror in Kafanchan and the need for defending Islam…The pro-Southern and pro-Christian press did not help matters. The Guardian of 14 March, for example, wrote about the 'Mullah's of easy violence' whilst the Standard of 13 March and the Punch of 14 March based their reports on damages to the Christian communities while ignoring what the Muslims had suffered in Kafanchan.

Up until now there has not been much change in the situation Ibrahim paints above. From the two separate studies' findings the views of participants will be used to illustrate this division, the North versus South or Islam versus Christianity:

The media are seen as defending certain interests. The South-West newspapers are seen as sympathising with Northern Christians, while the New Nigerian Newspaper is seen as defending the Caliphate and seeking to Islamise the North. There are certain interests that often ensure their line of thinking is portrayed. (R4 August 2010)

 From the onset there is no balance in the ownership and distribution of newspapers between the North and South…what you see is newspapers in the North, although in minority, slugging it out with their Southern counterparts in a bid to disseminate information to their target audience. This results in the slide to the use of sentiments, which doesn't help matters. (FGA6 August 2010)

I know there are those protecting the Muslim and Northern interest, there are those that basically represent the Yoruba and South-West as well as Christian interest and there is at least one major South-East, pro-Ibo newspaper which also defends Christianity... (FGB4 September 2010)

The first quote came from semi-structured interview data while the rest from focus group interview data. In all three examples there is suggestion that the issue of base is central in determining the inclination of reportage, emphasising the North/South, Islam/Christianity division.

7.1.2 Elitist link

Larkin (1997a), who studied the flourishing Hausa home video industry in the North, reveals the growing private ownership of grassroots media in the form of video technology. This development is a testimony to growing privatisation and corresponding reduction in state or government control, which comes at a time of change in global political economy of the media. Larkin (1997a, 2000: 210) thus states:

I wish to emphasise that the rise of Nigerian videos, while seemingly a local phenomenon, is part of a worldwide change in the political economy of contemporary media...Most important the rise of video culture signifies the emergence of a new kind of public sphere in Nigeria, one that is based on the privatisation of media production and consumption.

However, before the period pointed out above, the South of Nigeria had seen a robust private media ownership, especially in the print strand. In an earlier analysis in this thesis a respondent had observed that the *Tribune*, a South-West newspaper is owned by the

Awolowo[57] family. The respondent had said: *"The Tribune was established by the Awolowo family, but it goes to every length to defend the interest of the South-West"* (R4, August 2010). The *Tribune* was actually founded by Chief Obafemi Awolowo in 1946 (Babalola 2002; Ado-Kurawa 2006).

Other newspapers owned by notable families or elites include: *The Nationalist* published by Waziri Ibrahim, a presidential candidate under the platform of Great Nigeria People's Party (GNPP) in the Second Republic; Augustus Akinloye's *Sunday Advocate; The Eagle* owned by K. O. Mbadiwe, Jim Nwobodo's *Satellite; The Trumpet* of Alex Ekwueme; *The Sun* by Anthony Enahoro and the defunct *National Concord* owned by Abiola. There are also the *Guardian* of Alex Ibru[58], Lateef Jackande's *Lagos News*, Major General (Retired) Shehu Yar'adua's *the Reporter, the Nation* owned by former Lagos State governor and Action Congress of Nigeria chieftain, Bola Tinubu. Also, another *The Sun* is run by former Abia State governor Orji Uzo Kalu and others (Olayiwola 1991: 39; Babalola 2002). It is instructive to note that many of these newspapers are now defunct for various reasons, like the demise of their proprietors, for example Chief Abiola. Nonetheless, these examples explain the second feature mentioned.

7.1.3   *Promotion of sectional or commercial interests*

The third feature of the media in Nigeria as observed from the data is their open identification with certain interests inimical to the public or common good. It has been pointed out that their commercial concern usually takes precedence over all other things,

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[57] The *Tribune* is owned by one of the fathers of Nationalism in Nigeria, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, and it's staunchly pro-Yoruba. Despite being one of the oldest newspapers in the country its influence is hardly felt beyond the South-West.

[58] Alex Ibru's sibling Felix was a First Republic senator and first civilian governor of Delta State. Jakande is a former Lagos State governor in the Second Republic. Yar'adua was Obasanjo's deputy from 1976-79 and contested one of the aborted primary elections by IBB. He was also the late President UmaruYar'adua's brother.

except where there is an attempt to promote sectional or sectarian values. The mass media, according to the critical political economy argument, usually operate in an environment in which they act like other industrial and commercial organisations in the process of producing and distributing commodities (Murdock & Golding 1973). Thus, news is seen as a commodity that is retailed to the audience for commercial purposes and the satiation of this commercial motive in the form of profit becomes the ultimate goal. Commenting on the financial data of 24 media giants in the US, Herman and Chomsky (1994: 5-8) state:

> *These twenty-four companies are large, profit-seeking corporations, owned and controlled by quite wealthy people…Many of the large companies are fully integrated into the market…This trend toward greater integration of the media into the market system has been accelerated by the loosening of rules limiting concentration, cross-ownership, and control by non-media companies.*

In Nigeria, as Larkin (1997a) has rightly observed increased commercialisation and privatisation of the media albeit a local development is a sign of their integration into the global market economy. It also means a drive towards greater profit through sales and various commercials as Herman and Chomsky (1994) have explained in respect of the American media. Jonathan Ishaku (2009: 135) shares the following view in reference to the financial gains of newspapers from the recurring violent conflicts in Northern Nigeria:

> *Conflict, as bad news, generally sells. Religious conflict sells newspapers and magazines and has created the notion that religious diversity is bad for national co-existence.*

It is also important to note that based on the nature of their structure, location and ownership, the media are used in representing religious interests. This takes us back to the

assertion by Hallin and Mancini (2004) that they can never be totally neutral. Our data have confirmed this as in both studies some respondents argued that the media meddle in religious issues by taking sides in their reportage. Often, they opine, the religious bias of a newspaper or media is dictated by the part of the divide it belongs, either the North or South. This is why, as Ibrahim (1989) notes, newspapers in the North like the *New Nigerian* are seen as pro-Islamic and those in the South like the *Guardian* are considered pro-Christianity.

7.1.4   Tool of domination

The fourth feature is the inclination toward domination or as a tool of domination. Professor Hackett (2003) has correctly observed that a major bone of contest between the North and South of Nigeria is their differences in terms of the acquisition of Western literacy, its benefits and the consequent, albeit seeming, alienation of the North. Despite the North producing most of the country's military and civilian presidents[59], earlier experiences have continued to define relations between the two regions and the media have made themselves available in promoting this. A respondent suggests that:

> …*what you see is newspapers in the North, although in minority, slugging it*
>
> *out with their Southern counterparts in a bid to disseminate information to*
>
> *their target audience.* (FGA6 August 2010)

One of the reasons for group loyalty/competition or interdependence as explained by social identity theory (SIT) is the desire for self esteem or status based on which members of an in-group elevate their group higher than others' (Brief, Umphress, Dietz, Burrows, Butz &

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[59] See Chapter One, History of Nigeria, where it has been explained that more presidents have emerged from the Northern part of the country although they come from both the Muslim majority and Christian minority tribes in the North.

Scholten 2005). And because of their link to the cleavages the media, apart from rating themselves higher than those of the other side, promote the same feeling of superiority among their audience/readers. This, perhaps, explains the use of stereotypical images.

7.1.5   *Ethnic or religious polarisation*

The fifth feature directly correlates with the above in that in a bid to dominate or win in the struggle pointed out in the foregoing quote the media end up dividing the people on the basis of religion and ethnicity but seldom appeal to class like the media in the West do, as noted by Herman and Chomsky (1994: 3) in reference to the work of Curran and Jean Seaton on the emergence of the media in Great Britain:

> *…a radical press had emerged that reached a national working-class audience.*
>
> *This alternative press was effective in reinforcing class consciousness. It united*
>
> *the workers because it fostered an alternative value system and framework for*
>
> *looking at the world…*

 In the case of Nigeria, as was explained earlier, the media emerged as colonial convenience and Hackett (2003) has complemented this assertion by pointing out how one side was alienated, leading to grievances and bitter competition along the axes of geographical location, ethnicity and religion. This is further illustrated by their audience base and the perception of the audience of their reports as well as the 'other' as the quotes below suggest:

> *The information they pass across affect the audience in one way or the other,*
>
> *be you a Muslim or a Christian.* (FGA2 August 2010)

Tribalism and religious bigotry have always been part of our life in Nigeria. And today people are just coming out to defend their faith or tribe without listening to the other. So, even when newspapers or media are set up they tend to take this perspective. (FGB1 September 2010)

All these features have confirmed the links of the media to political cleavages as Hallin & Mancini (2004) have highlighted, which this section had set out to explain.

7.2   PATRON CLIENTELISM

Clientelism can hardly be discussed without mentioning corruption, just as corruption in the media is linked to falsehood or false reporting. In his book *Flat Earth News,* Nick Davies (2009: 51-52) states:

In a strange, alarming and generally unnoticed development, journalists are pumping out stories without checking them – stories which then circle the planet. And so now, in a way that was not true in the past, the global mass media are not merely prone to occasional error but are constitutionally and constantly vulnerable to being infected with falsehood, distortion and propaganda.

Hallin and Mancini (2004: 58) have explained clientelism as:

…a pattern of social organization in which access to social resources is controlled by patrons and delivered to clients in exchange for deference and various forms of support.

They have further described it as a term referring to an exclusive social system in which formal rules are relegated by personal ties or, as it later turned out, connections are made

through political parties, religious groups etc. As opposed to rational-legal authority, which is linked to a political culture in which primacy is given to 'public interest' or 'common good', they argue that in a clientelistic culture what prevails is commitment to specific benefits.

Clientelism exists in every culture at some point in its history, as Hallin & Mancini (2004) claim. In the case of Nigeria it is pertinent to draw attention to scholarly works suggesting the rooting of clientelism in the systems of the two regions and how people have tried to the deal with it, as a social issue. The first is a look at the cultural setting of the North, where on the foundation of Islam, Northerners are seen by some people as trying to present a picture of moral integrity and uprightness. In a bid to maintain this posture they try to shy away from corruption as Hunter and Oumarou (1998: 168-169) try to explain using Kirk-Greene's (1974) thesis *Bahaushe Mutumin Kirki* (the good Hausa man)*. In their analysis of the thesis they expound a number of qualities a good Hausa man possesses, *hali* (character) through which a typical Northerner should normally be viewed. According to them:

> *Kirk-Greene…enumerates ten qualities he feels are obligatory in understanding the concept of mutumin kirki, the good Hausa man. They are: gaskiya (truth); amana (trust); karamci (generosity); hakuri (patience); hankali (sense, common sense); kunya (shame, modesty); ladabi (good manners); mutunci (humanity); hikima (religious, wisdom); and adalci (religious, scruples).*

In Chapter Five a respondent who's an ex-female editor of a Northern newspaper was, perhaps, trying to confirm some of these virtues in the following words:

We are even referred to as a regional paper by some people who claim we

champion anything North. But we still go out of our way to ensure that we are

not stereotyping. Some people see us as thoroughly Northern, thoroughly

Islamic but we know that when it comes to practising the ethics of journalism

as it should be, even by international standards, we can hardly be beaten in

this country. (R6 August 2010)

Inasmuch as the above analysis of the typical Northerner might have been applicable

to the Northerner and perhaps the Nigerian situation at some time in the past, the current

situation points to the contrary. The issue of brown envelope journalism is a major one and

today journalism (in both the North and South) is seen from this perspective than the one

painted by both Hunter and Oumarou (1998), on the one hand, and the female editor

quoted, on the other hand. And as another respondent claims, although there are attempts

to fight corruption in the media, it is a problem that is endemic in the Nigerian system:

Some newspapers take good care of their journalists and even advertise that

you should not give any gift to their journalists because they pay them and the

journalists should not take it. There is also the culture of corruption in Nigeria

whereby if you are given a gift you cannot reject or the person giving will feel

disrespected…but Daily Trust is telling us that even if he takes let him bring it

to them and they will return it to you. (R5 August 2010)

The reference to *Daily Trust* is in respect of its 'No, Thank You' policy in which it encourages

the Nigerian public not to offer bribe to any of its staff. And as the respondent mentioned,

since some people might feel offended if an offer is rejected the paper allows its journalists

in such a situation to accept the gift but must hand it in to the company to be returned to the patron.

Another work of interest to this study is the one by Omobowale and Olutayo (2010: 453), an empirical study of political clientelism and its development impact in rural Ibadan, Nigeria. In it they considered the patron-client relationships that have developed in different scenarios over five decades, defining and enshrining a political culture fanned by corruption. In one of the scenarios they state:

> *During Nigeria's Second Republic (1979-83), Ibadan's clientelistic structure was similar to the arrangement of the 1950s. This time the poor majority became the clients of Alhaji Adelakun, a prominent Ibadan indigene…Whoever won or lost elections in Ibadan was dependent on Adelakun's clientelistic structure. Adelakun perfected the means of extending goods to clients and injury and /or death to political opponents. In spite of his fierce and open display of thuggery and violence, he remained a respected politician and patron in political circles and was thus beyond the reach of the law.*

The fact that Adelakun remained above the law despite doing everything contrary to the rules governing lawful behaviour in the country is a testimony of the deep-seated corruption in the system, which as R5 said is a culture.[60]

Of great significance to this study is also Richard A Joseph's (1987) work *Democracy and Prebendal Politics in Nigeria: the rise and fall of the Second Republic.* In it the author attempts to look at the nature of corruption in the Second Republic and how political offices

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[60] In explaining Nigeria's political culture corruption was one of the factors considered (see Chapter One).

were seen as a means to amassing 'spoils' and rewarding clients. Larry Diamond (1989: 284) highlights:

> *Drawing heavily (but not inflexibly) on Max Weber, Joseph uses the term prebendal to define patterns of political behaviour which rests on the justifying principle that (state) offices should be competed for and then utilised for the personal benefit of office holders as well as of their reference or support group.* (See Yusha'u 2010: 364)

Daniel Jordan Smith's (2007) book *A Culture of Corruption* is also hugely relevant to this discussion. Smith (2007: 13), explaining the preponderance of corruption in high and low places in Nigeria, notes:

> *The most elite politicians, government officials, economic moguls – federal ministers, state governors, NNPC[61] managers, major construction and petroleum industry contractors, and so on – commonly reap millions of dollars through corruption. But people at many levels of society participate in corruption in order to survive.*

Smith (2007: 122) also observes that during elections Nigerians vote for the best patrons; someone who gives them the most money or might be able to deliver the most government resources even if the mechanism of delivery is corruption. This is because the people have lost faith in their leaders and know they can only have access to them through the structures of patron-clientelism.

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[61] Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC) is the main oil corporation through which the Federal Government of Nigeria participates in the exploration and refining of crude oil and also regulates the country's petroleum industry.

From all that has been discussed it seems corruption is a major problem in the Nigerian society. The media, which are supposed to be the watchdog of a society like this, are also compromised because of their association to the cleavages in the system. And despite efforts to discourage or even penalise journalists for joining the 'brown envelope' bandwagon, the impact of such campaign will continue to be minimal because of the extent to which corruption has penetrated the system and hijacked the psyche of the people. Brown envelope journalism has gained a notorious popularity among journalists in Nigeria. Terje Skjerdal (2010: 369) explains that brown envelop journalism:

…is applied to denote journalistic activity which involves transfer of various types of rewards from sources to the reporter…it is safe to say that the following three characteristics are usually involved if we speak about the original "little" brown envelope: the practice occurs on the personal level, it has some degree of confidentiality, and it denotes an informal contract between the source and the reporter whereby both parties have certain obligations. These three characteristics are visualized through the image of a brown envelope containing cash physically hander over from source to a reporter.

The media, being part of the society as Hallin and Mancini (2004) have underlined, will remain part of the fraud especially if one recalls what R5 said regarding the feeling of disrespect to someone offering a gift to a journalist who rejects such a gift. They (the media) are also part of the fraud if we consider and take seriously the quotes below:

They often rely on one side's information without verifying and this is why they are often accused of bias. In Plateau we have been given a bad name irrespective of religion due to the reports written about us. (R11 August 2010)

…many of those parading themselves as journalists here are not even qualified or credible journalists; they have been employed by dubious proprietors who don't even pay them any salary and they are asked to fend for themselves by filing all sorts of reports. There are some media houses where their reporters allow stories to be planted through them and the stories get published. (R8 August 2010)

The above, coupled with other strains faced by genuinely honest journalists like delayed or non-payment of wages among others, are bound to complicate the problem. Our data analysis has at various points exposed this. It is also important to note that there are situations in which grim falsehood might be circulated by forces outside of the control of the media. Our data analysis further revealed this, particularly how new media/technology (the internet and mobile phone) are aiding the flouting of practice journalism rules. For instance while citizen journalism is increasingly gaining currency and emphasising immersion in the story, rumour mongers are effectively taking advantage of the handiness of mobile phones to circulate false stories and images. Given the extent of Nigeria's polarisation and endemic corruption, these possible means of peddling falsehood could find a fertile base and with serious repercussions, as the quotes below appear to suggest:

There is this trend now, citizen journalism, where you are supposed to immerse yourself in the issue at the same time as you report. (R1 August 2010)

Our problem is that we depend a lot on rumour mongering for information

and end up getting misinformed. (FGB2 September 2010)

The people who interpret this news send out the wrong messages to illiterates

who just lose it. (FGB3 September 2010)

The three quotes, one from semi-structured interview data and two from Kano focus group data, refer to the growing subscription of Nigerians to the forms of journalism mentioned above and how this could mean being fed falsehood and galvanized into taking the wrong decisions.

7.3   ENEMY IMAGES

The sharp divisions of the media, as we have discussed, are a reflection of the cleavages in the society and hugely denting on their ability to demonstrate fair or neutral journalism. Enemy images are used to further such divisions and fuel the crises as our analysis suggests. In the process of trying to achieve that what could follow is the framing theory's suggestion that certain aspects of reality might be selected, organised and emphasised while excluding others (De Vreese, et al 2001: 108). Alexander, et al (1999: 78) say features of enemy images comprise painting a meek picture of a rival party's *"motivations in both substantive and normative terms."* In the picture the enemy is presented as being motivated by only a few self-serving interests, which are all judged evil and immoral (Jervis 1976; cited in Alexander, et al 1999: 78). Green (1993: 327) adds that as soon as the enemy is constructed as an outsider, they are then imagined as devoid of humanity, more of an animal clothed in human skin.

In a classic study of the making and use of enemy images in the media Ottosen (1995) reveals that journalism is tailored to produce certain results at some point and in the

same manner customised to produce different outcomes on the same issue at another time.

Following a content analysis of the media reportage of four international conflicts by three

Norwegian newspapers, Ottosen (1995: 101) examined a sample of 915 articles and states:

In my analyses the situationally determined enemy image represents the

presentation of a concrete hostile action, while the dispositionally determined

enemy image represents the expectation of such an action. By identifying the

situational and the dispositional enemy images we can trace the danger zone

for enemy images in journalism.

Following the above distinction Ottosen (1995: 101) goes on to define dispositional enemy

image as:

…a negative stereotype of a nation, state, religion or/and their respective

regimes and heads of states. The enemy image can express itself through

metaphors or other effects in the language or visual and graphical effects that

create expectations of aggressive, hostile or inhuman behaviour.

Apart from the fact the enemy images are less obvious in news stories than they are

in editorials and commentary columns Ottosen's (1995) major finding is the preponderance

of dispositional trend in the articles. This draws our attention to the situation earlier

highlighted in our analysis of the data from both studies, where some participants fingered

newspaper columnists for stoking the problem. Here is a quote from FGA4 (August 2010), a

participant in one of the focus groups:

Columnists are the main problem as they often try to interpret intentions,

without necessarily seeking to balance.

Hackett (2003: 58) also refers to an article in the *Sunday Standard* of February 28, 1988 where the Prophet Muhammad was described as an 'epileptic prophet'. In explaining how manipulation occurs following such a trend Hackett (2003: 58) adds that:

The predilection of many newspapers for such descriptive labels as 'fundamentalists', 'shiites', 'fanatics', etc., notably when referring to Muslims, is, I would suggest, extremely instrumental in shaping attitudes.

Hackett's (2003) comment reminds of the contributions of two respondents who lament the use of derogatory terms or metaphors by the media on both sides to represent 'otherness':

They allow some writers or contributors to use the word arna (infidels) to refer to Christians, while Christian-owned media are used to refer to Muslims as terrorists or Hausa as malo (cow or animal). This is not good at all and should not be seen on the pages of newspapers or any media. (FGB4 September 2010)

You have already demonised some people when you say Fulani people just think of Dogo Na Hauwa and see all Fulani as people who kill women and children. Or when you say Berom some people link them to people poisoning ponds to kill cattle or attack Fulani in their hamlets. If you continue to report it that Berom attack or Fulani attack you are just piling hatred or perpetuating violent behaviour against certain groups. (R5 August 2010)

Again, in both Hackett's (2003) reference to the article in the *Sunday Standard* and the quote from FGB4 it was commentary columns that were blamed. This is because in news pages, as Ottosen (1995) suggests, it is less obvious even when headlines or texts contain

enemy images. Therefore, based on the findings in the analysis and the discussion above, this researcher postulates that: in the Nigerian media enemy images are commonly used; newspapers on both sides use such images to demonise the other; 'otherness' is a major feature of cultural and political differences between the two divides, North and South, or Islam and Christianity; the media fall into this classification of 'otherness' and constitute a primary site for its expression, often leaving bitter, dangerous feelings in its trail as Kawu argues:

> *But far more frightening for me is the way that the space of knowledge about the "other": The other region, the other religion, or the other people, has narrowed in our country. Knowledge has been trounced by very emotional responses and often very ignorant assumptions, about our compatriots. (Sahara Reporters* 2011).

7.4   STEREOTYPING

Just like the use of enemy images, stereotypes are used to demonise an opponent or a rival in such a way that their negative features, real or perceived, are made to appear more obvious than their positive sides, if any. Lippmann (1922) explains that stereotypes:

> *…get hold of the few simple, vivid, memorable, easily grasped, and widely recognised characters about a person, reduce everything about the person to those traits, exaggerate and simplify them, and fix them without change or development to eternity.* (Hall 1997: 258)

Stereotypes are employed usually by a 'superior' party to reinforce its dominance over an 'inferior' opponent. And similar to any enemy framing process they ensure the preservation of a social and symbolic order in which a group carves out itself as 'us' and alienates the

other, which it regards as 'them', (Hall 1997: 258). Hall expounds further that stereotyping is a 'power/knowledge' game in which people are categorised on the basis of a norm, while those excluded are constructed as 'other', (Hall 1997: 259).

The framing of rivals using stereotypes took a new turn following growing misunderstanding (and misrepresentation) between the Western and the Islamic world (Arabs, Muslims, and Middle Easterners). The September 11, 2001 terrorists attacks on the US was a watershed in this relationship as the American media began symbolising people of Arab or Islamic descent with terrorism and potentially targeting Americans. It is in line with this that Jackson (2010: 9) states:

> *Thus, although one might hope that the most common representation of Islam in American mass media is of an ordinary, good man, woman, or group of believers, instead it is of a dark, often even disembodied, presence, who is, in his own words, out to 'get' Americans.*

The negative framing of Islam/Muslims in the Western media is seen to have a global implication with stereotypes borrowed and applied in local contestations as some conspiracy theorists allege. In Nigeria, for instance, quite a few Muslims believe the type of negative coverage Muslims/Islam/Northerners get from the more vibrant South-based media is directly connected to the global framing of Muslim as the enemy as Jackson (2010) has suggested the American media do. In buttressing the position that has been taken by such theorists, a participant in one of the studies in this thesis argues:

> *That is the mentality, which in any case ties with global mentality – Islamophobia. This is negative propaganda against Islam, which is deliberate*

and organised. What you see sometimes in the Nigerian media, I think, is an attempt to integrate into that Islamophobic way of reporting. (R6 August 2010)

This view is shared by many Muslims in Nigeria and the number of those with such thinking is growing, especially in the North. In one of the focus groups a respondent says:

It's an international phenomenon in which one faith has been painted negatively. Every Muslim is seen as a potential terrorist and that impression has been created on the minds of non-Muslims, except they won't admit it. (FGA6 August 2010)

But Ishaku (2009: 136-137) tries to debunk the claims of conspiracy theorists by linking a prominent Northern newspaper to a violent local Islamic group with alleged ties to Taliban. According to him:

Since 2001, when security intelligence community began to notice the activities of the Talibans (the Boko Haram), Daily Trust newspaper has always attempted to undermine or ridicule security agencies' efforts in tackling this dangerous extremist group. During the arrest and investigation of Bello Damagun and his associates[62], the Weekly Trust (stable-mate of the Daily Trust) called it 'Detention without Trial: FG targets Muslims activists' in its July 10-16, 2004 edition.

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[62] Bello Damagun, who's one of the founders of Media Trust (publishers of *Daily Trust* and its stable-mates), was once accused of sponsoring youths from Northern Nigeria to undertake terrorism training in Mauritania, an allegation he vehemently denied. The issue was taken to court but has since been rested.

From the arguments advanced by both sides - those claiming unwarranted targeting by the Southern media in line with an anti-Islamic global media stereotyping and those attempting to deflate the allegation - it is pertinent to draw attention to Ibrahim's (1989) earlier argument that both sides are complicit in this hate campaign and exacerbation of sectarian crises in Nigeria. Ibrahim has highlighted the call by the *New Nigerian and FRCN Kaduna* on Muslims to fight against Christians' reign of terror in Kafanchan during the religious violence of 1987. He also notes the use of the phrase 'Mullah of easy violence' to describe Muslims by the *Guardian.* In both cases there was clear stereotyping of a larger group following the actions of a few members of each group. It is on this basis that one acknowledges some issues that have arisen in the discussion on stereotyping. These are: stereotypes are used in the Nigerian media to negatively portray the other; in the process violence in the country is amplified by the media; there is also a tendency to misrepresent and therefore paint a false image or wrong impression of the other; there is a strong feeling among Muslims/Northerners that a deliberate hate campaign by the South-based media targets them and their faith; that the said hate campaign is in a bid to join the global bandwagon of anti-Muslim/anti-Islamic hate campaigners; and there is a feeling that the North-based media are shielding extremist Muslim groups with suspected international terrorist connections from the law by alleging Muslim targeting.

7.5   COMPETITION AND NEGATIVE INTERDEPENDENCE

This headline was constructed following analysis of data in both studies revealing the role of factors like basic needs, including identity and security issues, in the crisis. Discussions in this chapter have so far been concerned with the role of the media in maintaining the conflict. This section therefore seeks to address different issues, the causes of the violence as suggested by the data. From our analysis two main factors were identified

as the major causes of the religious conflicts in Nigeria. This, of course, is owing to the general position by respondents that the conflicts are not religious but made to appear religious for certain reasons. First, competition for scarce resources became fiercer in the early 1980s as the government of President Shagari introduced austerity measure. It was in that period that the first noticeable of these conflicts was ignited in Kano on December 18-19, 1980 by the Maitatsine extremist group; at least five thousand lives were lost while many people were unaccounted for (Falola 1998). Between December 1980, when the first Kano riot took place, and December 1998, when the Maiduguri conflict occurred, no fewer than 14 violent conflicts had erupted in various parts of Northern Nigeria with huge destruction of lives and property (Usman 1987; Ibrahim 1989; Falola 1998; Hackett 2003; Kukah 1993; Ishaku 2009). Usman (1987: 72) argues:

> *The attack on, and destruction of, Christian Churches in Sabon Gari Kano, marks the highest, and most dangerous, point this systematic manipulation of religion has yet reached in its opposition to the unity of the people of Nigeria. This incident enables us to see more clearly the purposes and direction of this campaign of manipulation built around religion.*

 The manipulation Usman (1987) mentions above could be the use of frustrated unemployed youths either by extremist religious clerics like Maitatsine or some political leaders. In order to understand this within the context of this study realistic conflict theory (RCT, earlier introduced in Chapter Two), shall be brought into this discussion. Although the term realistic conflict theory was coined by Campbell (1965; Levine & Campbell 1972), RCT actually refers to the theory explaining people's (in-group) perception of competition over scarce resources as a zero-sum game in which their gain is another's (out-group) loss and

vice versa (Brief, Umphress, Dietz, Burrows, Butz, & Scholten 2005), with such a perception of win or lose resulting in increased prejudice against an out-group through the use of stereotypes, like name-calling, and in-group solidarity like awareness of distinct identity, in-group unity and even the acceptance of deviant behaviours of members, use of boundary symbols, and overt discrimination of others, like ethnicity and racism (Sidanius & Pratto 1999; Sherif 1966; Sherif, et al 1961; Brief, et al 2005). Negative interdependence or fierce competition as explained by this theory often results in increased hostility and social conflicts (Echebarria-Echabe & Guede 2003). Thus, competition over such things as territory (land), jobs, power and economic gains (Insko, Schopler, Kennedy, Dahl, Graetz & Drigotas 1992) could spark off violent conflicts. During the Sherif, et al study in the summer of 1949, 1953 and 1954 the introduction of superordinate goals (SG) was the intervention that restored harmony despite an earlier aggressive competition (through raid, name-calling etc). SGs are goals that can only be achieved through interdependence and cooperation. The goals arise where there is a common enemy from outside or a common problem from within (Leyens, et al 1994: 46).

Within the Nigerian situation it is important to look at how the respondents view the role of competition as explained by RCT in the conflict. Quotations from the data shall be used as examples to elaborate the relevance of RCT in this discussion:

I have heard people say poverty contributes to violence and I agree with that completely. If you look at the mass poverty in the North you will see it is one of the attributes or a major cause of the violence. (R5 August 2010)

At the bottom of it all I think it's economic, it's material. It is the struggle for what people think is scarce resource so now people fall back on the ethnic

group or their religion to try and grab as much as they can for themselves. (R1 August 2010)

Ninety per cent of our youths are unemployed and there is massive poverty everywhere with so many people just waiting for anything that would give them an opportunity to loot. They just join the bandwagon as soon as they hear that something is happening. (FGB1 September 2010)

It is about giving the people what to live for and you will see if anybody will die for any religion…Many people are not employed and would easily be manipulated by any news report even when it is not so provocative. (FGB3 September 2010)

In the four quotes above one thing is common and that is the agreement that the conflict is due to economic reasons, which RCT emphasises. It is essential to recall our earlier explanation that the crises first started in the 1980s as Nigeria's economy experienced a sudden plunge. And as the condition continued to deteriorate the rate at which people succumbed to pressure to become violent increased tremendously. In the process of trying to grab for oneself and one's group as much of the scarce resources as possible the religion or tribe issue comes in, which is the second factor.

RCT is complemented by social identity theory (SIT) in explaining the social cognitive aspect of conflict (Tajfel & Turner 1979: 34; Breif, et al 2005: 831). Stemming from the works of Tajfel (1969, 1978a, 1978b, 1982), Tajfel and Turner (1979, 1986) and Turner (1981) SIT explains the role of identity and group formation in competition and conflicts (Insko, et al 1992). It enunciates the primacy of issues like status, self-esteem and beliefs over objective

benefits. Thus, interdependence is central to SIT as it says members of a group become aware that their destiny depends on interdependence (Leyens, et al 1994). People, therefore, form a group when they are aware of the interdependence of their destiny (Rabbie 1991). SIT also discusses in-group favouritism, arguing it is usually induced by factors like shared fate or objective competition. By belonging to a group and knowing that the other person belongs to a different group is enough reason to create prejudice even without knowing that person; just as members of an in-group rate their group better or higher than others' (Brief, et al 2005). In linking this to our study quotes from the data will be used to illustrate the SIT factor in the conflict:

…whenever a political leader falls out with the political class he comes back to tell the people that he is being marginalised because of his ethnicity or religion, and with some little mobilisation, like peanuts, you'll see an army of idle young men unleashing havoc. (R10 August 2010)

They become religious even if they were not at the beginning. The Jos crisis was not religious. The governor is known to be tribalistic even among the various groups in the state, even in his normal life he is known to be tribalistic. (R2 August 2010)

The media worsen the problem by trying to present one side or one religion as the truth while they criticise the other as a bad religion. They cause hatred through this because not everyone is happy with such publications and they can force people to take to violence as they see others as the bad guys and would want to act on that information. (FGB4 September 2010)

The above quotes illustrate respondents' views on how people fall back on identity or interdependence in a bid to make competition a thing of 'us' (in-group) and 'them' (out-group). Politicians are fingered as the biggest culprits as they resort to such a tactic for their personal benefits; because they are losing out they turn to interdependence as their last bastion. This is exactly why SIT says people rely on interdependence when they realise their survival dependents on it. The last quote mentioned the media for being part of the division, because they paint one group as better than the other. They, therefore, encourage in-group versus out-group prejudice and at the same time they constitute an in-group (North-based) as opposed to out-group (Southern/Lagos-Ibadan axis media) and vice versa. While this helps them to competitively outsmart others, it also serves as a fuel for fiercer competition among the people; thereby increasing the possibility of conflict and violence.

At this point one needs to re-introduce the conflict maintenance factor, which the media have been accused of being responsible for. Again, quotes will be used to illustrate respondents' positions.

…the media were divided on the basis of certain sentiments like saying these are my people and I don't care about the others. So the warring parties could only make their plight known to the world through the relationship they have with a particular section of the media. (R7 August 2010)

They are aware of the implications of their reports but often they want to be seen defending their religion than not doing anything because they fear other journalists who are of different religious faith may take advantage and project their view as the right one irrespective of the adverse implications like bloody conflicts and so on. (R8 August 2010)

Some of the print media sometimes don't disseminate the kind of information

they are supposed to pass to the public. They don't say what could actually

calm the public… (FGA2 August 2010)

I once read a column that I felt was clearly biased and seeking to shape

people's opinion. And this is common to both sides. They use these sentiments

to get people to support them and end up polarising and heating up the polity.

(FGA6 August 2010)

There is a need to once again refer to our previous discussion of the background of the various newspapers in Nigeria, based on which it can be deduced that they exhibit the following features: colonial legacy; weapon for fighting colonialism; tool in the hand of politicians to outsmart political opponents; commercial enterprise for people to make money; used by regional and religious groups to polarise the polity and promote their interests. In all the above features there is at least a link to one of the theories, either through economic or group interests and this explains why they have failed to be neutral and are rather encouraging fierce competitions leading to violent conflicts. For instance, the fact that they are used by individuals or groups based in the regions or affiliated to religions might explain the link to economic benefits (RCT) or group/tribe's interest (SIT). Also commercial benefits clearly show their drive to make money, which is an economic factor. But they are not directly the cause of the conflicts. This takes us to the argument by Gauntlett (1998) that the media effects model erroneously focuses attention on the relations between violence/crime and media contents. However, based on the findings of Hagell and Newburn's (1994) study, violence or crime has no connection with media (or

newspaper in this case) usage as especially people have less access to papers given the declining readership/circulation figures earlier mentioned.

7.6   CROSS-CULTURAL EDUCATION AND EXCHANGES

Nigeria's division could be described as one arising from issues like perceived cultural dissimilarities. It was mentioned earlier (in Chapter 1) that the country came into being following the colonisation of the different ancient kingdoms, empires, caliphate and chiefdoms operated on distinctive cultural beliefs and religious faiths. These differences were compounded by the manner of colonialism/administration applied in the different regions, leading to the emergence of a Muslim North that is distinct from the Christian South, with each side feeling cheated and bitter (Hackett 2003; Salawu 2006; Gumi 1992; Ishaku 2009). Although Hackett (2003) argues there have been attempts by successive governments to negotiate the differences, especially on religion, not much success has been achieved. Today most of the crises arise due to these differences.

Despite the failures to deal with the problem sufficiently there have been suggestions from participants to adopt a mass enlightenment campaign about the different cultures of the people. It is believed that when better educated people would learn to treat each other with more respect than is currently the case. Noor, et al (2008) have suggested that the best way of getting past any conflict and its painful experiences is by reconciling the warring parties, flagging off the healing process leading to mutual acceptance between conflicting groups (Staub & Bar-Tal 2003; Noor, et al 2008: 482). But reconciliation has to take place on the foundation of forgiveness offered and accepted by each in-group and out-group, although there might be enormous resistance from both sides due to the psychological trauma of their experiences. In their experiment with this in the conflict of

Northern Ireland, Noor, et al (2008) note that such resistance was stiff towards intergroup reconciliation despite a peace agreement. Fundamentally, they identify past wrongdoings as a stumbling block and suggest dealing with those in order to achieve forgiveness and reconciliation. And in the process they propose discouraging revenge, which could collapse the entire process and re-ignite violence.

In his study of the intervention process in Northern Ireland, Neil Ferguson (2010) argues the conflict has left the society sharply polarised, as demonstrated by two detached cultural substructures through which different cultural and sporting organisations, newspapers, preferred histories, political parties and school systems are accessed (Mac Ginty, Muldoon & Ferguson 2007; Ferguson 2010). Ferguson (2010) further explains that in spite of its rebuttal, by some, and other hurdles intervention in the form of introducing integrated schools has hugely reduced segregation with integrated schools becoming over sub-scribed in 2007. Even in situations where Protestants and Catholics continued to run non-integrated schools, Ferguson (2010) maintains that rules were introduced to ensure cross-community contact, promote greater tolerance and boost equal opportunities (Gallagher 2004; Ferguson 2010). Education for Mutual Understanding (EMU) and Cultural Heritage (CH) introduced in the Education Reform Order (1989) stipulated compulsory cross-curricular themes in the two sides' school systems. The stimulus of this intervention, as Ferguson (2010) notes, comes from contact hypothesis (Allport 1954), which seeks to convene conflicting individuals/groups into contact with the aim of shedding off ignorance and prejudices through new impressions empowered by knowledge (Allport 1954; Ferguson 2010; Hean & Dickinson 2005: 481; Christian & Lapinsky 2003: 248). Following a study of the origin of intergroup prejudices and likely conflicts Allport (1954) propounded contact

hypothesis on four preconditions in order to ensure the reduction of in-group solidarity with the intent of discouraging out-group hostility. These prerequisites, which have risen to more than four, suggest that contact must be prolonged, it must involve some co-operative activity, must have official support for the integration, the parties should be equal in number and status, there must be one-to-one contact, the contact must be voluntary, it must involve an opportunity for friendship, must provide information to dispel ignorance, should highlight similarities and differences and take place in a pleasant surrounding (Cairns 1996; Pettigrew 1998; Ferguson 2010; Hewstone & Brown 1986; Hean & Dickinson 2005).

Since it was advanced by Allport (1954) contact hypothesis has been found to have its limitations and this explains why the preconditions outlined above were suggested. And given that one of the aims of intergroup contact is to ensure the emergence of a common (in-group) identity to tackle/end a conflict there is a need for longer contact and more intimacy. In the Nigerian situation the government introduced the mandatory NYSC in 1973[63] to contribute towards healing the wounds of the country's 30-month civil war and enhance cultural awareness and inter-relationships. But the aims have yet to be realised. The people have continued to be divided and the media are part of the division and have played a vital role in maintaining it. In a survey to assess the performance of NYSC, Obadare (2010: 45) sampled the opinions of 90 serving and former corps members. Analysing the data, Obadare (2010) argues that despite 50 per cent of the participants agreeing that NYSC has failed to achieve its general aims and objectives, in response to whether the scheme has contributed to national integration 56.7 per cent answered yes. But Obadare (2010) also

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[63] National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) is a mandatory (12 months) civic plus a brief military exercise aimed at preparing fresh Nigerian graduates for the challenges of Nation Building, like patriotism, community development and inter-cultural understanding and tolerance. A more detailed explanation is given in Chapter One.

notes that the serving corps members had a more positive opinion about the scheme, probably due to their enthusiasm and inexperience, than the alumni that took part in the study. Explaining some of the possible reasons for the participants' belief that the programme has not been able to promote national integration or foster cross-cultural exchanges, Obadare (2010: 48) states:

> *In many cases, new friendships, groups and companionships were still formed along ethno-religious divides during and after the orientation camps. Most corps members who were posted to areas outside their regions of origin and who had different religious faiths were often not accepted in their places of primary assignment. Besides, the recurrent problems of religious clashes (intolerance), negative ethnicity and inter-ethnic killings, and the leadership crisis in Nigeria over the past thirty years lent further credence to the complaints voiced by respondents.*

In the aftermath of the violence that saluted the outcome of the April 2011 presidential election in Nigeria there were a few suggestions for the abolition of NYSC or its restructure due to the murder of 10 serving members in some Northern states. Asaju, while contributing to the debate in a newspaper column (*Sunday Trust July 3, 2011)* argues:

> *It would therefore seem logical that what is needed is mobilization of communities to accept these youngsters as part of the community. This can be done using the stick and carrot game; an amendment to the NYSC Act stipulating strong penalties for communities that harm them.*

Among the penalties suggested by the writer are the imposition of heavy fines or the closure of government presence in any community whose hostility leads to the death of a corps member, so as to serve as a strong disincentive to potentially hostile communities that might want to attack what Asaju (2010) describes as *"the base of a country's unity and the NYSC is an enviable cornerstone of national integration."*[64]

While the writer earlier emphasised the issue of integration which, as they suggested might be achieved if the host communities were mobilised, maybe through sensitisation, to accept and integrate corps members, the use of punitive measures might need to be seriously considered and implemented. This is because integration is reciprocal, requiring both the host and the guest agreeing to it, which could be achieved through a sustained campaign stressing its mutual benefits. In the case of Northern Ireland, the Education Reform Order (1989) was successfully used to ensure compulsory cross-cultural themes in the school systems of the two sides in conflict. It was a stimulus of intervention that was based on the application of contact hypothesis. A reformation of the NYSC Act as suggested by Asaju (2011) could be very necessary here too; making contact hypothesis its motivation could also make it a success. It is, perhaps, based on this that a respondent in one of the interviews suggests:

> *Before NYSC, we should ensure that pupils have cultural exchanges that would enrich their world-view and help them treat others as they would want to be treated."* (R16 September 2010)

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[64] Tunde Asaju's article entitled 'NYSC- to be or not to be' was accessed via the following link http://sunday.dailytrust.com/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=7129:nysc--to-be-or-not-to-be&catid=42:wakaman&Itemid=113 accessed 19 July, 2011.

Cultural education, as the participant has advocated, should not be at the point of mandatory corps service or journalism training, it should be at a much earlier stage as the example in Northern Ireland has shown. In almost every of the data analysed in this study there has been a consensus among participants that Nigerians need to know more about each other's way of life to be able to co-exist. In the case of journalists, being the watchdog of the society, there have been suggestions that they also need enough cultural knowledge to be able to educate others. According to a participant:

In Nigeria for example, it will be quite important if a Mass Communication student from Kano is made to understand the cultural and religious ceremonies of the Yoruba and Igbo. In this way we will know and appreciate our similarities and differences, which will prevent stereotyping. In a word I will suggest better exposure for our trainee journalists to our different cultures. (R6 August 2010)

Another respondent also dwells on a need for further education of journalists to enable them to properly enlighten others:

NUJ needs to wake up and educate its members because they also need education before they can educate others. (FGA5 August 2010)

Juxtaposing the various views from the data as shown in this section, one might conclude that cultural education, including contact hypothesis, is essentially needed in the Nigerian situation albeit with certain modifications to suit the realities on the ground. Some of these realities are the obvious dissimilarities in the people's cultures and religious beliefs,

foreign cultural influences[65] and most importantly socio-economic conditions. As the Noor, et al (2008) experience in Northern Ireland shows, there is a need to resolve certain underlying problems for forgiveness and reconciliation to be achieved, which would lead to the transformation of the conflict. Thus, one would suggest at this point that: cultural education begin at much earlier school levels to prepare young minds for cultural tolerance and peaceful coexistence; governments at various levels need to support and ensure its emphasis in the school curricula; in addition to mandatory corps service young people too should be encouraged to learn peace studies and cultural education as compulsory courses in tertiary institutions; communities should be sensitised about the benefits of NYSC and be encouraged to accept and integrate corps members; employers be encouraged to promote codes of conducts prohibiting stereotyping and encourage cultural tolerance; and a robust cultural and anti-corruption enlightenment campaign using the media, following their own education on inter-culture and improvement of their welfare status, be adopted and encouraged by governments in collaboration with media owners.

7.7   CONCLUSION

It is essential to conclude this chapter by drawing from the various theories analysed in Chapter Two explaining the tendency among humans to become aggressive and drift to violence or violent conflicts. For instance, the biological theory (including Freud's (1920) explanation of the instincts of life and death being inherent and in constant conflict) has argued that aggression is genetic in mankind and often manifests as man interacts with other humans. There was also the social and economic explanation linked to Ardrey (1976) that argues that mankind is intolerant of the presence of strangers in their territory, while

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[65] The South is more inclined to Westernisation, while the North is more tilted to the East. Refer to Chapter One.

the psycho-political trauma school has suggested that previous traumatic experiences could transform people into violent types.

Other explanations were the frustration-aggression hypothesis (FAH) arguing that people could become frustrated if they fail to achieve certain goals they have set for themselves and tend to blame it on a weaker target, specifically invented to vent such frustrations. In the case of Rwanda, Zimbardo (2009: 15-16) quotes a Hutu genocide suspect explaining how they turned Tutsis to scapegoats in order to vent their frustration. There was also Zillman's (1994) explanation that arousal by one issue could combine with arousal by another (different) issue to either increase or decrease the tendency of one to be violent. Yet the question of basic needs, including security and identity, was the most delicate of all factors considered likely to provoke violent conflicts. For instance, in all the conflicts studied in Chapter Two, as well as the Nigerian situation, there were suggestions that group identity and perceived inequality substantially played a role in causing the conflicts. People form in-groups to defend or preserve their identity and become hostile to out-groups seen as distinctively different. And as Jeong (2008: 55) observes: *"Stronger, exclusive identity increases the chances for an in-group to defame, and justify discrimination against an out-group with the development of stereotypes."* In-groups are, thus, formed by setting boundaries on the basis on region, religion, tribe or even clan or certain features that might have been deliberately constructed to satiate the desires of manipulative leaders or politicians. SIT has explained that people fall back on interdependence when they become aware that their destiny depends on it. Such destiny might not be unconnected to one's economic needs. For example one of the respondents in our studies has opined that:

At the bottom of it all I think it's economic, it's material. It is the struggle for

what people think is scarce resource so now people fall back on the ethnic

group or their religion to try and grab as much as they can for themselves. (R1

August 2010)

In the process of trying to grab as much as possible for oneself and one's ethnic or in-group,

competition for scarce resources becomes fierce and likely violent. Brief, et al (2005) have

argued that competition over scarce resources is considered a zero-sum game in which an

in-group's gain means an out-group's loss. Therefore, every means might be employed to

ensure victory, like the use of stereotypes and enemy images or name-calling. There might

also be a resort to violence, as some examples have illustrated.

 Since the early 1980s Nigeria has continuously witnessed violent conflicts between

people of different tribes and religions in the country; notably between Muslims and

Christians. In almost all cases it was blamed on religion. But as the illustrative quote above

from a respondent R1 shows religion is only used as a decoy. This is so because, as R1 and

many other respondents have opined, religion is seen as easily amenable to manipulation.

Another respondent R7 (August 2010) has also argued that:

People hide under the cover of religion to attract sympathy and therefore use

religion. But when you give it closer look you find out all the reasons that make

it not religious are there. The only thing is that the people fighting against

each other belong to two different religions.

 An important point to note in the argument above in relations to both SIT and RCT is

that people intent on realising their desire, a desire to grab as much of the scarce resources

as possible, have realised the best way to do so is by forming groups through which such agenda might be realised. In the process religion, which sets a boundary for defining an in-group against an out-group, is manipulated. This manipulation of religion, with real economic undercurrents, was what Usman (1987) has decried and described as the bane of Nigeria's unity. Thus, every participant in the conflict appears bent on using religion but in the real sense the goal is mainly economic. Politicians manipulate the people for economic reasons; unemployed youths allow themselves to be manipulated because they have no real reason to live, life seems meaningless to them, and they are hopeless and frustrated; the media manipulate their audience either because they are owned by manipulative politicians or that they want to increase sales by being identified with certain ethno-religious beliefs. In the end the goal is simple: selfish economic interest.

In the entire argument, therefore, the most important motive in the conflict in Nigeria is not religious but economic; from the Maitatsine crisis to the current one in Jos and other parts of the Plateau. This explains why, just as Sherif, et al (1961) observed in their studies in 1949, 1953 and 1954, while participants reformed cohesive groups and resumed fiercer competition, including name-calling and raids, their leaders chose not to restore sanity because they were benefitting from the chaos. In Nigeria the same seems to be happening as political leaders appear more interested in perpetuating the cleavages in the system and would rather be seen as ethnic or tribal champions. While there is a need to introduce a superordinate goal (SG) as Sherif (1961) did to restore sanity, the case of Northern Ireland is worth emulating. Ferguson (2010) has explained how EMU was introduced to promote an integrated schools system and reduce dissimilarities and prejudices. In Nigeria, although the NYSC was introduced to foster unity its goals have yet to

be realised. This explains why there is a need to reform the programme so it can address crucial cross-cultural issues, and this might need to start at a much earlier stage as a respondent has posited:

> *Before NYSC, we should ensure that pupils have cultural exchanges that would enrich their world-view and help them treat others as they would want to be treated.* (R16 September 2010)

As in the case of Northern Ireland, again, which pivoted its EMU on Allport's (1954) contact hypothesis, Nigeria might need to adopt contact hypothesis and adapt it to its specific situation, using a reformed NYSC as SG.

In the concluding chapter of this thesis, Chapter Eight, there will be an overall summarisation of all the previous chapters, as well as discussions of the limitations of this study, its findings, contribution to knowledge and recommendations/suggestion of areas that need further researching.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Conclusion

8   INTRODUCTION

This study has been an attempt to explore, understand and discuss the way in which the media, particularly newspapers, report religious conflicts in Nigeria, and how this might have contributed in amplifying the crises. Beyond just looking at the various conflicts and their causes, there were also attempts to understand where, how and why other factors helped in maintaining the conflicts. Newspapers (journalists) were specifically identified for maintaining the conflicts because of their own links to the divisions in the country. For instance newspapers are owned by proprietors or group of proprietors that are more interested in promoting regional rather than national goals as well as their commercial interests. As such they are seen to be (or actually) based in a particular region, staffed by editors, columnists and reporters with regional view points, and promoting regional cultures and beliefs etc. In addition to the above, the workplace (including financial) condition of journalists in Nigeria was considered. It was found that journalists are underpaid or (in some cases) unpaid. This means they are impoverished and vulnerable, and might be very willing to do anything to earn themselves money, even at the expense of professional ethics. An attempt was further made to understand this within the clientelistic culture of Nigeria.

The thesis is made of eight chapters and Chapter One provided a setting within which the entire study could be understood. Thus, there was an introduction explaining what the researcher planned to do like investigating the nature of the violence,

understanding the level and manner of involvement of the media and attempting to develop a strategy for understanding the problem and transforming it. It was based on this the aims/objectives of the study were outlined: to critically examine the emergence of newspapers in Nigeria and how it might be linked to their perception and choice of news values; to extensively investigate the influence of ownership and control among other issues, on newspapers and how it affects the reportage of religion/religious conflicts in Nigeria; to carefully determine how it might be possible for the media to manipulate their audiences/readers; to thoroughly examine the role of political and socio-economic factors in the crises; and to significantly expose the danger of manipulation and its relations to violent conflicts in the country. The significance of the study were stated as follows, to: profoundly understand the particular challenges of reporting religion/religious violence in complex societies like Nigeria; genuinely proffer solutions to the problems discovered; significantly contribute to discourses on ownership, control and use of the media in the study of journalism and society in colleges and universities; and to particularly device a framework for critically examining the issues highlighted and means by which ethnic, cultural and religious similarities might be emphasised while de-emphasising dissimilarities especially in societies with complexities like Nigeria, using the media as a conduit. Most importantly, the researcher summarized the research questions they were hoping to provide answers to, which included: To what extent do the media (newspapers) in Nigeria provide a platform for promoting religious disharmony? What are the factors that make it difficult for journalists in Nigeria not to be biased when reporting religion or religious conflict? How are enemy images and stereotypes created in news production and reporting? To what extent are the conflicts actually religious? Against the above background attempts were made to have an understanding of the environment in which the media operate in Nigeria. Thus, Nigeria's

history was traced; there was also a look at the history of the print media in the country; an attempt was made to chronologically review religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria; efforts were made to understand the country's political culture; and the framework for conducting this study, phenomenological research, as well Hallin and Mancini's (2004) typology for studying media systems that was referred to in a contextualised format several times in the thesis, was outlined.

Although some literature had been reviewed in the previous chapter, more was considered in Chapter Two. There were attempts to understand the manifestation of violence among humans and how this could be linked to the various conflicts that have been witnessed especially from the late 1980s and 1990s up until now. For example the conflicts in Rwanda, Darfur, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Northern Ireland were studied briefly, bringing out the causes and involvement of the media either in stoking or mitigating the problem. There was also an attempt to study the reporting of religious conflicts in Northern Nigeria with a view to understanding the roles played by the media in either causing or amplifying the crises.

Chapter Three dwelled on the research methodologies the researcher has used in trying to complete the study. Thus, efforts were made to first explain some philosophical terms like ontology and epistemology and their relationship to this study, particularly the choice of a theoretical approach. In the end a strand of interpretivism, phenomenology was identified as the approach most suitable for the study. Phenomenology and the rationale for its choice were thoroughly explained. There were also explanations about the research design and process, as well as data collection methods. Therefore, the researcher elucidated that they collected newspaper back copies (of two Nigerian newspapers) used for analysing the reporting of a religious crisis through critical discourse analysis (CDA). Also, it was

explained that primary data were collected by means of semi-structured and focus group interviewing in Nigeria. The method of analysis was also identified as interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA).

Chapter Four contains the first of the three studies in this thesis. It opened with further description and discussion of critical discourse analysis (CDA). The research and analytic processes were also explained, describing how themes for analysis and headings for discussion in the chapter emerged. The themes included: aggravation/finger pointing; indifference/lack of concern; pessimism/exaggeration; satire/use of rhetoric/labels; and peacebuilding/conciliatory efforts. Employing CDA, reports by two Nigerian newspapers of the November 2008 violence in Jos, central Nigeria, were analysed. Thus, the *THISDAY* and *Daily Trust* reports between November 29, 2008 and December 26, 2008 were examined. This was followed by discussions, using Teun van Dijk's (2001) model especially, to conclude the chapter by explaining the meaning and framing of headlines and texts of news stories/articles/opinions among others, under the following headings: regional cleavages; enemy framing; misinformation; and peacebuilding.

Chapter Five is the second of the studies, the analysis of semi-structured interview data obtained from Nigeria. The research process narrated how data were collected following interviews with 16 participants who were mainly journalists, editors, newspaper proprietors, columnists and commentators. After transcription the analytic process described how, following several readings of transcripts, superordinate and sub-themes emerged which were used through IPA to analyse and interpret the data. Participants were coded R1-16. Themes under which the analysis was presented were: public interest journalism; causes of the conflict; the North/South divide; the creation and maintenance of enemy images and stereotypes; ideal versus reality; and recommendations/peacebuilding.

The third of the studies is in Chapter Six. It was in this chapter that the two focus groups data were analysed and interpreted using the same methodology as applied in Chapter Five that is explanation of the research and analytic processes detailing how interviews were conducted, as well as transcription, readings and construction of superordinate and sub-themes. In the chapter, the two focus groups were simultaneously analysed although different codes were assigned each group to distinguish them. For instance the Jos focus group was code-named FGA while the Kano focus group was assigned the code FGB. During the analysis similar codes with numeric were combined to produce codes for each participant and this helped to differentiate a participant from other participants. The superordinate themes were: publisher interest; causes of the conflict; media fuelling the conflict; demonization; and recommendations.

Discussions of the findings in both Chapters Five and Six were presented in Chapter Seven. The chapter is made up of eight sections, six of which were headlines for discussions that included regional cleavages, patron clientelism, enemy images, stereotyping, competition and negative interdependence, and cross-cultural education and exchanges. Each of the headlines emerged from the themes that were constructed during the data analysis and linked to a theory providing explanations for the issues identified under them. Thus, findings in the studies in Chapters Five and Six provided the appropriate illustrations for the discussions in this chapter.

Finally, Chapter Eight provides a platform for explaining all that has been done in this and previous chapters, from one to eight. It is, therefore, a summary of the entire thesis and also an attempt to discuss the findings as well as factors or issues that contributed in one way or the other to limiting the capacity or ability of this researcher to complete the study. In addition to the issues the researcher explained in this chapter some areas that although

the researcher might or might not have intended covering were not touched or not properly investigated due to the limitations mentioned earlier. The researcher has therefore identified these areas and made suggestions for further research to fill up the lacuna this study could not cover.

8.1   FINDINGS AND CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

When this study started it had been hoped that some contribution might be made to knowledge. Particularly, the researcher wanted to study, understand, and critically analyse the patterns in which newspaper reports are tailored to produce certain results that might cause or contribute to the causes of conflicts. It was hoped that there would be further understanding of the events behind the scene that often fuel these conflicts and consider options for resolving the problem. In view of all this, the researcher was hoping to device a framework for critically examining the issues highlighted and means by which ethnic, cultural and religious similarities might be emphasised while de-emphasising dissimilarities especially in societies with complexities like Nigeria, using the media as a conduit. Most importantly, it was expected that the ideas generated might be useful in the study of journalism and conflict resolution in colleges and universities etc. It was also thought that such ideas might be helpful to policymakers in formulating policies that would lead to resolving ethnic and/or religious conflicts.

Against the above backdrop, a number of discoveries were made that are significant towards understanding the roles of the media and others factors (like economic and political) in inter-religious crises in Nigeria. First, whereas the impression often created is that the conflicts are religious it was discovered that religion is actually used as a tool of manipulation. The real factors are economic and to some extent political, which are interrelated in this respect. Both literature examination and data analyses have revealed the

role of economic factors in the conflict. For instance, it was noted that religious crises started erupting from the 1980s in Nigeria when the country's economy faced recession. The situation worsened as things got worse. A number of the respondents also cited this as a major cause, arguing that idle youths are often used as foot soldiers.

Second, religion and ethnicity/tribe are also used in the conflict because they are seen as a means of swelling the ranks of parties in the conflict. Religion, in particular, is more amenable to manipulation and often used by both parties to draw support across the country. The geo-political division of Nigeria into the North and South easily allows for the categorisation of regions into certain religious affiliations as opposed to others. The North, for example, is believed to be predominantly Muslim, while the South is considered populated by more Christians than Muslims. Thus, in the event of any conflict each party appeals to people from the region it is more likely to draw sympathy or support. This explanation is best understood if we refer back to the discussion in Chapter One in which Nigeria's history was traced from pre-colonial era to present day; how people with little or no cultural similarities were brought together as a country; and the impacts these dissimilarities are continuing to have on the people and country.

Third, the media (especially newspapers) are part of and linked to the divisions because they are also a colonial creation and have continued the same old rivalry, thereby stoking ethnic/religious hate and fuelling violence. It is essential to note that the study has also discovered that they are not the cause of the problem. But they are part of it because they are owned by proprietors that are linked in one way or the other to the cleavages; they are based in one region or the other and tend to promote regional interests; they are affiliated to one religious belief or the other and/or easily have access to and present the views of people from one religious group; they are mainly staffed by people from one

section of the society and because they are product of the same divisive society they tend to portray such view points. This might explain why demonization of one group by the other is common and both sides have been fingered for using the media to carry out such campaigns.

Fourth, Nigeria's political culture, it has been found, should also be blamed for the crises in the society. Falola (2009) has described the political culture as violence, while endemic corruption and ethnicity/tribalism are seen to be crucially part of the problem. They combine, based on the findings of this researcher, to present a mixed bag of Nigeria's political culture and play a substantial role in defining relationships amongst people in the country. This makes more sense if the plight of some newspapers is considered i.e. in the hands of manipulative or dubious publishers in collusion with unscrupulous editors/managers who recruit reporters and compel them to conform by peddling falsehood or championing unethical journalistic practices. For example, there were suggestions that some publishers employ quack reporters whom they fail to pay wages but allow them to be used in planting false stories, which are published without double checking. In some media organisations salaries are often unpaid or underpaid, leaving journalists with no choice but to succumb to pressure from the clientelistic system.

Fifth, the influence of new media and technology in redefining journalism is an interesting discovery. This is so because non-journalists are taking over the role of professionals and they justify this act. Citizen journalism plays a major role in that it enunciates immersion in the story, which might explain why some reporters with mainstream media do not have any problem with being one-sided or nakedly biased. This might also explain why some media organisations are proudly flaunting their links to a side as opposed to the other and see no fault in that, in spite of professional ethics. The use of

mobile phones to circulate rumours is also another important discovery. The fact that majority of the population targeted are illiterate makes it even easier for them to be manipulated. It is easier for someone to claim reading or hearing something, and then circulate such story through text messages to hundreds of people. Such information/rumour might be further spread through word of mouth as was the case in Rwanda.

Sixth, in spite of the seemingly daunting issues in the above discoveries it was also found that many of the respondents were optimistic that there might be some glimmer of hope for transforming the conflict. It was based on this that many suggested re-education or further education to understand their differences and foster unity through such understanding. A respondent actually noted that the more the dissimilarities were studied the more it might be realised that there were more similarities than differences. Cross-cultural education and exchanges were thus proposed as a way of fostering understanding, facilitating long-term contacts and sharing values and beliefs.

The significance of all this is that the study has explained or exposed that the media (newspapers) in Nigeria are situated within a specific context or environment which regulates or constraints their performance or objectivity. This is important as the media are best understood in relations to the society in which they operate, as Hallin and Mancini (2004) argue, and in this case the Nigerian situation with its culture of corruption (and violence and tribalism) provides a prism for explaining the willingness of journalists to succumb to being used to maintain violent conflicts. In the study of journalism and society understanding this cause and effect relationship might be useful in understanding the delicate position of the media and how they could be cautiously and positively utilised to divert from being willing tools in the hands of manipulative patrons.

8.2   LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

A number of factors stood in the way of making this research a total success, some of which will be explained shortly. First, time was a major constrain as the entire thesis must be completed with a minimum time of three years and maximum time of four years. Aware of this handicap the researcher had to be cautious to set a realistic target. For instance an initial plan was made to collect data from the Nigerian cities of Jos, Lagos, Kaduna, Kano and Abuja. But the plan had to be modified to allow the researcher to realistically spend sufficient time in Jos, Abuja and Kano. And although the participants were carefully selected to present a national outlook the fact that no survey was specifically conducted in Lagos could limit the outcome of the findings.

Another limitation was money. The researcher's initial plan was to visit Nigeria in the first quarter of 2010 to collect data. But this plan changed because funding was not available until July 2010 when the trip was undertaken. And because of this limitation only three cities could be visited to conduct the survey. Within Nigeria too, finances became a major issue as the researcher needed a research assistant to help with fixing interviews and providing other logistical assistance. Although in the end a volunteer agreed to take up the position their feeding and other costs of maintenance during the survey had to be borne by the researcher. This added to the strain faced by the researcher and increased the need to complete the survey as quickly as possible.

There was also a culture of not keeping to appointments and time schedule in Nigeria. As was explained in Chapter Three there was an occasion a very important interviewee kept the researcher waiting for eight hours and this affected other plans as a plan to head back to Jos that day was cancelled. It also affected the researcher's finances as a hotel accommodation had to be sought within a short space of time. On another occasion

while trying to catch a flight to Lagos there were cancellations and further delays even after boarding flight. The researcher ended up being in Lagos late at night; the interviews had to be cancelled completely as the researcher headed back to the UK the next day.

Although the situation in Jos was worrying, given growing cases of isolated killings and the likelihood of sudden violent eruptions, the researcher was determined to carry on with the survey, albeit cautiously. The only limitation this caused was the failure to meet up with interview participants who were not comfortable with taking the risk of travelling from their safe communities (havens) to even neutral places. Thus, some key participants were not able to take part in the study. The researcher was also conscious of time factor and hoping not to end up with too much data, so some people that were vital to the research could not be included. For example only 16 individual interviews and two focus groups were done. Originally it had been hoped that at least 30 semi-structured and four focus group interviews would be conducted. Also, there was a plan to analyse four newspaper reports through content analysis. The plans were changed after taking into consideration time limitation and the need to avoid doing too much.

8.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Given the limitations discussed in Section 8.2 it is imperative that suggestions for further studies in some areas should follow. Some of the discoveries described in Section 8.1 could not be effectively addressed in this study. This was so because it would require completely fresh studies to adequately address those areas; this researcher will therefore suggest further research in the following areas:

There is a major problem with having alternative media to address issues that have been neglected by the mainstream media as they struggle to project sectional or regional interests. It is important to carry out further studies to understand the actual need for

alternative media and the likely effect it will have on the manner in which information is disseminated. It is helpful to recall that in our analysis it was realised that the absence of alternative media to counter the propagandist influence of most news media resulted in the people resorting to the circulation of rumours through mobile phones which further inflamed the situation. This is so because non-journalists use such medium to peddle falsehood. Despite this discovery the researcher could not do much to investigate it further and, therefore, suggests it should be taken further by another researcher.

Another area needing further research is the extent to which the financial and workplace conditions of journalists affect their commitment to objective journalism. A participant in one of the studies had argued that *"all the time journalists are in a matchbox except that it is a very big matchbox."* Put in another way, journalists may have a choice but this also restricted. They could just continue to work for manipulative media and toe the line, like others, or decide not to. In each case there are major repercussions: the one for the society as professional ethics are jettisoned and conflicts are further fuelled; and the other for the journalists as they may lose their source of livelihood and some clientelistic benefits that come with succumbing to manipulation. It is important that this situation is studied on its own in order to understand the extent to which such temptation is actually thrown at journalists resulting in a compromise. It is also essential to understand the real influence of the country's clientelistic culture in all this and how it might be mitigated or checkmated.

The third area of interest that was discovered during this study is the role of citizen journalism in redefining public interest and how it may be achieved. This brand of journalism practice emphasises immersion in the story and this is where the issue of objectivity becomes a subject of controversy. While citizen journalists argue that you can

immerse yourself in the story and still be objective there are quite a few people who believe in traditional journalism practice that argues otherwise. It is an important issue that needs further researching to understand whether immersion might be possible even as objectivity is not neglected; or how it might not be possible to talk about immersion and objectivity in one breath.

Finally, it might appear as if the real influence of the media and their ability to manipulate or contribute towards causing crises has been hyperbolized. It is therefore important to further address this by specifically studying the political economy of the media in Nigeria. This can only be done if one is able to find out their daily circulation (sales) units and how much accrues to each of them every financial year. At the moment there is no sufficient information about those and media owners are happy to disguise or hide such information, which makes it look really dodgy. A particular study to find out this might be able to address a number of other questions.

8.4   CONCLUSION

This chapter is the concluding part of this thesis. It has been able to explain how this study started and what the researcher was hoping to achieve in the end. It has also highlighted other chapters and their contents, especially what the researcher did in those chapters. In all eight chapters of the thesis, there was an explanation as to what was the expectation at the beginning and how or what was achieved. Other issues that have been addressed in this chapter are the limitations of the study, based on which the researcher explained that some factors stood in the way to limit its success. There was also a discussion of the contribution the study might make to knowledge, like the possibility of devising a framework through which ethnic, cultural and religious similarities might be emphasised while de-emphasising dissimilarities especially in societies with complexities like Nigeria, using the media as a

conduit, which could be used in the study of media and society as well as conflict resolution or peace studies. There were also a number of suggested areas for further research, including alternative media, the financial and workplace conditions of journalists, citizen journalism, and political economy of the mainstream media.

GLOSSARY OF ACRONYMS USED IN THE THESIS

AC Action Congress, currently leading opposition party with the strongest support in South-West

ADVAN Advertisers Association of Nigeria

AFP Agence France Press

ANPP All Nigerian People's Party

AP Associated Press

ASUU Academic Staff Union of University

BBC British Broadcasting Corporation

CA Content Analysis

CAN Christian Association of Nigeria

CDA Critical Discourse Analysis

CDR Coalition for the Defence of the Republic (Hutu extremist group)

CH Cultural Heritage

CODESRIA Counsel for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa

COS Chief of Army Staff

CRK Christian Religious Knowledge

DA Discourse Analysis

DW Deutsche Welle

ECWA Evangelical Church of West Africa

EMU Education for Mutual Understanding

FAH Frustration Aggression Hypothesis

FG Federal Government

FRCN Federal Radio Corporation of Nigeria Kaduna

GNPP Great Nigeria People's Party

HRW Human Rights Watch

IBB Ibrahim Badamasi Babangida

IGP Inspector General of Police

INEC Independent National Electoral Commission

IPA Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis

IRA Irish Republican Army

JEM Justice and Equality Movement

JNA Yugoslav National Army

June 12 Acronym for democracy in the annals of Nigeria's history (June 12, 1993)

MASOB Movement for the Actualisation of the State of Biafra, a pan-Ibo group

MSS Muslim Students Society of Nigeria

NACOMYO National Council of Muslim Youth Organisation

NASFAT Nasril Fati, a Muslim organisation

NATO North Atlantic Treaty Organisation forces involved in peacekeeping operations

NECO National Examination Council

NIPR Nigeria Institute of Public Relations

NLSS National Living Standard Survey

NNN New Nigerian Newspapers

NNPC Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation

NPC National Population Commission

NPN National Party of Nigeria

NPP Nigerian People's Party

NRA Ugandan National Resistance Army

NYSC National Youth Service Corps

OPC Odu'a People's Congress, a pan-Yoruba organisation

OUP the Official Unionist Party

PDP People's Democratic Party, Nigeria's biggest political party since 1999

PLSG Plateau State Government

PLASIEC Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission

RCT Realistic Conflict Theory

RFI Radio France International

RFP Rwandan Patriotic Front

RTLMC Radio Television Libre des Collines, one of Hutus' anti-Tutsi hate campaign media

SDLP Social Democratic and Labour Party

SG Superordinate Goals

SIT Social Identity Theory

SLA Sudan Liberation Army

SPLA Southern People Liberation Army

UPN Unity Party of Nigeria

UVF Ulster Volunteer Force

VOA Voice of America

WAEC West Africa Examination Council

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APPENDECES

The first survey technique was Semi-Structured interviewing and the following questions were presented to participants:

1. What is your experience with reporting religion/religious conflict in Nigerian newspapers?

2. What is your assessment of the suggestion that most religious violence in Nigeria are, in fact, ethnic and or political problems dressed up in the garment of religion and amplified by the media?

3. How aware are journalists who write about religion/religious crises of the effects of their reports/articles on the audience?

4. How much control do newspapers have over what they publish, particularly those affecting or relating to religion?

5. Tell me about the recruitment policy of your organisation.

6. How much does a journalist's remuneration/welfare package contribute in ensuring objectivity/professionalism?

7. In what ways are journalists/reporters made aware of boundaries beyond which they must not step in the course of their work?

8. What is your assessment of the assertion that negative reports about the "other" reinforce prejudice and encourage extremism?

9. If you were to suggest a restructure of the current regime of journalism training in Nigeria what changes would you advocate for making journalists more aware of their watch dog role and promoting national unity?

The second survey technique was Focus Group interviewing and the following questions were presented to participants:

1. What is your experience with the way Nigerian newspapers report religion/religious conflicts?

2. In what ways do you think newspapers shape the values and impressions people have of the different religious faiths in Nigeria?

3. When reading sensitive reports/articles how much effort do you make to read between the lines and search for hidden meanings, if any?

4. In your opinion, how is the 'other' often represented in newspapers?

5. What role would you suggest negative impressions play in amplifying religious crisis in Nigeria?

6. What impact does alternative news have in changing previously held impression of the 'other'?

7. What effect will some basic knowledge of other cultural and religious beliefs have on the audience?

8. If you were to suggest a change in the current journalism practice in Nigeria what changes would you suggest for making journalists more active in playing their watch dog role and promoting national unity?

ETHICAL ISSUES ON FIELD STUDY

A number of ethical issues were considered prior to the field study, and even during the study in Nigeria some of the concerns became quite apparent. The issues are listed below:

(a) Jos was particularly unstable and often unpredictable. There were genuine fears about the safety of the researcher, research assistant and participants in the study.

(b) Although Lagos was considered for a focus group study, there were concerns about holding a focus group, difficulty with recruiting participants was particularly anticipated.

(c) Kano or Kaduna was pencilled down as an alternative.

(d) There was mutual suspicion among the people and people were generally cautious about what they discussed with others.

(e) The researcher anticipated that people might not be willing to freely participate in the study, especially group discussion (focus group).

(f) It was also feared that even if people agreed to take part they might hold back certain information.

(g) Since the researcher was relying on others in the field to do the groundwork, like organising venues the researcher feared certain things might not go exactly according to plan.

(h) Initially, there was a suggestion that written consent should be obtained from participants but the idea was dropped because the researcher feared there might be some participants who might not be able to read or write.

(i) It was also suggested that for the literate ones written consent should be obtained while verbal consent should be taken from those who were not able to read or write.

(j) But the researcher feared obtaining consent from participants, especially in focus groups, in different ways might stir suspicion.

(k) The researcher realised that he needed to establish a very good rapport with the researched to be able to understand their phenomenology fully.

(l) The presence of a research assistant could pose a challenge especially where participants might think a third party was allowed access to the information they were revealing to the researcher in confidence.

The researcher was able to deal with above issues as follows:

The issue of safety was resolved by holding the focus groups, especially the one in Jos, in a neutral venue that all participants endorsed prior to the study. It was also agreed that whatever was discussed should not be mentioned outside of the venue. The researcher clearly told the participants that codes would be used to represent their statements and the audio would be destroyed after transcription. To boost their confidence in the process they were told they could ask the researcher to excuse the research assistant if at any point they felt uncomfortable or wanted to make a sensitive disclosure.

The researcher also wanted to ensure that no ethical procedure was breached so participants were asked at the beginning of each interview to say whether they consented to the study or not, and the verbal consent was recorded. Also, the participants were told the research assistant was under oath not to disclose any part of the information to anyone outside of the venue.

The researcher made a plan to alternatively do a study in Kano or Kaduna if the one scheduled for Lagos failed to materialise. Against this backdrop another person was contacted in Kano to facilitate the process, like contacting potential participants and organising a possible venue.

To make sure all procedures that had been put in place were in order the researcher decided to begin with a pilot study, which revealed a number of weaknesses including the real difficulties of organising focus group interviews.

The researcher was able to get closer to the researched and win their confidence which made them more relaxed and willing to reveal as much information as possible. Although no one was paid for their time during the focus group or individual interviews the researcher made available light refreshment during the process, particularly the three-hour focus group. Despite not expecting that someone would come to the venue to cause or provoke any form of violence or disorder the researcher had planned to inform the appropriate authorities where and if necessary. The ultimate aim was to ensure the research was done according to ethical procedures while making sure the participants, research assistant(s) and researcher were not exposed to avoidable risk.

OUTPUT FROM THE THESIS

PUBLICATION

Musa, O. A. (2010). Reporting religion and enemy images in the Nigerian press. *Networking*

Knowledge: Journal of the MeCCSA Postgraduate Network, (3) 1, 1-13.

ARTICLES CURRENTLY UNDER PEER REVIEW

Musa, O. A. (2011). Regional cleavages, clientelistic culture and the reporting of religious

violence in Nigerian newspapers, under peer review by *Journalism*.

Musa, O. A. (2011). Enemy framing and the politics of reporting religious conflicts in the

Nigerian press, under peer review by *Journal of Media, War & Conflict*.

ABSTRACTS AND PRESENTATION

Musa, O. A. (2009) Reporting religion and enemy images in the Nigerian press. 3rd Graduate

Conference on Social Sciences and Management University of Bradford, 8-9 October.

Musa, O. A (2009) Mass Education and Peace Building: Exploring the media option in the

Niger Delta. Abstract submitted to IAMCR conference, Communication and Society

Research Centre, University of Minho, Braga, Portugal, 18-22, July.