



Building Capacity for Conflict-Sensitive Reportage of Elections in Nigeria

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Management Sciences in the Faculty of Management Sciences
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ABSTRACT

Nigeria's vociferous media has the potential to be divided along ethnic and religious lines. Given that most Nigerians view political aspirants in terms of their ethnic and religious lineage rather than political ideology, and since most Nigerians rely on the media for information, there is the tendency to fall prey to biased and insensitive reportage, capable of inciting violence which is elicited by prejudiced information often presented as news, features, commentaries, documentaries, etc. This problem is the major motivation behind this research, which aims to build through training, the capacity of the media to report elections in a conflict-sensitive manner.

This thesis develops, through the use of a participatory action research design, an alternative method of news reportage using the peace-journalism model. The model, developed by Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick (2005), encourages journalists to report social issues in ways that create opportunities for a society to consider and value nonviolent responses toward conflict by using the insights from conflict analysis and transformation to update concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting. It also provides a new route map, which traces the connections between journalists, their sources, the stories they cover and the consequences of their reportage. In addition, it builds awareness of nonviolence and brings creativity into the practical job of everyday editing and reporting.

This research holds theoretical significance in that it explicitly identifies conditions that encourage journalists to apply conflict-sensitivity to their reportage, thereby promoting societal peace, particularly during elections. The research findings herein offer a unifying multi-dimensional, conceptual framework which can be used to analyse and discuss the role journalists play in ensuring peaceful elections and demonstrates that they have a constructive part to play when covering sensitive social issues. A training manual has been developed from the findings of the study; it is intended to serve as a template and guide for journalists reporting on elections across the African continent.

DECLARATION

Building Capacity for Conflict-Sensitive Reportage of Elections in Nigeria

I declare that the thesis herewith submitted for the PhD: Public Management (Peacebuilding) at the Durban University of Technology has not been previously submitted for a degree at any other University.

Joseph Olusegun Adebayo

I hereby approve the final submission of the following thesis.

Professor Geoff Harris

Dr. Sylvia Kaye

This _____ day _____ of 2015 at the Durban University of Technology

DEDICATION

I dedicate this research to the memory of my late mother,
Mrs. Josephine Adebayo, Nee Udeagbala.

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ABBREVIATIONS

APC:	All Progressives Congress
CCA:	Constant Comparison Analysis
CDG:	Centre for Democracy and Governance
COG:	Commonwealth Observer Group
EMB:	Election Monitoring Body
FGD:	Focus Group Discussion
ICG:	International Crisis Group
INEC:	Independent National Electoral Commission
JIC:	Joint Intelligence Committee
MDC:	Movement for Democratic Change
NATO:	North Atlantic Treaty organisation
NBC:	National Broadcasting Corporation
NEPU:	Northern Elders Progressive Union
NNDP:	Nigerian National Democratic Party
NPC:	Northern People's Congress
NUJ:	Nigerian Union of Journalists
ODM:	Orange Democratic Movement
PAR:	Participatory Action Research
PDP:	People's Democratic Party
PJ:	Peace Journalism
PJF:	Peace Journalism Foundation
RDS:	Radio Diffusion System
RTLm:	Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines
WMD:	Weapon of Mass Destruction
WNTV:	Western Nigeria Television
ZANU-PF:	Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front
ZEC:	Zimbabwe Electoral Commission

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PART 1

Part 1 of this research focuses on the background of the study, the problem statement, context of the study, significance, delimitation and limitations of the study.

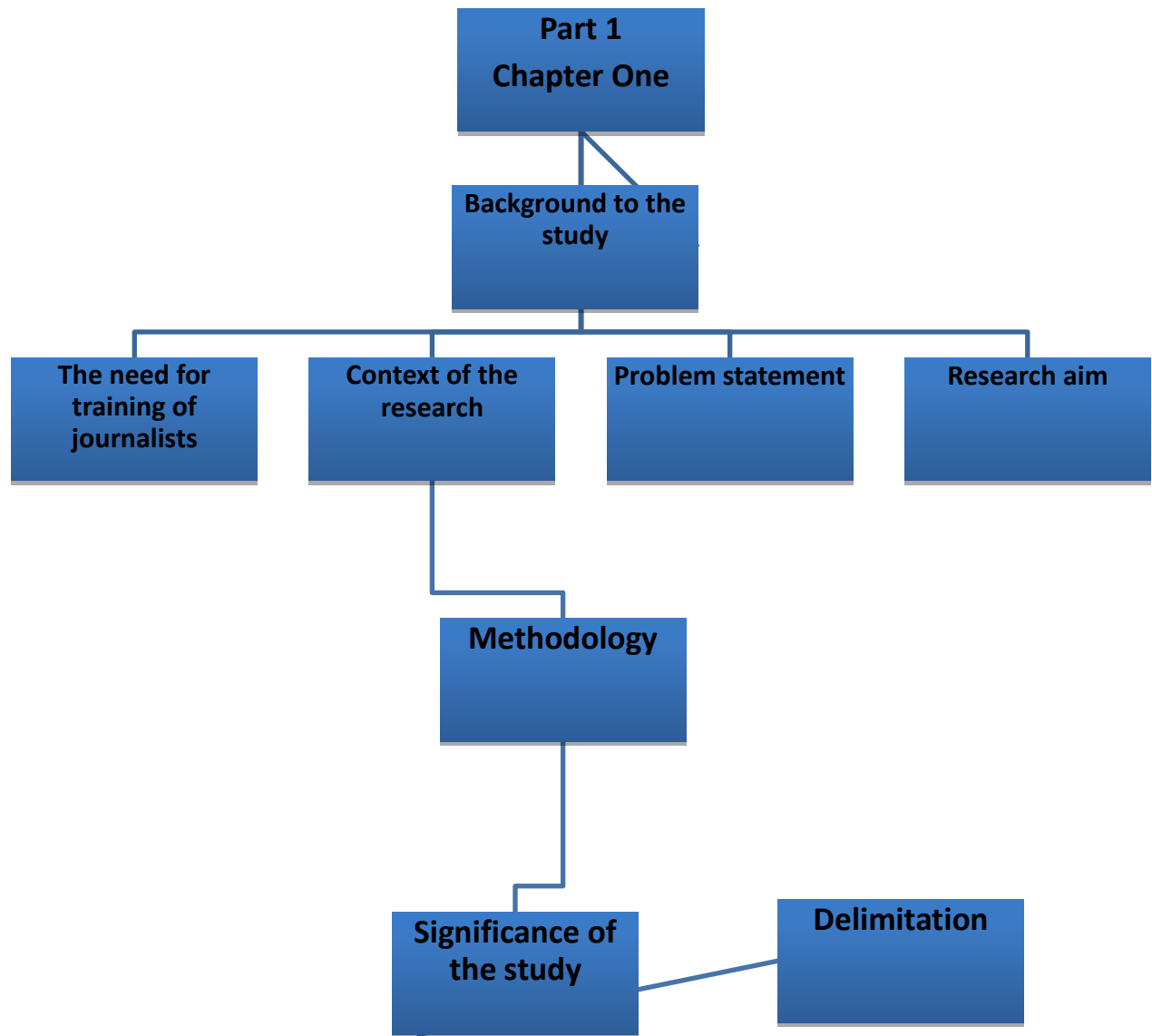


Fig 1.1: Flowchart showing direction of part 1

CHAPTER ONE

Most of journalism is not about facts, but about the interpretation of what seem to be facts-Walter Lippmann (1922).

1.1 Background to the study

Elections provide a people with the ability to exercise their right to choose; this choice could either be to install a candidate they deem worthy for a political position or remove an existing office holder they reckon to be unworthy. It is (or should be) a participatory and representative process in which all citizens of a given country can vote and be voted for in a democratic setting. Olanrinmoye (2008:67) is of the opinion that individual members of society 'participate' in the electoral process by deliberately and consciously taking part in activities that have impact on their society. He describes representation as the process individuals in the society put themselves forward to be chosen to act on behalf of the community. He further asserts that political parties offer citizens the platform with which to fully participate in and be represented in the process of public policy decision making. Similarly, Olukayode and Lawal (2012) assert that election confers legitimacy on leaders; it makes the leaders acceptable to the people.

Sadly however, in some parts of the developing world, with particular reference to Nigeria, elections have been contentious, raucous and stormy issues. Rather than unite the country and its people, they divide them. This is because the ruling party and opposition parties are always at loggerheads either to retain or capture power at all cost without consideration for the people they claim to want to govern. Luqman (2009:59) is of the opinion that since independence, Nigeria's efforts at democratisation has been fraught with a lot of anomalies such as unchecked electoral malpractice, violence, corruption and total disregard for the constitution. It is therefore of little surprise that past efforts at democratization have collapsed on the altar of corrupt elections and electoral processes.

One of the major challenges plaguing elections in Nigeria is the electoral process. As observed by Luqman (2009), that votes are cast on election days does not necessarily

mean that the process is democratic, it is an aggregate of all activities ranging from credible and updated voters' register, well equipped and professional party system built on sound ideology, transparent nomination of candidates during parties' primaries, campaigns and solicitation of votes that are devoid of violence, the actual casting of votes, provision of adequate voting materials, quick counting and announcement of results and importantly postelection activities like election petition etc. that are devoid of rancour and violence.

It might be argued that successful elections are those in which most of the activities listed above are strictly adhered to and observed. It is also important to state that there are no perfect elections or electoral processes and there are possibilities that one or two of the aforementioned activities will not be adhered to. This is in line with the views held by Elklit and Reynolds (2005:148) who declare that errors due to human factors are inevitable in electoral processes. They however maintain that when these errors do not accumulate to affect the outcome of the election in anyway, then the electoral process can be said to be credible.

The success or failure of an electoral process is dependent on a lot of factors, some of which have been earlier mentioned. However, one key player in the political landscape of a society is the media. The media is a powerful tool of mass mobilisation. It is a two-edged sword, capable of motivating for peace or instigating for violence. As Akinfeleye (2003) points out, the relevance of the media in any polity is generally drawn from the fact that information is necessary for effective governance and administration, and the society depends profoundly on the press for vital information. This dependence by the public on the media places immense influence on the media, perhaps even in magnitudes beyond the comprehension of media practitioners.

How powerful is the media? Lazarsfield, Berelson and Gaudet conducted a study in the 1940-1960s to determine whether or not the media's effect on society was as powerful as been touted. Lazarsfield and his team conducted a study in the 1940s to determine voters' behaviour during the lead-up to the re-election bid of President Franklin

Roosevelt. The result of their study showed that most Americans had already made up their minds about which candidates to vote and were not swayed by the barrage of media propaganda that was ongoing. Rather, most Americans believed one-on-one contacts with politicians and their representatives played a major role in swaying their votes. They concluded, rather abruptly, that media messages only marginally affected the voting audience, they were also of the opinion that the effects of the campaign were not all-powerful to the extent that they convinced helpless watchers consistently and unswervingly, which is the very definition of what the magic bullet theory does (Lazarsfield et al, 1968).

The positions of Lazarsfield, Berelson and Gaudet that the media was not as powerful as been flaunted lasted for a few decades until a study conducted by McCombs and Shaw in 1972 put forward the agenda setting theory which states that the media may not have the hypodermic needle effect (immediate direct impact) as argued by Lazarsfield et al, but it does set agenda for public discourse, thereby affecting what society thinks, talks about and eventually does. Their research showed that by focusing on an issue for a sustained period of time, the media portrays the issue as very important thereby 'forcing' attention to such issues. They were also of the opinion that by constantly presenting candidates to the public, the media is able to shore-up their public acceptance and increase voters' perception of them as important and worthy to be voted for (McQuail and Windahl, 1993).

McQuail and Windahl (1993) describe the theory of agenda setting as the media's way of powerfully telling society what issues are important by creating awareness about salient social issues. They aver that the theory is premised on two basic assumptions:

- i. The media only filters what it perceives as reality, it does not reflect it.
- ii. The concentration and focus on a few issues by the media unwittingly leads to beliefs by members of the public that the issues are more important than others.

Efforts to explain the impact media has on society has seen a shift from agenda setting theory to the framing theory in recent years. Seow and Maslog (2005) are of the opinion that theoretically, framing theory supports war/peace journalism. With its roots in the field of cognitive psychology, framing theory has been adopted in other fields such as economics, linguistic, social-movements, political communication, public relations research and health communication.

According to Tankard et al. (1991), media frames are the central idea for contents of news that provide a context to issues and are seen through the use of selection, emphasis, exclusion and elaboration. Price et al. (1997) hold similar views; they posit that issue frames are themes, story lines or labels suggesting a preferred interpretation of some questions. They argue that by focusing on selected aspects of a social issue, trains of specific thoughts are shifted to the forefront of audience members' consciousness. McCombs (2005) explains that framing involves the selection of aspects of reality and make them more salient in a communication text. McCombs also found that media framing also promote problem definition, and understanding of the cause(s), moral evaluation and/or treatment recommendation for the described item.

From the perspective of research methodology, Weaver (2007) avers that frame can be studied through systematic content analysis. Weaver further states that framing is more concerned with how issues or other objects are depicted in the media than with which issues or objects are more or less reported prominently. It focuses on the most important themes or descriptions of the object of interest. Framing also includes a broader range of cognitive processes such as moral evaluations, causal reasoning, appeals to principles and recommendations for treatment of problems.

From the foregoing, one can safely assert that though the media cannot be said to be all-powerful, it however does have immense power. The role of the media in the Second World War, the part played by the media propaganda justifying America's invasion of Iraq and the unfortunate role played by the media in the Rwandan genocide have further highlighted the immense impact media messages wield. Hachten (2005)

observes that because society depends a great deal on the media most of its information, virtually all aspects of our national lives would be grounded and ineffective without a free flowing stream of media message. It is near-impossible to have a democratic society without an independent news media.

This dependence on the media by society puts enormous responsibilities on the shoulders of journalists and the journalism profession. Whether or not a society is in peace will depend to a large extent on responsible journalism. Society holds the media accountable often when things go wrong. According to Hachten (2005), journalists run the risk of being considered biased or partial, hence, the need to be fair and even-handed. Objectivity and fairness may be difficult, if not impossible goals to achieve, but it is essential that journalists try.

Journalists' even-handedness and objectivity is often put to test the most during elections and conflict situations. According to Nwokeafor and Okunoye (2013:5), the media has been severally accused of being prejudiced and biased in their reportage during elections as they tend to favour particular candidates over others. This has often led the public to perceive the media as being on the side of a particular group while rejecting others. This unfortunately has plunged many societies like Nigeria into preventable conflicts before, during and after elections.

The growing wave of media instigated violence, and the need to channel the immense influence wield by the media to promote societal peace and harmony has given rise to the emergence of the concept of peace journalism, developed by one of the fathers of peace and conflict studies, Johan Galtung in the early 1960s. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:5) are of the opinion that when journalists deliberately make choices regarding the stories to report and the prominence they accord such stories in ways that creates opportunities for members of the society to take the route of nonviolence when responding to conflict, then they are said to be practicing peace journalism. According to them, the concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy is updated by Peace Journalism by using the insight of conflict analysis and transformation.

Peace journalism seeks to correct the societally held notion that journalism is fraught with unethical practices. Lambeth (1992:3) recalls an incident in the 1980s which dented the media's image so badly that most people completely lost faith in the stories put forward by the media. The incident involved Janet Cooke, a young *Washington Post* reporter who had a Pulitzer Prize revoked after confessing she had made up the existence of an eight year old heroin addict. Similarly, a columnist for the *New York Daily News*, Michael Daly admitted that he had invented the name of a British soldier who had shot a youngster in Belfast, Northern Ireland. These incidences, amongst several others, put the searchlight albeit negatively, on the media.

According to Muhlman (2010:12), critics often denounce journalism as a profession which imposes biased and distorted points of view, as compared with the shifting opinions and gazes which would freely circulate in public space, if only it was not controlled by the media. He describes it as connivance within the profession with those wielding power in the political and/or economic sphere thereby providing the powerful with the means to impose their worldview on the public.

It is however vital to note that the media plays a very important role in helping society turn out positively. Hachten (2005:24) states that the media's persistent reporting about pariah states such as South Africa under apartheid, or Iran or North Korea, can often help facilitate political change. Such reporting forms world opinion, which, in turn, can lead to actions by concerned nations. Persistent American and European press reporting of the civil war in Bosnia and the growing evidence of genocide by Bosnian Serbs undoubtedly pushed the Clinton administration and the North Atlantic Treaty organisation (NATO) to intervene and impose military truce which ultimately led to peace in the troubled nation.

I am of the opinion that consistent media messages tilted towards a particular goal can indeed have immense impact on the public. The journalist is always at a crossroad whenever the opportunity to report an incident presents itself. He/she is either reporting the issue as a peace journalist or a violence journalist. Either way, the reportage often

impacts society in one way or the other. In table 1 below, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) present what they term the peace journalism model which illustrates a comparison between peace and violence journalism. The aim of peace journalism, and indeed my aim in this research, is to, via training, inculcate more of the tenets of peace journalism on practicing journalists in Nigeria and to discourage the practice of war/violence journalism.

Peace/conflict journalism	War/violence journalism
<p>1. Peace/conflict-orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore conflict formation x parties, y goals, z issues, general win-win orientation. • Open space, open time, causes and outcomes anywhere also in history/culture. • Making conflicts transparent • Giving voice to all parties, empathy, understanding • Humanization of all sides, more so the worse the weapon. • Proactive: prevention before any conflict occurs. 	<p>1. War/violence orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on conflict arena-2 parties, 1 goal (win), war, general zero-sum orientation. • Closed space, closed time, causes and exits in arena who threw the first stone. • Making wars opaque/secret • 'Us-them' journalism, propaganda, voice, for 'us'. See them as the problem; focus on who prevails in war, dehumanization of 'them' more so worse the weapon. • Reactive: waiting for violence before reporting. • Focus only on visible effects of violence (killed, wounded and material damage).
<p>2. Truth orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose untruths on all sides/uncover all cover-ups 	<p>2. Propaganda orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose 'their' untruths/help 'our' cover-ups/lies.
<p>3. People orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on suffering all over, on women, aged, children, giving voice to voiceless. • Give name to all evildoers • Focus on peace makers 	<p>3. Elite orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on 'our' suffering, on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece • Give name of evil-doers • Focus on elite peace makers
<p>4. Solution orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace = nonviolence + creativity • Highlight peace initiatives, also prevents more war • Focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society. • Aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation. 	<p>4. Victory orientated</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace=victory + ceasefire • Conceal peace initiatives, before victory is at hand, focus on treaty, institutions and controlled society. • Leaving another for war, return of the old flares up again.

Table 1.1: Peace journalism model

Source: Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:18).

1.2 The need for training of journalists

Responsible media is characterised by reportage that is unbiased and devoid of unnecessary hype that attracts public attention with the sole objectives of making money. However, current state of reportage in Nigeria is manifest in reportage mainly motivated by factors such as ownership, geopolitical location and religious/ethnic inclination.

According to Ado-Kurawa (2001), the dominance of southern based newspapers in Nigeria has made most of newspaper reportage of socio-political issues such as elections pro-south and anti-north. He is of the opinion that the imbalance in the spread of newspapers in the country has led to the biased reportage of Islam and the north in general. This bias, according to Akinfeleye (2005) has made most Nigerians view media reportage with suspicion and question the veracity of information put forward by the media. Often, sometimes without intending to, journalistic reportage have either led to conflicts or fueled existing ones. The unfortunate Rwandan genocide gives credence to the immense influence the media wields in instigating violence in society. Palluck (2009) akin the media's role in the Rwandan genocide as "the voice of the devil"; he believed the media incited the public into one of the most gruesome genocides in recorded history.

Utor (2000:21) accords the media the status of a decision moulder and society's teacher owing to its enviable ability to enlighten people on happenings in the social sphere. In the same vein, Abagen (2009:39) is of the opinion that that the media has evolved over time into an essential ingredient in the quest for political rebirth of societies. This, according to Foster (2010:142) is due to the media's huge role of shaping the opinion and attitude of people, especially in their capacity as voters and in their capability to remain nonviolent before, during and after elections.

This immense influence of the media requires that media personnel are trained in ways of reporting social issues in a conflict-sensitive and responsibility manner. According to Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), few journalists have been trained in the area of conflict analysis and theory. Thus, they are not well equipped to report issues that have consequences on societal peace. Training of journalists in conflict sensitive reportage is imperative because journalists covering conflict are inescapably involved in the events and processes they are reporting on-whether they like it or not.

Conflict-sensitive reportage training of journalists is extremely crucial particularly in a volatile nation like Nigeria. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:16) are of the opinion that an informed understanding of conflict leads us to expect that statements put out by parties to a conflict will also be part of that conflict. Without this expectation, journalists may become stuck in what they termed, the reality based community', oblivious to the way realities are being created around them, and indeed their (journalists) part in creating them.

Peace journalism training is beneficial to journalists because it will equip journalists with the skills to deliberately find ideas for nonviolent responses from everywhere in society and bringing them to public knowledge. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:18) are of the opinion that there is never, in any conflict, any shortage of non-violent responses and it is the duty of the journalist to focus on them. In the words of the distinguished peace researcher John Paul Lederach:

'I have not experienced any situation of conflict, no matter how protracted or severe, from Central America to the Philippines to the Horn of Africa, where there have not been people who had a vision for peace, emerging often from their own experience of pain. Far too often, however, these same people are overlooked and disempowered either because they do not represent "official" power, whether on the side of government or the various militias, or because they are written off as biased and too personally affected by the conflict' (Adapted from Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005:18).

I am persuaded that with the proper training, journalists can champion positive social change, particularly peaceful non-violent elections. For instance, the recent success of the 2013 election in Kenya has been severally attributed to the commendable role played by the media. The International Crisis Group (2013) claim that the Kenyan media were not prepared for post-election violence that rocked the country shortly after the 2007-2008 elections. The media communicated in ways that suggested partisanship. Even worse is the fact that most vernacular radio stations were unwittingly used by politicians as tool for disseminating hate speech that polarised the nation. However, the media played a more responsible role in the 2013 general elections by reporting the election in a way that fostered peace amongst Kenyans.

1.3 Context of the research

Over the past five decades, elections in Nigeria have been marred by rigging and violence. As noted by Fischer (2002), election violence in Nigeria reveals itself in behaviours of political parties, their supporters, journalists, agents of the government, especially incumbents, election monitoring bodies or administrators, and the general public and is often evident in threats, assaults, murder, destruction of property and physical/psychological harm. The rising wave of violence in Nigeria as witnessed in the agitation for greater resource control by militants in Nigeria's Niger Delta region and the acts of terrorism perpetrated by the Islamists group Boko Haram in Northern Nigeria have made Nigeria a violence prone society. In her analysis of electoral violence in conflict societies, Høglund (2006) identifies certain precipitants of violence with regards to elections, particularly in Nigeria. One of the precipitants is the design of electoral systems and administration and media reportage.

Nigeria has an ever vocal media regarded as one of the most vociferous in Africa and often tilted in reportage along ethnic and religious lines. Given that the society depends on media messages for information and given that the media set agenda for public discourse, it becomes undeniable that mass media are significant in our political climate.

1.4 Problem statement

Nigeria's media has the potential to be divided along ethnic and religious lines. Given that most Nigerians view political aspirants in terms of their ethnic and religious lineage rather than political ideology, and since most Nigerians rely on the media for information, there is often the tendency to fall prey to biased and insensitive reportage capable of inciting violence. This is because majority of the populace are frequently vulnerable to prejudiced information often subtly presented as news, features, commentaries, documentaries etc. This problem forms the major motivation behind my embarking on this research which aims to build, through training, the capacity of the media to report elections in a conflict sensitive manner.

1.5 Research aim and objectives

The main aim of the study is to evaluate the potential of conflict-sensitive reportage as a way of encouraging nonviolent elections in Nigeria. The specific objectives of the research are to:

- i. Determine the media's current mode of operation as regards election reportage in Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the extent to which media may be responsible for electoral related violence in Nigeria.
- iii. Determine the training needs of media personnel particularly as regards conflict-sensitive reportage.
- iv. Implement training needs and enhance, through training of media personnel, the media's capacity to operate in a way that discourages violence.
- v. Carry out a preliminary evaluation of the outcome of the training.

1.6 Methodology

Seeking as it does to evaluate the potential of training journalists on conflict –sensitive reportage as a way of fostering nonviolent elections in Nigeria, this study is oriented within an action research paradigm. Action research is a research type that is focused on communities. It sets out to improve conditions and practices in the healthcare industry, and is now commonly used in the social sciences (Lingard et al., 2008; Whitelaw et al., 2003). Though it originally involves healthcare practitioners conducting systematic enquiries in order to help them improve their own practices, which in turn can enhance their working environment and the working environments of those who are part of it – clients, patients, and users, it has widespread applicability in social science research. The purpose of undertaking action research is to bring about change in specific contexts, as Parkin (2009) describes it.

In their systematic review of action research, Waterman et al. (2001: 4) provide a comprehensive and practically useful definition:

“Action research is a period of inquiry, which describes, interprets and explains social situations while executing a change of intervention aimed at improvement and involvement. It is problem-focused, context specific and future-orientated. Action research is a group activity with an explicit value basis and is founded on a partnership between action researchers and participants, all of whom are involved in the change process. The participatory process is educative and empowering, involving a dynamic approach in which problem-identification; planning, action and evaluation are interlinked. Knowledge may be advanced through reflection and research, and qualitative and quantitative research methods may be employed to collect data. Different types of knowledge may be produced by action research, including practical and propositional. Theory may be generated and refined and its general application explored through cycles of the action research process”.

A mixed research method will be adopted for this study. This research method is appropriate because, as posited by Mouton and Marais (1990:160-170), a single approach is limited in investigating phenomena in social science that are tightly enmeshed. Thus, by combining qualitative and quantitative research, there is greater possibility of understanding human nature and reality.

In order to answer the research objectives and, hence, meet the goals of this study, various data gathering techniques will be employed. These included questionnaires (to ascertain the training needs of journalists), interviews and Focus Group Discussions. Content analysis of selected newspapers also served as source of data particularly regarding the mode of reportage of elections by journalists in Nigeria.

1.7 Significance of the study

This study is unique and significant on many counts. It represents, the first scholarly attempt to determine the impact training has on journalists' reportage of conflict-sensitive social issues such as elections using the peace journalism model. It is of great value, if for no other reason, because it furnishes a baseline of comparison for subsequent studies and serves as a template that can be replicated in other African countries where elections are often laden with violence.

There is a paucity of published research in which journalist's style of research after training was evaluated to establish the link between capacity building and reportage of socio-political issues. This study will thus make a significant contribution towards closing the perceived gap in the existing literature. In addition, the finding from the research should be of particular interest to media practitioners who will employ the peace journalism model in fostering peaceful and harmonious coexistence between a diverse ethnic and religiously heterogeneous nation like Nigeria.

1.8 Delimitations of the study

Delimitations are factors that affect the study over which the research generally does have some degree of control. Delimitations describe the scope of the study or establish parameters or limits for the study (Baron, 2010). Due to the large number of potential participants in the study population (journalists across Nigeria), the population involved in the current study will focus only on journalists located in Lagos, Kwara and Abuja states. Thus, it is safe to assert that this study only represents portraits of selected journalists trained in 3 Nigerian states based on the peace journalism model. It does not

claim to have captured and related the entire story about journalists across Nigeria. Consequently, as is typical with case studies, caution should be exercised in extrapolating and generalising from the findings of the study. Nevertheless, given the in-depth descriptions of the cases treated in this study, it is hoped that many of the results obtained in the research will resonate in similar contexts.

1.9 Thesis overview

This thesis is made of the main body, beginning with the title page and ending with the list of references, and the Appendices, and it is intended to contribute to our understanding of the numerous data collection tools and how these contributed to the various findings reported the study.

Chapter one: presents the background of the study, the aim and objectives, significance as well as limitation and delimitations of the study.

Chapter two: contextualizes the study within the relevant literature and provides its theoretical underpinning. The chapter begins with a review of the several conceptions peace journalism and elections and how each of these relates to the study. The main thrust of chapter two will be a review of relevant literature relating to the study. A related theoretical framework will be presented and reviewed in this chapter.

Chapter three: Chapter three discusses the role of the media in the reportage of elections.

Chapter four: Chapter four is titled: instigators or mediators: assessing the role of the media in electoral violence. It attempts to determine the extent to which electoral violence are instigated by the media.

Chapter five: Chapter five discusses the impact of training on journalists' conflict-sensitive reportage of elections. It attempts to answer the burning question, does peace journalism really work?

Chapter six: describes the research methodology. It specifies the paradigm within which the study is located, its overall design, the research process, and the techniques employed. The chapter also explains the procedures for data collection and analysis, and further highlights the validity and reliability measures adopted. Issues relating to research ethics (e.g. participants' rights to confidentiality, anonymity and informed consent) and how these were handled in this study are also discussed in this chapter.

Chapter seven: discusses how the training needs of journalists were determined

Chapter eight: Data obtained will be presented and analysed in this chapter.

Chapter nine: The training intervention is extensively discussed in this chapter

Chapter Ten: This chapter discusses the methods employed for evaluation of the training intervention.

Chapter Eleven: The study's summary, conclusion and recommendations are presented in this chapter.

1.10 Chapter summary

The chapter provided a brief background, aim, objectives as well as significance of the study. A cursory discourse on the study's significance, limitation and delimitations were also presented. The next chapter will undertake a review of literatures relevant to the study; relevant theories underpinning the research will also be discussed.

PART II: LITERATURE REVIEW

This part of the dissertation will consist of six chapters-chapters two to seven. Chapter two will focus on the theoretical framework upon which the study is based. The theories of agenda setting, media framing and the peace journalism model will be reviewed and their link to peace journalism and indeed societal peace established. Chapter three delves into the reportage of elections, across the world, with specific emphasis on Nigeria. The main focus of chapter four is to determine the extent to which electoral violence is instigated by media reportage, while chapter five looks at the impact training has had on journalists' reportage of elections. Chapter six will focus on the appropriate research methodology adopted for the study, while chapter seven will explore the factors that determined training needs of participants in the study.

Suffice to add that the literature review is based on the objectives of the study put forward in chapter one. The main aim of the study is to evaluate the potential of conflict-sensitive reportage as a way of encouraging nonviolent elections in Nigeria. The specific objectives addressed in this section are:

- i. Determine the media's current mode of operation as regards election reportage with particular reference to Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the extent to which media may be responsible for electoral related violence, with particular reference to Nigeria.
- iii. Determine the training needs of media personnel particularly as regards conflict-sensitive reportage.
- iv. Implement the training of media personnel in order to build media's capacity to operate in a way that encourages nonviolence.
- v. Carry out a preliminary evaluation of the outcome of the training.

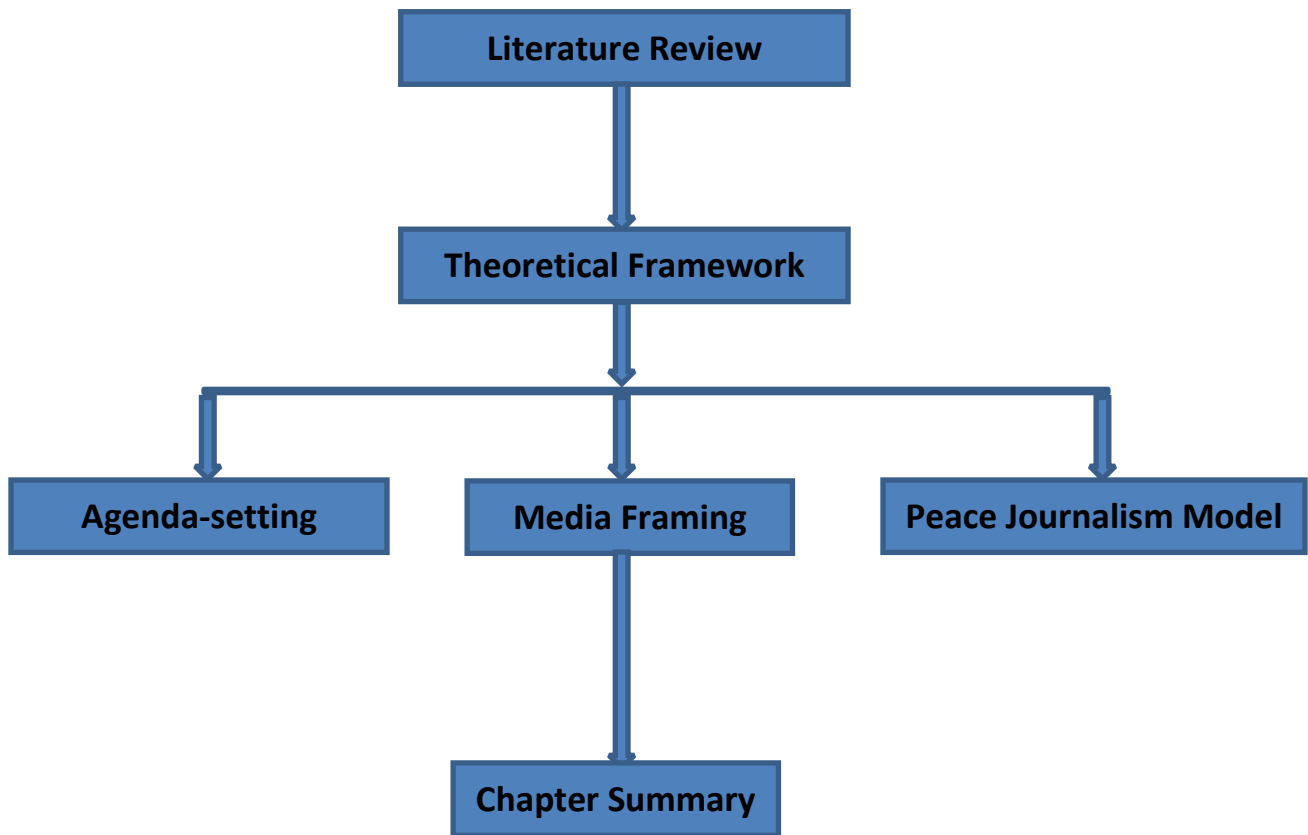


Fig 2.1: Flowchart showing direction of chapter two

CHAPTER TWO

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.0 Introduction

This chapter will explain the theoretical frameworks that support the study. The theories of Agenda-setting, media framing and peace journalism will be explored and their link to societal peace, particularly regarding nonviolent elections established.

2.1 Agenda-setting theory

“The press may not be successful much of the time in telling people what to think, but it is stunningly successful in telling its readers what to think about.” Bernard Cohen (1963).

The theory of agenda setting, though not a peace theory is helpful in explaining how the media can foster societal peace through the prominence it accords issues of social importance. Shaw and McCombs (1972:23) are associated with the theory, which describes the media's ability to highlight, through reportage or coverage, certain aspects of society in a way that influences the scope of public thinking. The theory holds that if the media focuses on an issue consistently, that subject will become dominant theme of discourse in the public sphere. In other words, the public waits for its 'daily agenda' from the media.

This dependence on the media by the society puts enormous responsibilities on the shoulders of journalists and the journalism profession because whether or not a society is in peace will depend largely on responsible agenda-setting by media. A classic example is the impact media reportage had in instigating and encouraging the 1994 genocide in Rwanda (see section 2.1.1).

Although the agenda-setting theory is severally linked to Lipmann (1922), long before the advent of print and electronic media, Africans had traditional agenda-setters that set agendas which formed the bedrock of their daily discourse(s) at the market or village

squares. In pre-colonial Africa, villagers often waited daily for the village town crier, a kind of information officer for the king, who used his gong as a preliminary to announcing news from the palace or about happenings in and around the village. News such as impending marriages between families in the village, outbreak of illnesses, cultural festivals, threats of war from neighbouring villages etc. became the 'talk of the village' for days or even weeks.

The town crier, an oblivious agenda setter, often determined the prominence accorded a particular social issue by the intensity with which he beat his gong or by the frequency with which he repeated certain information. He was a respected member of the community and an important member of the king's (or queen's) royal cycle. Aziken and Emeni (2010:23) are of the opinion that the town criers combined all the information agencies in the performance of their duty. Today, the town crier takes the form of journalists in newspapers, broadcast media and most recently, social media, who set the agenda for public discourse.

According to McQuail and Windahl (1993:3), agenda-setting theory is predicated upon two basic assumptions:

- i. The media only filters what it perceives as reality, it does not reflect it.
- ii. The concentration and focus on a few issues by the media unwittingly leads to beliefs by members of the public that the issues are considered more vital than others.

Given that different media have different agenda setting roles, time becomes of essence in agenda setting. Thus, Sheafer and Weismann (2005:347) are of the opinion that because of the complexity of the world, there is a need for society to depend on the media to decipher the world.

This view is shared by Onyebadi (2008:32) who states that agenda-setting's uniqueness stems from its application in most leading communication journals. Agenda setting

theory best explained the media's role in society, particularly in the 21st century where more of society's directions are motivated by the media (Bryant and Miron, 2004).

Onyebadi's views are in consonant with those held by McCombs and Shaw (1993:60) who argue that agenda-setting has "provided a common umbrella for a number of research traditions and concepts in communication," a feature that possibly partially describes its ubiquity in communications research endeavours.

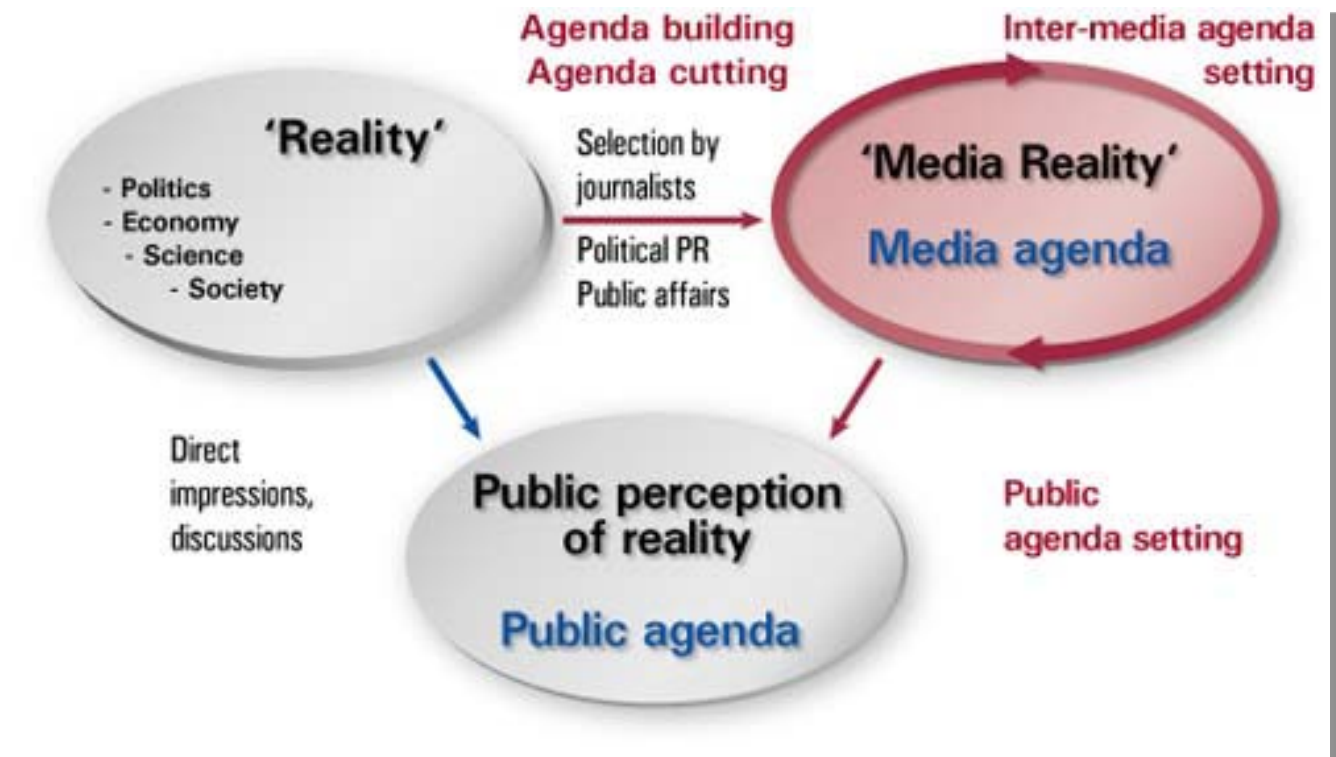


Fig. 2.2: The agenda-setting model (Brettschneider, 2013:3).

As can be observed from figure 2.1, what the society perceives as social reality is often linked to media representation. Brettschneider (2013:13) delineates between social reality and media reality, he states that social reality such as political, social, cultural and scientific happenings in the society take a different meaning entirely when media personnel such as journalists, political public relations practitioners and public affairs

commentators select social issues and skew them to reflect the desires of gatekeepers who could be editors or media owners.

2.1.1 Setting agenda for war: the media and the Rwandan genocide.

The media's agenda-setting role and its impact on society should be of interest to peace practitioners considering the media's potential to set the agenda for peace or for fuelling conflicts. Oftentimes, the agenda-setting role of the media has been reduced to their reportage of social issues, but is important to note that the media can set agenda by also deciding not to report issues, by simply ignoring them or by making such issues appear irrelevant in the eyes of the public. The following quote by Dowden (2007:251) illustrates the Western media's agenda-setting with respect to the Rwandan genocide:

Rwanda simply wasn't important enough. To British editors, it was a small country far away in a continent that rarely hit the headlines. The words Hutu and Tutsi sounded funny, hardly names that an ambitious news editor or desk officer would want to draw to the attention of a busy boss and claim that they were of immediate and vital importance. Within a few days of the plane crash, [which marked the start of the genocide] the Times ran several articles about what it obviously considered an angle to interest its readers: the fate of the Rwandan gorillas (Dowden, 2007:251).

It is ironic to note that at the peak of the Rwandan genocide, the Western media chose to focus on the fate of the Rwandan gorillas rather than on the thousands of human lives that were repeatedly lost daily. Although it is vital to protect a country's wildlife against possible extinction, it was nonetheless cold-blooded to place immense value (and media prominence) on gorillas in the forests of Rwanda over human life.

After weeks of gruesome murders on the streets of Kigali and throughout Rwanda, the international media decided to shift focus to the cruel reality on ground, a human tragedy of immense proportion. According to Thompson (2009:3), the world's media reports about Rwanda were filled with images of ballooned bloated bodies, scattered along roadsides. The fact that there were no media reports about the possibility of

genocide in Rwanda while tension was still brewing meant that people got to know about the genocide only after hundreds of thousands had lost their lives. In retrospect, Thompson avers that had the international community reacted earlier enough, the needless deaths would have been prevented, rather than later showing pictures of disfigured corpses that made headlines across the globe after the evil had already been committed. It can be argued that had the international media undertaken a more detailed comprehensive coverage of the Rwandan genocide, the killings of several thousands of lives would probably have been mitigated or completely halted.

I am of the opinion that had global media focused on the crisis at its infancy stage; they would have positively generated agenda for public discourse in the weeks, months and even years that the conflict in Rwanda was brewing. Media focus would have had what Thompson (2009:3) calls the Heisenberg Effect on the Rwandan genocide. The effect, coined in memory of Werner Heisenberg, a German physicist, describes the impact observing a particle over time has on its velocity and direction. Though originally used to explain a scientific phenomenon, the Heisenberg Effect has profound applicability to the media. According to Moody (2006: 83), it is impossible for a scientist to continually observe any living organism without essentially changing it; observation alone changes the behaviour of the observed. The Heisenberg Effect means that no one does, or can, enact the same performance before an audience, compared to unobserved rehearsals. Further, people need only imagine they are under observation and this perception of being observed will inevitably alter behaviour. I cannot help but wonder what would have happened in Rwanda had the media consciously focused on and reported the happenings leading to the genocide. The world may well have been spared one of the most horrific genocides in human history.

The media conspired with the government to perpetrate the genocide because the media reported media messages that were deliberately skewed in favour of government propaganda. It may be argued that the media out of fear, refused to challenge the government's misrepresentation of the genocide as tribal conflict. The media also failed to deliberately question government information by seeking alternative news sources in

pursuit of the truth. Rather than wait for the government to set agenda for it, the media would need to have set its own agenda for public discourse in a way that would have prevented the conflict (Schimmel, 2011:1127).

The behaviour of the media within Rwandan is further proof that journalists wield immense influence in shaping public opinion through deliberate and systematic agenda-setting. The hate messages churned out by *Radio Télévision Libre des Mille Collines* (RTLM) was unfortunately the only media agenda-setting that was taking place in Rwanda during the genocide, although with disastrous consequences.

2.1.2 Agenda-setting, agenda-building and peace practice

While agenda-setting places enormous responsibilities on the media to chart society's path of discourse on social issues, agenda-building includes "some degree of reciprocity" between the media and government; the agendas of both influence public policy and subsequent action, for better or for worse. Rogers and Dearing (1988:23) are of the opinion that the goal for peace practitioners is to influence public policy for good.

Although it is generally agreed that the media can direct public discourse by setting agenda, it is vital to note that the media is also part of society and it gets its agenda from the society. The media's power to set agenda depends on the agenda the public feeds it. This understanding takes power away from the media and places it in the hands of the public. This 'power' can help peace building practitioners promote societal peace and harmony by generating positive agendas for the media.

Radoli (2011:10) argues that public agenda can be constructively shaped for positive and peace-engendering discourse if policymakers and journalists consciously generate discussions on peace-building. Rather than focusing public agenda on wars and rumours of wars that are capable of creating fear and promoting hate among the members of the public, the media can instead focus on successful peace-building

initiatives and so set the agenda for positive discourse. This does not suggest that the media should cover up stories or withhold information. But it does suggest, as put forward by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:18), that the journalist should focus on non-violent responses in every conflict situation and help set public agenda in that direction.

In other words, editors and reporters should conscientiously make choices of what stories to report and about how to report them that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value nonviolent responses to conflict. In the words of the distinguished peace researcher John Paul Lederach:

'I have not experienced any situation of conflict, no matter how protracted or severe, from Central America to the Philippines to the Horn of Africa, where there have not been people who had a vision for peace, emerging often from their own experience of pain. Far too often, however, these same people are overlooked and disempowered either because they do not represent "official" power, whether on the side of government or the various militias, or because they are written off as biased and too personally affected by the conflict' (Adapted from Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005:18).

In order to set positive agenda for peace in the society, journalists need to be completely objective. According to Muhlman (2010:12), critics often denounce journalism as a profession which imposes biased and distorted points of view, as compared with the shifting opinions and gazes which would otherwise freely circulate in public space. He describes it as connivance within the profession with those wielding power in the political and/or economic sphere thereby providing the powerful with the means to impose their worldview on the public.

Similarly, Hachten (2005:34) maintains that journalists run the risk of being considered biased or partial, hence, the need to be fair and even-handed when setting agenda for public discourse. Objectivity and fairness may be difficult, if not impossible goals to achieve, but it is essential that journalists try.

Journalists' evenhandedness and objectivity is often put to test the most during elections and conflict situations. Nwokeafor and Okunoye (2013:5) state that the media's capacity to influence public opinion makes it inevitable that they will promote some candidates rather than others. One consequence of such bias has been to plunge many societies like Nigeria into violence before, during and after elections.

Emanating from the role of the media in the unfortunate 2007 post-election violence in Kenya, Radoli (2011) observes that the media unwittingly makes its agenda the public agenda by daily reporting a particular story and framing it in ways that give it prominence. The theory implies that it is imprudent to accuse the media of brewing conflict because it only mirrors societal disorder.

2.2 Media framing theory

Media framing theory can be said to be an extension of the agenda-setting theory, McCombs, Shaw and Weaver (1997) refer media framing as the second level of agenda-setting. According to Scheufele (1999), the theory of media framing is based on the conjecture that audience' understanding of an issue is strongly dependent on the way that issue is characterised in news reports. In other words, the media can 'frame' a social issue in such a way as to give it a meaning different from the original intent. Given that most media messages seek to elicit emotional response from the audience, news stories are systematically framed and laced with emotional appeals.

According to Scheufele and Tewksburg (2007:12), news framing plays on the fact that audience respond differently to social issues based on the way they are presented by the news media. They propose a framing model with the central idea that frames from news activate certain inferences, ideas, judgment and contrast concerning issues and policies. They argue that how news stories are placed- either presented with an imposing banner to get public attention and sympathy or tucked inside the newspaper for an interested reader to find, plays a great role in how audiences view the issues.

In the same vein, Chaundhry and Ashraf (2012:277) state that the basis of framing is that the media focuses attention on some events and places them within a field of meaning. They argue that journalists have the onerous task of deciding how a social issue is presented to the public. According to Kauffman, Elliot and Shmueli (2013:1) frames can be referred to as intellectual shortcuts that people use to help make sense of complex information. Media framing, then, is the use of these 'shortcuts' to help individuals interpret the world around them and represent that world to others.

Media frames are very important to peace-building in many respects because the media can frame conflict situations in ways that can significantly affect their intractability by creating mutually incompatible interpretations of events. Kauffman, Elliot and Shmueli (2013:2) maintain that disputants in a conflict always construct media frames to suit their points of views because frames are often built upon underlying structures of beliefs, values and experiences.

In elections, opponents often use unsuspecting journalists (and sometimes conniving ones) to produce media frames that will serve not only as an aid to construing events in their favours, but also to promote tactical advantages or benefits during elections. Politicians often use the media as tools for framing aimed at justifying acts of selfishness, convincing a larger audience, building political bridges of convenience, or adopting support for specific outcomes. Thus, one can safely conclude that the factors that influence the direction conflicts take are multifaceted.

Like agenda-setting where the public can generate agenda for the media through consistent discourse on burning social issues, society can also paint frames for the media in order to achieve set results. Politicians often use this method to coarsen journalists into presenting often skewed reports about social issues. As at the time of writing this chapter (December, 2013), the current agenda in the South African public

sphere, at least in the last few days, is the infamous Johannesburg E-tolling comments made by President Jacob Zuma. *"We can't think like Africans in Africa. It's not some national road in Malawi."* Those words sparked public outrage within and outside South Africa, with many pundits labelling it a diplomatic goof.

Various media frames were developed. The online version of the *Mail & Guardian* (22nd October, 2013) had as its headline: ***Zuma: don't think like Africans, pay up for e-tolls***, while the *Times Live* (22nd October, 2013) had: ***Zuma blasts own goal***. The online version of *City Press* had a similar headline like that of the *Mail & Guardian*: ***Zuma: don't think like Africans***. Politicians and political parties soon cashed on the President's blunder to score cheap political points, while the President's spokespersons worked hard to explain the statement away. Also framed in the report was the statement attributed to the President: *It's not some national road in Malawi*. This statement was also greeted by public outrage from within and outside South Africa. The media framed the news as a diplomatic goof capable of affecting relations between South Africa and the Republic of Malawi.

Figure 2.3 below presents a graphic description of the process of media framing.

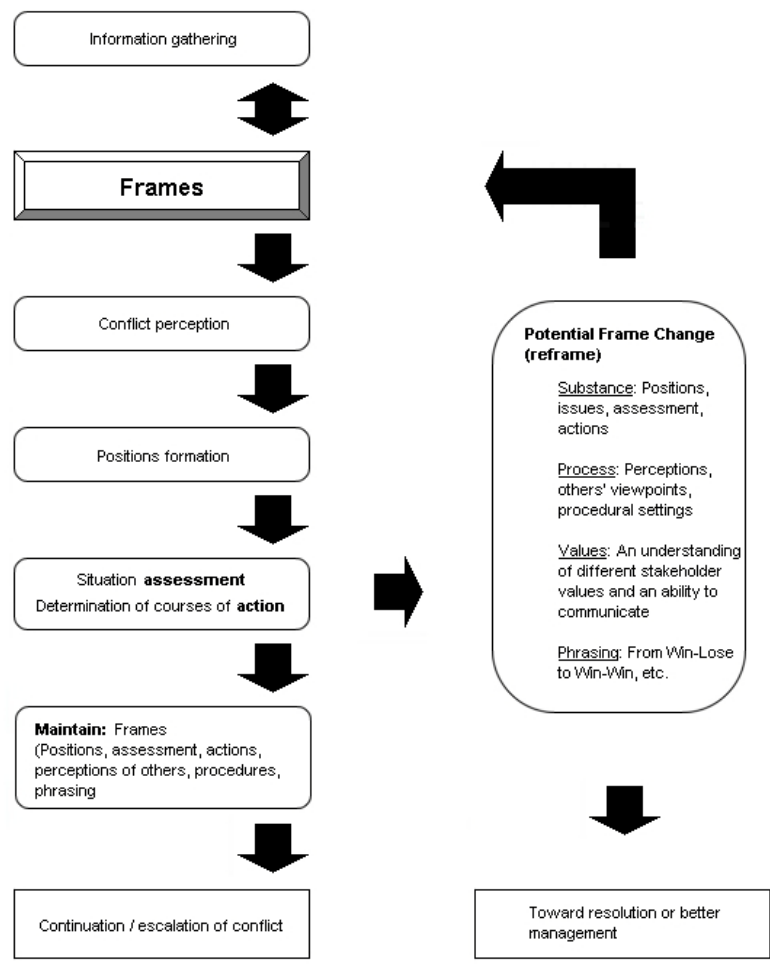


Fig 2.3: Media framing chart. Source: <http://www.beyondintractability.org>

When media personnel gather information, they consciously or unconsciously frame them to achieve a certain goal which could be personal, institutional or even that of the media owner. Depending on how the media message is framed, the public unwittingly attach meanings to them which, in a conflict situation, may affect their perception of the conflict.

When the public or audience form perceptions of a given conflict, they gradually start forming positions which are usually for or against the parties in the conflict. This eventually leads them (the public) into taking actions that could either escalate or mitigate the conflict. A peace-motivated media message on the other hand can be framed in such a way as to result in the resolution of conflicts. By focusing on the core

issues and by providing avenues for various opinions to be aired, an understanding of the viewpoint of others is achieved shifting focus from a win-lose state to a win-win situation. Chong and Druckman (2008:104) state that the media framing theory is premised on the fact that individuals and/or groups can view issues from different worldviews and perspectives and that these differing views form the basis from which decisions are reached.

2.3 Peace journalism model

The term 'Peace Journalism' (PJ) was first coined by Johan Galtung in the 1970s. According to Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:5), peace journalism is the deliberate selection and reportage of stories in ways that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value nonviolent responses to conflict. PJ uses the insights of conflict analysis and transformation to update the concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting, provides a new route map tracing the connections between journalists', their sources, the stories they cover and the consequences of their journalism and builds an awareness of nonviolence and creativity into the practical job of everyday editing and reporting.

Hyde-Clarke (2011:43) states that one main feature of peace journalists is their ability to frame stories in ways that provide society with enough information with which to respond non-violently to conflict or conflict situations. She also affirms that peace journalism is not only relevant in conflict situations; it can also find relevance in attempts at maintaining peace in the society by providing varied viewpoints that will help a large section of the citizenry make informed decisions about issues bothering them. This places enormous responsibilities on the media as society's watchdogs (Hyde-Clarke, 2011: 43).

PJ was born out of the need to correct the negative consequences associated with traditional (standard) journalism. Bratic, Ross and Kang-Graham (2008:13) aver that

traditional journalism practice rather than encourage peace, is more likely to foster violent conflict because it does not present society with alternatives that encourage peace. This follows from the fact that news media often have been used to promote wars and conflicts. For instance, the news media was accused of helping the allies further their goals in World War I and to overtly manipulate the German masses into believing that Jews were of a lesser race (Stout, 2011: 9). The German Nazi employed all kinds of tactics and bought varying weapons prior to and during World War II. However, none can be compared to the overt propaganda employed by Nazi Germany; propaganda was used by Hitler to maintain the loyalty of Germans. Similar to the horrific genocide perpetrated by Hitler is the significant role played by the media in the ethnic conflicts that engulfed Rwanda and former Yugoslavia. Journalists played crucial roles in the promotion of violence in the two countries (*see section 2.1.1*).

It is vital to note that the media can play very important role in positively shaping society. Hachten (2005:24) states that the media's persistent reporting about pariah states such as South Africa under apartheid helped facilitate political change. Such reporting formed world opinions, which, in turn, lead to actions by concerned nations. Persistent American and European press reporting of the civil war in Bosnia and the growing evidence of genocide by Bosnian Serbs undoubtedly pushed the Clinton administration and NATO to intervene and impose military truce which ultimately led to peace in the troubled nation. Hackett (2010: 118) argues that shifting and expanding the sphere of conflict reportage beyond the immediate conflict environment to larger venues thereby giving insight into possible causes, instigators and solutions is one of PJs notable prescriptions.

The model is not without its criticisms; even its name evokes contentions. For instance, Loyn (2007:2) contends that the biggest problem with PJ is where it puts the reporter. He asserts that the primary duty of a reporter is to be an observer and not a participant in a conflict situation, or indeed, any issue of social relevance. According to Loyn, the reporter is not there to make peace but to address the complications of a messy world and construct a narrative, not to search for connotations.

Similarly, Hanitzsch (2007: 5) argues that the idea behind PJ is often based on individualistic and voluntaristic illusion which suggests that journalists only need to change their attitudes and behaviours in order to produce coverage that will embrace the tenets of peace journalism. He further contends that there are many structural constraints such as inadequate personnel, availability of sources, access to the scene and information in general etc. which shapes and limits the works of journalists. Therefore, he affirms, it would be imprudent to suggest that the conduct of PJ is solely a matter of individual scope.

In stout defense of the model, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) maintain that PJ is often misunderstood as 'advocating for peace'. Rather, they aver, it is a journalism model concerned with giving peace a chance in national and international debate, by ensuring that nonviolent responses to conflict get a fair hearing.

Similarly, Peleg (2007:3) faults Loyn's position that reporters should maintain objectivity by acting as detached observers and not players in the social sphere. He remarks that that it is callous, inconceivable and insensitive for journalists to remain aloof and disconnected in the face of social injustice and tyranny. He is of the opinion that it is near impossible for instance to report disasters like the Rwandan genocide, the war in the DRC, the ravaging scourge of HIV/AIDS etc. without a sense of attachment, distinct emotional slant and empathy.

Peleg also disagrees with Hanitzsch's (2007:5) position that peace journalism overemphasises voluntarism and individualism, ignoring the sustaining surroundings, organisational logic and economic pressures that go with day to day journalistic duties. Individual reporters, according to Hanitzsch, journalists work alongside a group of other peace minded people or groups to ensure peace as they cannot possibly work alone or in a vacuum.

According to Peleg (2007:4), peace journalism aims at individuals as agents of change and not as solo crusaders as proposed by Hanitzsch. The aim is to create a critical

mass of individuals with innovative mind-sets towards the practice of journalism, thereby rendering the tenets of peace journalism a commonplace and not just a passing fad. Journalists are provided the enormous skills of peace journalism because they are in tune with ever-changing environmental circumstances and consequently provide opportunity for reform and growth.

A major criticism of PJ is that it inhibits journalists from practicing fair and objective reporting. Fairness and objectivity, they argue, are the universally known and accepted tenets of the journalism profession. Without objectivity, journalism loses its respect. However, objectivity without sensitive reportage can often be the bane of journalism. As Lee (2010:363) points out, objectivity is possibly one of the biggest obstacles to journalists playing a more responsible and beneficial role in public life. Objectivity, by emphasizing facts and overt events, devalues ideas and fragments experience and make complex social phenomena more difficult to understand. Hackett (2010:180) notes that there are certain positive connotations associated with the term objectivity, such as fairness and the pursuit of truth without favour. He argues, however, that objectivity is not a fixed 'thing', but is relative, because whether or not objectivity is a desirable and achievable goal for reporting in a democratic society is a debatable question

While objectivity as a fundamental part of journalism should be entrenched, it is vital nonetheless to note that news said to be 'objective' can in fact fuel violence. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:209) identify ways in which news said to be objective fuel violence, they are:

- News that overtly favour official sources over others
- News that are obviously biased in favour of events over process.
- And News that favour dualism in reporting conflicts

These biases as put forward by McGoldrick (2006:3) are discussed below:

Bias in favour of official sources

McGoldrick (2006:3) remarks by its nature, news is change-centred, yet its understanding of how change is attained is often one-dimensional. Thus, news often favour realism and unwittingly ignores insights of peace and conflict studies which hold that conflicts can be change in a number of ways, thereby negating the one-direction nature of news. However, because of the quest for news objectivity, we often hear so little about other actors of peace compared to official sources.

Bias in favour of events over process

According to McGoldrick (2006:3), most journalists have ignored the rudimentary requirements of reportage which is providing the public with the what, when, where, why and how of societal issues. The excuse normally put forward by journalists is that this will make the story too long and boring. McGoldrick however argues violence is often left to appear by default as the only response that makes sense during conflicts because journalists do not take time to explore the underlying causes of such violence. Thus, it becomes imperative for journalists to provide the public with the underlying causes of violence because understanding of the underlying issues is essential to effectively deal with a conflict.

A bias in favour of dualism

Hearing 'both sides of the story' is often regarded as objectivity at its best, and means the journalist is under obligation to ensure that sides in a conflict are given equal opportunities to present their arguments. As traditional and laudable as this may seem, it has its pitfalls, particularly as regards peace building and enduring positive peace. McGoldrick (2007:4) contends that dualism, though a key part of objectivity unwittingly frames conflict as a tug of war in which each party's only aim is victory over the other, ultimately creating a win-lose situation which is inimical to lasting peace

I believe that consistent media messages tilted towards a particular goal can indeed have immense impact on the public. The journalist is always at a crossroad whenever

the opportunity to report an incident presents itself. He/she is either reporting the issue as a peace journalist or a violence journalist. Either way, the reportage often impacts society in one way or the other. In table 2.1 below, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:18) present what they term the peace journalism model, which illustrates a comparison between peace and violence journalism. The aim of peace journalism, and indeed my aim in this research, is to inculcate more of the tenets of peace journalism on practicing journalists and to discourage the practice of war/violence journalism.

Table 2.1: Peace journalism model.

Peace/conflict journalism	War/violence journalism
1. Peace/conflict-orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore conflict formation x parties, y goals, z issues, general win-win orientation. • Open space, open time, causes and outcomes anywhere also in history/culture. • Making conflicts transparent • Giving voice to all parties, empathy, understanding • Humanization of all sides, more so the worse the weapon. • Proactive: prevention before any conflict occurs. 	1. War/violence orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on conflict arena-2 parties, 1 goal (win), war, general zero-sum orientation. • Closed space, closed time, causes and exits in arena who threw the first stone. • Making wars opaque/secret • 'Us-them' journalism, propaganda, voice, for 'us'. See them as the problem; focus on who prevails in war, dehumanization of 'them' more so worse the weapon. • Reactive: waiting for violence before reporting. • Focus only on visible effects of violence (killed, wounded and material damage).
2. Truth orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose untruths on all sides/uncover all cover-ups 	2. Propaganda orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expose 'their' untruths/help 'our' cover-ups/lies.
3. People orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on suffering all over, on women, aged, children, giving voice to voiceless. • Give name to all evildoers • Focus on peace makers 	3. Elite orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on 'our' suffering, on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece • Give name of evil-doers • Focus on elite peace makers
4. Solution orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace = nonviolence + creativity • Highlight peace initiatives, also prevents more war • Focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society. • Aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation. 	4. Victory orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace=victory + ceasefire • Conceal peace initiatives, before victory is at hand, focus on treaty, institutions and controlled society. • Leaving another for war, return of the old flares up again.

Table 2.1: Difference between PJ and WJ

Source: Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:6).

As can be observed from table 2.1 above, the focus areas of peace and war/violence journalism differ in their core motives. While the motive for peace journalism is to engender lasting peace (positive peace) where all parties feel that their position(s), interests and needs are met in conflict situations, while war/violence journalism focuses

on the 'winner' in a conflict and a cessation of hostilities (negative peace) rather than lasting peace.

- **War/violent-oriented vs. peace/conflict-orientated**

The American invasion of Iraq was a war fought on two battlefields---the media and Iraq, with the former accused of partly instigating the latter. Media reportage in the build up to the American-led invasion reduced the conflict to two parties, personified in the two presidents, George W. Bush and Saddam Hussein. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:7) remark that the unfortunate framing of the conflict as the battle of two meant the conflict became a tussle; as such, both George Bush and Saddam Hussein struggled to gain a 'metre' over one another. Media frame reduce the conflict to a situation whereby each party faces only two possibilities-victory or defeat.

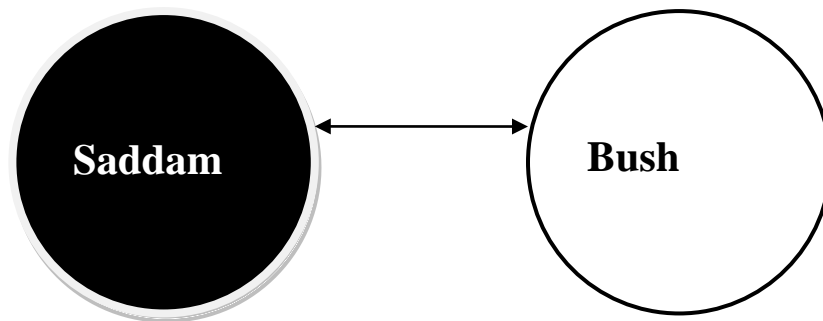


Figure 2.4 line conflict between Bush and Saddam

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:8) explain that the component parts of war journalism are mutually reinforcing. The question is implicitly posed in the initial framing decision thus:

- Like a simple geometric question, a line will be the only way two points can be joined.
- This means that this 'line' will form the single axis upon which change between them can take place.
- This leads to a tussle in which President Bush cannot gain a metre without President Saddam losing one.
- This leads to a zero-sum game in which each party in the conflict is left with only one option, to win or lose.

Such approach to conflict framing does little or nothing to mitigate it because conflicting parties do not have options to propose change in policy which does not move them to victory over the other. It creates a 'win at all cost' stance that means anything that is not 'winning' must be 'losing'. Thus, because of man's innate desire not to concede defeat, each has a ready-made incentive to step up or escalate his efforts for victory (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005:8).



Fig 2.5: Front page of Newsweek international edition

The above headline by *Newsweek Magazine* shortly after the demise of the regime of President Saddam Hussein clearly showed the type of journalism that was the norm during and after the invasion of Iraq. The international media clearly practiced war journalism that focused on a win-lose situation, instead of a win-win situation. Years

after the death of Saddam and the 'liberation' of Iraq, there still remain incessant direct violence in the country, suggesting that the 'victory' attained was superficial and unsustainable.

- **Truth vs. propaganda oriented**

"The citizen is completely helpless. He does not hear any other voice; and if everybody says the same, it must be true".-Uri Avnery
(http://www.reportingtheworld.net/Israel_Palestine.html)

Propaganda is defined by Jowett and O'Donnell (1999:6-7) as the willful, intentional and premeditated provision of materials calculated to further the interest of the propagandist. World War II was hinged on propaganda; the American-led invasion of Iraq was also aided by propaganda. The sad reality is that propaganda needs a conduit for its transference and the media have severally presented itself as a willing channel.

In the lead-up to the invasion of Iraq, the international media was awash with claims and counterclaims of the availability and possible use of destructive weapons or Weapons of Mass Destruction (WMD) by the government of Saddam Hussein. Proof that most of the media messages emanating at that time were skewed in favour of the invasion was obvious in the weakness of the claims put forward by proponents of the war.

Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:14) state that Britain's Joint Intelligence Committee (JIC) and the government of then Prime Minister, Tony Blair provided conflicting versions of the availability or non-availability of WMD in Iraq. While the JIC described claims of the presence of WMDs as 'sporadic and patchy', Blair described it as 'extensive, detailed and authoritative'. Whereas the JIC reported that there was a possibility that Iraq hid small quantities of weapons and agents, Blair's position was that the government of Saddam Hussein had large amounts of chemical and biological weapons capable of causing havoc to the entire gulf region.

According to Lynch and McGoldrick, the British Secret Intelligence Service warned the Prime Minister against overreliance on a single source for action against claims about Iraq's active weapons programme because the source's reliability was clearly unproven. Expectedly, work with the source was discontinued after the war when the source was discovered to be unreliable.

Years after the invasion and with new findings suggesting that there were no WMDs after all and that the real motive behind the invasion was oil and all its other sundry business, it became apparent that the media had once again failed the society. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:15) contend that the media would have been less apologetic had they paid more attention to the inspection process and its findings. Sadly, rather than carry out extensive investigations into the claims and counterclaims regarding reasons adduced for the invasion, most international media organisations depended on *The New York Times*, which ingloriously ignored identifiable sources that might have cast doubt on the administration's Iraqi WMD claims, while featuring unidentified sources that supported the claims.

Solution vs. victory oriented

One of the major tenets of peace journalism is a shift from focusing on the problem to diagnosing and providing solutions to potential conflict situations. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005: 20) state that when we start with a tug of war in a conflict situation and dehumanise the other party, as was the case in the US led invasion of Iraq, the remedy often is a military victory to get rid of that party. Conversely, when the problem is located in the conflict arena, it provides opportunity to convince all concerned that a limited, pre-emptive, surgical strike can remove the 'cancer'.

Elite vs. people oriented

The focus of war journalism often is on being the mouthpiece of able-bodied elite males, reporting their valour in war and esteeming the act of warfare in the process. Perez

(2008) believes this focus led to an invasion of the warfront by American reporters to 'experience the war' with the troops on the ground. While it is encouraging to show support for the gallantry of soldiers on the warfront, it should however not be at the expense of dying children, women and the aged, often neglected during war reportage. In contrast to war journalism, peace journalism seeks to shift focus from elite combatant to suffering all over; on women, aged, children, and giving voices to the voiceless. The *New York Times*, a leading channel for proponents of the invasion of Iraq did little to highlight the suffering of defenseless Iraqis.

Sengupta (2004) reports that the newspaper's archive for stories reported during the war showed one human interest piece on Baghdadi teenage girls' difficulties in pursuing their education and going out alone. In other to promote the practice of peace journalism and avoid war journalism, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:28-31) propose a 17-point plan for practical peace journalism. The points are tabulated below:

S/N	War Journalism (what to avoid)	Peace Journalism (what to do)
1.	Avoid protracting a conflict as consisting of only two parties contesting the same goal(s). The logical outcome is for one to win and the other lose.	Disintegrate the two parties into smaller groups, with many needs and interests, pursuing many goals, opening up more creative potential for a range of outcomes.
2.	Avoid accepting stark distinctions between 'self' and 'other'. These can be used to build the sense that another party is a 'threat' or 'beyond the pale' of civilised behaviour. Both are key justifications for violence.	Seek the 'other' in the 'self' and vice versa. If a party is presenting itself as 'the goodies' as the questions about how different its behaviour really is to that it ascribes to the other-isn't it ashamed of itself?
3.	Avoid treating a conflict as if it is only going on in the place and at the time that violence is occurring.	Try to trace the links and consequence for people in other places now and in the future. Ask: Who are all the people with a stake in the outcome? How does these stakeholders relate to each other? Who gains from the conflict? What are they doing to influence the conflict? What will happen if...?
4.	Avoid assessing the merits of a violent action or policy of violence in terms of its visible effects only.	Try to find ways of reporting on the invisible effects, e.g. the long term consequences of psychological damage and trauma, perhaps increasing the likelihood that those affected will be violent in future, either

		against other people or, as a group, against other groups or other countries.
5.	Avoid letting parties define themselves by simply quoting their leaders' restatements of familiar demands or positions.	<p>Enquire for yourself into goals, needs and interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are people on the ground affected by the conflict in everyday life? • What do they want changed? • Who else is speaking up for them besides their political leaders? • Is the position stated by their leaders the only way or the best way to achieve the changes they want? • This may help to empower parties to clarify their needs and interest and articulate their goals, making creative outcomes more likely.
6.	Avoid concentrating always on what divides the parties, on the differences between what each say they want.	Try asking questions which may reveal areas of common ground, and leading your report with answers which suggests that at least some goals, needs and interests may be compatible or shared.
7.	Avoid only reporting the violent acts and describing the horror. If you exclude everything else, you suggest that the only explanation for violence is previous violence (revenge); the only remedy, more violence (coercion/punishment).	Show how people have been blocked and frustrated or deprived in everyday life as a way of explaining how the conditions for violence are being produced.
8.	Avoid blaming someone for 'starting it'.	Try looking at how shared problems and issues are leading to consequences which all the parties say they never intended.
9.	Avoid focusing exclusively on the suffering, fears and grievances of only one party. This divides the parties into 'villains' and 'victims' and suggests that coercing or punishing the villains represents a solution.	Treat as equally newsworthy the suffering, fears and grievance of all parties.
10.	Avoid 'victimising' languages like 'devastated' 'defenceless', 'pathetic', 'tragedy' which only tells what has been done and could be done for a group of people by others. This is disempowering and limits the options for change.	Report on what has been done and could be done by the people. Don't just ask them how they feel; also ask them how they are coping and what they thin. Can they suggest any solutions?
11.	Avoid the imprecise use of emotive words to describe what has happened	Always be precise about what we know. Do not minimise suffering but reserve the

	<p>to people, such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tragedy is a form of drama, originally in Greek, in which someone's fault or weakness ultimately proves his or her undoing? • Assassination is the murder of a head of state. • Massacre is the deliberate killing of people known to be unarmed and defenseless. Are we sure? Or do we not know? Might these people have died in battle? • Systematic e.g. raping or forcing people from their homes. Has it really been organized in a deliberate pattern, or have there been a number of unrelated albeit extremely nasty, incidents? 	<p>strongest language for the gravest situations or you will beggar the language and help to justify disproportionate responses which escalates the violence.</p>
12.	<p>Avoid demonising adjectives like 'vicious', 'cruel', 'brutal', 'barbaric'. These always describe one party's view of what another party has done. To use them puts the journalists on that side and helps to justify an escalation of violence.</p>	<p>Report what you know about the wrongdoing and give as much information as you can about the reliability of other people's report or descriptions of it. If it is still being investigated, say so, as a caution that the truth may not yet be known.</p>
13.	<p>Avoid demonising labels like 'terrorist', 'extremist', 'fanatic', 'fundamentalist'. These are always given by 'us' to 'them'. No one ever uses them to describe himself or herself. And they are difficult, if not impossible, to apply impartially in every instance where they would be warranted.</p>	<p>Try calling people by the name they give themselves. Or be more precise in your descriptions e.g. 'bombers', and for the attacks of September 11th, 'suicide hijackers' are both less partisan and give more information than 'terrorists'.</p>
14.	<p>Avoid focusing exclusively on the human rights abuses, misdemeanours and wrongdoings of only one side</p>	<p>Try to name all wrongdoers and treat allegations made by all parties in a conflict equally seriously. This means, not taking at face value, but instead making equal efforts to establish whether any evidence exists to back them up, treating the victims with equal respect and the finding and punishing all wrongdoers as being of equal importance.</p>

15.	Avoid making an opinion or claim seem like established fact. This is how propaganda works-e.g. the campaign, primarily aimed at US and UK media, to link Saddam Hussein to 'international terrorism' in early 2002. Under a headline linking Iraq to the Taliban and al-Qaeda, came the claim that Iraqi military intelligence officers are said to be assisting extreme Palestinian groups in attacks on Israel.	Tell your readers or audience who said what. That way to avoid implicitly signing up yourself and your news service to the allegations made by one party in the conflict against another.
16.	Avoid greeting the signing of documents by leaders which bring about military victory or a ceasefire as necessarily creating peace.	Try to report on the issues which remain, and on the needs and interests of those affected. What has to happen in order to remove the incentives for further acts of violence? Ask what is being done to strengthen the means on ground to handle and resolve conflict non-violently, to address development or structural needs in the society and to create a culture of peace?
17.	Avoid waiting for leaders on 'our' side to suggest or offer solutions.	Pick up and explore peace initiatives wherever they come from. Ask questions of politicians e.g. about ideas put forward by grassroots organisations. Assess peace perspectives against what you know about the issues the parties are really trying to address; do not simply ignore them because they don't coincide with established positions. Include images of a solution, however partial or fragmentary-they may help to stimulate dialogue.

Table 2.2: A 17-point plan for practical peace journalism Adapted from Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:28-31).

2.4 Agenda-setting, media framing and peace journalism: a combination for peace.

Despite decades of independence from colonisation by most African countries, democracy is yet to be engrained as the norm in most nations in the continent. Most African leaders, it seems, would rather remain at the helm of affairs as demigods rather than conduct credible elections that would afford the populace the opportunity to decide who governs them and on what conditions.

The relationship between democratisations, elections and electoral violence are complex to say the least. All over the world, the assumption is that regular free and fair elections are signposts to democracy; while this is true in some instance, it is however imprudent to assume that simply because a nation conducts an election it now qualifies to be regarded as democratic. Omotola (2010:53) argues that elections do not necessarily mean a nation is democratic; they only strengthen democracy and peace in the society. Elections not only allow for political competition, participation and legitimacy, but also permit peaceful change of power, thereby making it possible to assign accountability to those who govern.

Journalists and the media in general can help foster peace and the entrenchment of democracy in the society by applying their 'power' to set agenda and frame news to the benefit of society. History is awash with journalists who have utilised the media's immense influence for the good of society. Pauli (2008:717-718) recounts how separate interviews conducted with the then Egyptian President Anwar Sadat and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin helped in no small measure to end the protracted conflict between both nations. The interviews, according to Pauli, focused on giving the two leaders the platform to air their grievances and to also understand the viewpoints of the other party. It helped in fast-tracking the peace process and in the historic visit of Sadat to Jerusalem.

Howard (2003) argues that “a reliable, diverse and independent news media has an almost innate potential for contributing to conflict resolution. It functions as a channel of communication that counteracts misperceptions. It frames and analyses the conflict, identifies the interests, defuses mistrust, provides safe emotional outlets, and more.

2.5 Chapter summary

The chapter provided a lucid narrative of how the media in Africa can play significant roles in ensuring that elections in the continent are devoid of violence by setting agenda for public discourse that encourage peace rather than brew violence. It should focus on issues rather than individuals when reporting elections. Amponsah (2012:1) believes voters need knowledge of issues during a presidential campaign. As Patterson and McClure (1976:49) explained, of all the information voters obtain through the mass media during a presidential campaign, knowledge about where the candidates stand is most vital of political campaigns.

The media has been described as society’s eyes, presenting society with the lens with which it views conflicts. Ramadhan (2013:14), remarks that it is through media that a conflict in society is reported and it is the manner of reporting that can increase violence, even when this was not the intention.

CHAPTER THREE

MEDIA AND THE REPORTAGE OF ELECTIONS

*“...since wars begin in the minds of men,
it is in the mind of men that the defense
of peace must be constructed.”*

(Preamble to UNESCO Constitution, 1945)

3.0 Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to analyse the media's election reportage in Nigeria. The chapter will look at media coverage of elections across the world to determine the extent of similarity with coverage in Nigeria and possible lessons that can be learnt. Case studies of media reportage of elections in Malaysia, Kenya and Ghana will be presented and the current mode of Nigeria's media reportage of elections will be reviewed.

3.1 The media as society's watchdog

The onerous task of safeguarding and ensuring the transparency of the democratic process lies in the 'shoulders' of the media. While society 'sleeps', the media, like a watchdog, is expected to keep awake by play an active role in ensuring that the electoral process is transparent. Transparency before, during and after elections is required at all levels; the public must be able to access information without struggle, politicians should be held accountable, legitimacy of individuals must be ensured and the public should be given the freedom to participate in debates without threats to their lives (ACE, 2013).

Information in an electoral process is said to be transparent when the electorate is provided unrestricted access to information that will aid his/or her decision making. This access includes legal and operational proceedings.

According to Abuya (2010:124), transparency and accountability in elections is vital, particularly in Africa, considering that the entire electoral process in many countries is often vulnerable to fraud and manipulation and often leads to widespread violence with loss of lives and destruction property. To ensure electoral transparency, the Election Monitoring Body (EMB) for example, is under obligation to inform the public of their actions, decisions and plans. Because of the sensitive nature of the duties of the EMB, only respected public figures that are known to be unbiased and working for the interest of the public are appointed into the Board. Thus, before assuming such sensitive positions, their vital information such as affiliations, histories and performance while in office is to be freely accessed by the public.

One of the media's chief responsibilities is ensuring that it acts as a catalyst for the avoidance of acts of violation and malpractice. The media also ensures that when such acts occur, they are investigated and brought to the public glare. To prevent acts capable of jeopardizing the electoral process, the media ensures that it is present during the entire electoral process from actual voting to counting. They also ensure that public office holders are held liable for their electoral promises and that political office holders live and operate above board while in office.

Norris (2000) identifies three political tasks for the news media system during the electoral process: the media should act as a watchdog for civil and political liberties, to provide platform for free and engaging political debate and act as a mobiliser and sensitizer for public participation in a representative and participatory democracy.

An election is only deemed democratic when members of the public are fully able to participate and are unhindered in the exercise of their choice. To achieve this, the media is vital in ensuring that the platform upon which the electoral process is hinged is open and transparent. Politicians and members of the public must be able to debate and participate in discussions without fear of molestation and intimidation. Transparency of an election helps ensures that this indeed is so.

Chan and Suen (2009:799) are of the opinion that during elections, voters rely heavily on information provided by the news media on the electoral process. Often, voters have little motivation or ability to gather information about intricate social issues. Americans, for instance, have been found to be extremely dependent on the newspapers and television news as their principal source of news and information on public policy and politics.

One major reason for possible overreliance on the news media for information during elections is the fact that information obtained from the media is 'cheap' and easily accessible. This means individual voters would not need to go through the trouble of finding out information such as the policy of a particular candidate or party, their antecedents, strengths, weaknesses etc. The problem is that this overdependence gives the media the excessive power to influence political outcomes through its agenda setting and framing ability.

The media is the society's 'watchdog'. Like the dog with the responsibility of guarding his master's gate from intruders, the media protects society from unfiltered information from politicians and/or governments. Norris (2000) avers that journalists should go beyond becoming the mouthpiece of politicians who use the media to report political speeches, campaign rallies and photographs; instead they should deliberately provide unbiased editorial commentaries, interpretative evaluations and features that will help readers place issues in their proper contexts.

Through critical coverage, the media can effectively promote accountability and an electoral process that is genuine and free of interference by investigating claims about government's records and/or performance, candidates' qualification for office and party activities and bringing such claims to the public domain. The media can also aid society by analysing party strategies and tactics and how they affect members of the public. The watchdog role of the media means that the media has the responsibility of providing background information about political aspirants and their parties. This is vital for the

protection of civil liberties and political rights because it opens up the actions of government and politicians to public scrutiny.

3.2 What motivates the way people vote?

Elections provide a people with the freedom to exercise their right to choose; either to install a candidate they deem worthy for a political position or remove an existing office holder they reckon to be unworthy. It is (or should be) a participatory and representative process in which all citizens can vote and be voted for in a democratic setting. Olanrinmoye (2008:67) describes participation as the level to which members of the public take part or are involved in societal activities that impact on their lives. He refers to representation as the process whereby members of the public chose individuals to act in the interest of the community or sectors thereof. He concludes that political parties serve as the principal mechanism for ensuring citizen participation and representation in public policy decision-making particularly in countries where the dominant form of democracy is indirect or representative.

Similarly, Olukayode and Lawal (2012:6) believe that elections confer legitimacy on leaders and it makes them acceptable to the people. This view is shared by Gélinau (2013:418), who holds the view that elections confer a sense of citizenship on a people because the core of modern democracies are its citizens and elected representatives. In the same vein, Schmitter and Karl (1991) observe that elections provide the citizenry with the power to ensure that rulers are held accountable for their actions or inactions.

In exploring further the discourse on elections, it is vital to ask what motivates electorates to vote. Why do individuals vote certain candidates over others? What are the implications of voters' decision and the outcome of elections on societal peace? Understanding electorate behaviour is important to peace studies because it provides information of use in formulating interventionist peace-building activities before, during and after elections to counter any drift towards violence.

In 1940, Paul Lazarsfield and a team of social scientists at Columbia University applied survey research to the study of electoral behaviour. The sophisticated nature of the research makes it still relevant today when discussing elections and voters' behaviour. Lazarsfield and his colleagues surveyed 600 prospective voters in Ohio as many as seven times during the 1940 presidential campaign; they made sure that the mixed new questions and repeated others in each successive interview and also had additional fresh cross-sections to serve as baselines for assessing the effects of repeated interviewing on respondents in the panel. This was done to determine the impact media messages had on their choice of presidential candidates (Bartels, 2008:3).

According to Bartels (2008:4), Lazarsfield and his team had hoped to demonstrate that carefully selected media content had a great tendency to sway voters' allegiance during elections. They however found out that media content had little or no impact on voters' choice of presidential candidates. Instead, voters chose candidates based on their perception of the candidate's 'brand appeal'. This brand loyalty seemed to be rooted in religion and social class which was reinforced via face to face interactions with people of like minds. The result shows that often, voters hold deep rooted pre-existing political dispositions and are hardly 'converted' no matter the persistence of the media messages.

In a follow-up study in 1948, Lazarsfield and his colleagues took another route by deliberately focusing on the influence interpersonal relationships had on voters' choice of presidential candidates; this they did by measuring respondents' perception of the political views of their families, friends and co-workers. This meant that the team had to downplay the role of political parties and the mass media downplayed the role of the parties and the mass media. They believed that by focusing on interpersonal relationships, they could ascertain the impact homogenous social networks have on political campaigns (Bartels, 2008:5).

From the result obtained from the study, Lazarsfield and his team concluded that:

“...the usual analogy between the voting “decision” and the more or less carefully calculated decisions of consumers or businessmen or courts ... may be quite incorrect. For many voters, political preferences may better be considered analogous to cultural tastes—in music, literature, recreational activities, dress, ethics, speech, social behaviour. ... Both have their origin in ethnic, sectional, class, and family traditions. Both exhibit stability and resistance to change for individuals but flexibility and adjustment over generations for the society as a whole. Both seem to be matters of sentiment and disposition rather than “reasoned preferences.” While both are responsive to changed conditions and unusual stimuli, they are relatively invulnerable to direct argumentation and vulnerable to indirect social influences. Both are characterized more by faith than by conviction and by wishful expectation rather than careful prediction of consequences” (Bartels, 2008:5).

Berry and Howell (2007:845) put forward an alternative theory — that of retrospective voting. They are of the opinion that in retrospective voting, a voter can decide to vote an incumbent into office based on his or her previous performance in government. According to Franks (2009:4), however, often voters vote for the incumbent because it saves them the trouble of seeking information on other candidates. The incumbent is already known and his performance is in the public domain for all to see, then it is assumed that the past performance of the incumbent can serve as a predictor of future performance.

Gélineau (2013:419) puts forward the economic voting pattern, where citizens would vote for a government when they are satisfied with its handling of the economy as reflected in the cost of food and availability of goods and services, support for the incumbent usually would drop. It may be argued that Olusegun Obasanjo, Nigeria’s second democratically elected president got the voters’ nod for a second term because of the manner in which his administration revolutionized Nigeria’s telecoms industry from a mere 400,000 subscribers to an enormous 73 million phone users in by 2009. According to Pyramid Research’s estimates (2010), mobile services were used by roughly 73million in 2009, around half of the population. Another economic contribution

of the Obasanjo administration was the negotiation of 36 billion Dollars debt cancellation from the Paris Club and other international donor organisations.

It is however significant to state that a citizen decides on economic voting or economic accountability after reaching certain conditions. Singer (2011) is of the opinion that citizens take time to firstly observe the economy to determine whether or not it is growing, then based on the observation, the citizen is able to form an opinion (negative, neutral, or positive). The voter is also then able to decide whether or not his observations are a result of government management or mismanagement.

In such a context, the model of electoral accountability would be conditional on the voters' individual attributes as well as features of the institutional context around them. Such a possibility clearly opens the way to observing variations in the extent to which voters blame/reward incumbents for perceived economic performance. As a result, one should find variation in the magnitude of economic voting across countries and over time within countries.

A classic example of economic voting and its impact on voter-decision was demonstrated during the 1992 presidential election in the United States. Roger and Tyszler (2012:4) argued that during the election campaign, Clinton's campaign team hinged their campaign on claims that incumbent President George H.W. Bush did not handle the economy well and was not deserving of another term. Thus, James Carville, a leading campaign strategist for Clinton used a whiteboard in the campaign headquarters to remind staff of the central message of the campaign.

The list read:

1. More of the same vs change
2. The economy, stupid
3. Don't forget healthcare

Carville cashed on the fact that in every election, the economy is a central theme of discourse. Realising that the American public, like publics across the world judge candidates' performance on their ability to turn around the economy, Clinton's campaign team used catch phrases that inspired bumper stickers, political cartoons and commentary throughout the period of the campaign.

Foucault, Nadeau and Lewis-Beck (2013) have proposed patrimonial voting, which goes back to an old political economy idea linking an individual's vote choice with possession (or not) of the means of economic production. This echoes Marx's division of society into workers and owners of businesses or means of production according to the assets they own: assets in this case would be the apparatus of production in the case of the owner or the labour of their bodies in the case of the workers. According to Stubager, Lewis-Beck and Nadeau (2013:439), voting behaviour is ultimately determined by the amount of assets possessed by individuals. They are of the opinion that wealthier are more likely to tilt towards right wing parties known for their traditional unwillingness to support redistribution and support for business interest, while individuals with few or no economic assets besides their labour gravitate towards leftist parties that favour economic redistribution.

However, Stubager, et al. (2013:439) are of the view that patrimonial voting theory goes beyond simply looking at assets, stating that assets are usually classed by individuals as either low risk or high risk. Lewis-Beck et al. (2013:18) assert that citizens choose assets according to their degree of risk aversion, with risk-averse citizens preferring assets like houses, a savings account and summer house that do not entail risky decisions and are not subject to large market unpredictability. Such assets require little ongoing attention and are characterized by (relatively) stable price development. On the other hand, individuals with a larger appetite for risk will be more attracted to assets that hold out potential for larger profits like shares, a business, or rental properties.

A classic example of patrimonial voting behaviour played out during the 2007 French General Elections whereas proposal for a generous fiscal measure for first-time home owners was put forward by Nicolas Sarkozy. Sarkozy's action was influenced by the fact that the French on average spend 35% of their disposal earnings on housing. His proposition was part of the 2007 French fiscal package consisting of policies aimed at lightening the fiscal burden on businesses, liberalising the labour market and stimulating investment. Sarkozy's tactics was patrimonial in that it made the French public believe that their material situation could be improved if he gets elected into office.

3.3 The media and election reportage around the world: three case studies.

As one of several actors in the political landscape during elections, the media nonetheless plays a very key role in determining the success or otherwise of elections. Often, elections are cast like movies with the media playing the lead role or acting as bit part actor simply adding small elements to a plot constructed elsewhere. Like cheerleaders, the media also amplifies and echoes what has happened somewhere else. Whatever role the media plays in the 'movie', the fact remains that the media is a vital actor in the interpretation of the electoral 'script'. Its interpretation can play a significant role in the peace, progressive and prosperity of the society at large (Nesbitt-Larking, 2009:7).

According to Norris (2000), citizens are motivated to exercise an informed choice during elections when they are assured that elections are free and fair, that they occur at regular intervals and that their votes translate into seats and alternation of the authorities in government. Citizens are further motivated when they know that they possess the power to hold parties and representatives answerable for their actions and, when the need arises, vote them out of positions.

A credible electoral process goes beyond the freedom to cast votes and ensure that the votes count, it is also about a process of participation where voters engage in debates about political parties, candidates, their policies and the election process itself. This

helps them make informed choices regarding who to vote and why (Ace, 2013:9). The essential role of the media in elections cannot be overemphasized.

3.3.1 Malaysia

Given that most people in developing countries are concerned about their economic and social wellbeing, politicians have hinged their campaign promises on issues bothering on national development and modernisation. Recognising the influence the media has on society's perceptions, many government leaders in the developing world justify their control of the media as necessary to guard and guide its citizens on the supposedly noble path of national development (Anuar, 2005:27).

Anuar (2005:27) believes the media in Malaysia, not wanting to be proscribed, have become muffled drums and have formed an unholy alliance with the government of the day; this has resulted in a somewhat submissive media which sing praises of the government's economic endeavours and avoids genuine and positive criticisms of its development policies and projects. Similarly, Rajaratnam (2009:35) agrees that in Malaysia's often restricted democracy, the coverage of government policies by the media is usually uncritical, while prominence and coverage is not accorded political opponents. Brown (2005) is of the opinion that although there are noticeable limitations on media operations in Malaysia, recent happenings suggest the possibilities of change as Civil Society Organisations are increasingly using the platform of new media technologies to disseminate their messages and opinions.

The role of the media is most evident in the run-up to any election. The 2008 General Election proved to be a watershed in the development of media in Malaysia. While the mainstream media's role has been evident in every election, the role of online media proved to be a turning point in the recent 12th General Election. Rajaratnam (2009:37) observed that during this election in Malaysia, there seemed to be an increased disappointment amongst Malaysians as they viewed the media as partisan and supportive of the incumbent government. The media was severally accused of providing

the citizenry with unbalanced reportage that often echoed the voice of government while ignoring the opposition's point of view.

Tapsell (2013:625) is of the opinion that the Malaysian people got tired of the bias of mainstream media that was brazenly pro-government and turned to the internet for trustworthy news information, particularly regarding the election. Thus, he remarks that the election result was determined by the swing votes of young voters who had access to the internet and read websites that offered alternative news and commentary. It can be noted that According to internet penetration in Malaysia increased from 3.7 million in 2000 to 16.9 million in early 2009, an increase of 356% (Samsudin, 2011:4).

3.3.2 Kenya

Kenya has a very vibrant and enthusiastic media. According to Polycarp and Ochilo (1993:23-24), like most African countries, the modern media in Kenya was started by British missionaries. The early examples include the *Taveta Chronicle* which was published by Rev. Robert Stegal of the Church Missionary Society in 1895. The paper was the flagship for the European settlers in Kenya and gave rise to other newspapers in Kenya and East African region. The British East African Company founded the *Leader* in 1899, while the *Ugandan Mail* was published in Mombasa. The basic objective of these papers was to provide information for the missionaries and settlers of news that came from home. Such newspapers became a device to maintain the status quo by legitimizing the rights of the colonial masters to rule Kenya. They also provided a channel for social communication among the settlers in Kenya from different parts of the country. Radio was also started in 1928 to play the same kind of roles (Polycarp & Ochilo, 1993:24).

The mainstream media in Kenya operates in English and Swahili as national and official languages. According to Kenya Media Landscape Guide (2010), television reaches 40% of the population, while newspaper circulates among 30%. Radoli (2011) affirms that Kenya's mainstream media has gained a reputation for exposing corruption, promoting human rights and providing a forum for public debates. The years of single party politics

limited the watchdog role of the media. The amendment of the constitution in the early 1990s to re-introduce multi-party electoral democracy brought challenges for the mainstream and proliferating alternative media to remain professional by following ethical standards such as objectivity, fairness and impartiality.

Abdi & Deane (2008) maintain that the media in Kenya have been unfortunately touted as biased and prejudiced in their reportage of elections. They hold that while the media is seen as the most trusted public institution, it has also been blamed for fuelling the conflict that ensued shortly after the disputed 2007 presidential election. The media was accused of political bias; fanning the embers of ethnic hatred and marginalising voices of reason in an ethnically polarised political environment.

The 2013 election provided an opportunity for alternative election reportage. Warah (2013) argues that the local media in Kenya displayed extreme caution and restraint, bordering on self-censorship, in terms of how it reported the election. Acts of violence and disturbances in some parts of the country during the election were downplayed, perhaps in the belief that reporting these events might trigger reprisal incidents elsewhere or make the violence appear more widespread than it really was. According to Warah (2013), the Kenyan media had decided not to “disturb the peace”, even if it meant under-reporting electoral misconduct. In some regards, one may argue that the Kenyan press practiced peace journalism during the 2013 election, though critics will contend that the media’s under-reportage of issues during the election negates the principles of objectivity and fairness. This “peace messaging”, according to Warah, was also premised on the awareness that a politically unstable Kenya was not good for local businesses and foreign investors, and that remaining peaceful or non-violent was good for the economy. In the long run, the election was largely free of violence.

Suffice to add that the Kenyan election was not without its criticisms. Critics believe the media, in an attempt to avoid a possible repeat of the electoral violence that rocked the country in 2007 practice a journalism of ‘compromise’. Beckett (2013) asserts that the

general elections gave Kenyans an unsatisfactory choice between the half-truths of the foreign press and the illusions of their own national media.

By African standards, many pundits believe the Kenyan election was relatively peaceful and the media has been credited for practicing responsible peace-oriented journalism. However, even those who publicly praised the Kenyan media's overtures to unity will privately confess that they harbour concerns, particularly about the self-censorship drive adopted by the national media. Beckett (2013) observes that in the fear of telling dangerous half-truths, an extreme relativism that all truths are equal was permitted.

Beckett believes the Kenyan media presented an 'illusion' of unity amongst the populace. It covered the glaring differences that still existed amongst the people and under reported accusations of rigging and electoral malpractices leveled against Uhuru Kenyatta.

This illusion is described by Silverstone (2000) thus:

"...illusions, of course, though they have their costs, can be massively sustaining. The illusion of connection is grounded in the refusal of otherness. It is based on the private masquerading as the public, the separate masquerading as the shared, the different masquerading as the same, the distant masquerading as the close-at-hand, the unequal masquerading as the equal. In all these dimensions the masquerade is profound in its ethical consequences."

Though the fact that the Kenyan media made a conscious effort at preserving the peace of the nation before, during and after the election is commendable, sweeping the nation's obvious differences under the rug was akin to postponing doomsday. In the not too long future, issues such as ethnicity, religion and gross electoral malpractices that went unreported or underreported could spring up with dire consequences. Beckett (2013) argues that although telling the 'good' stories played a critical role in preventing violence during the electoral process, it is important to the real challenge to forming a

national narrative, however, is how to include conflict, injustice, suffering, and inequality – how to promote mutual understanding on the themes that divide us (Beckett, 2013).

3.3.3 Nigeria

The evolution of the Nigerian media

The Nigerian media is arguably one of the most vocal on the African continent. With a population of over 175 million people, and with over 500 ethnic groups and diverse religions, Nigeria's multicultural and multi-religious setting means that media messages are often given several interpretations beyond their original intentions. These (mis)interpretations have the potentials of eliciting violence and also to engender peace. As Akinfeleye (2003) holds, the Nigerian media is a two-edged sword, capable of motivating for peace or instigating for violence. According to Akinfeleye (2003), the relevance of the media in any polity is generally drawn from the fact that information is necessary for effective governance and administration, and the society depends profoundly on the press for vital information.

Over the past several decades Nigeria's media has passed through various stages from state domination of print and broadcast media to liberalised format, involving state and the private sector. In assessing the role of the media in society, Wei (2008), affirms that the media plays a multiplicity of roles such as fostering communication, aiding social cohesion and building cultural continuity in a given society.

At the individual level, the media fulfils audience needs for surveillance, personal guidance, personal relationships, identity formation, and diversion, among others. Rooted in the functional view of media, the uses and gratifications approach to media use assumes that audiences are aware of their social and psychological needs and actively seek the media to fulfil them. That is, needs fulfilment motivates audience media use (Wei 2008: 37).

From Townsend to new media

“My objective is to beget the habit of seeking information by reading ... I have set on foot a Yoruba newspaper”-Rev. Henry Townsend.

According to Ismail (2011), historically, the development of the Nigerian Press is traceable to an Anglican missionary Henry Townsend, who in 1859 commenced newspaper publishing with the first newspaper in Nigeria, called “*Iwe-Iroyin fun awon Egba ati Yoruba*”, which literally means “*A Newspaper for the Egba and Yoruba Nations*”. First published in 1859, the paper’s aim was to encourage literacy and build up elites among the then Egbas of Abeokuta, present day Ogun State in Nigeria’s southwest.

The newspaper was published fortnightly and became extremely popular among the elite in Egba land, it was a mainly Yoruba language newspaper. After growing patronage and widespread acceptance, the newspaper later started publishing in Yoruba together with an English translation. Abati (1998) is of the opinion that the demise of ‘*Iwe-Iroyin*’ later resulted in the emergence of other Newspapers like *Anglo-African*, *Lagos Time* and *Gold Coast Advertiser*, *Lagos Observer*, *The Eagle* and *Lagos Critic*, *The Mirror*, *The Nigerian Chronicle*, *The Lagos Standard*, *Lagos Weekly Record*, *African Messenger*, *The West African Pilot*, *Nigerian Tribune*.

The growth of the early Nigerian newspapers gave rise to the nationalistic struggles that eventually led to the independence of Nigeria from Britain. Most of the publishers of the emerging newspapers at that time formed the nucleus of the nationalists that agitated for the independence of Nigeria. Prominent nationalists like Herbert Macaulay, Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Dutse Mohammed Ali, Ernest Ikoli, Anthony Enahoro etc. all used their newspapers as platforms for mobilizing the citizenry against British rule. It can be argued that the pressure from the press contributed in no small measure towards the attainment of independence in 1960.

Oso (2012:20) observes that although the *Iwe-Iroyin* set the stage for what turned out to be media led campaign for Nigeria’s independence, the turning point actually came

about with the amalgamation of Nigeria's Northern and Southern Protectorates in 1914. The amalgamation meant that newspapers based in the former Northern and Southern Protectorates 'joined forces' to clamour for a common goal, Nigeria's independence. The amalgamation led to an increase in nationalist tempo, resulting in an increase in the number and variety of newspapers in the country. He states that while 16 papers were published between 1880 and 1914, 64 were published between 1914 and 1945.

It is important to note that aside from the amalgamation, the newspaper industry was stimulated by the 1922 Clifford constitution which introduced the elective principle that provided the platform for Africans to take part in the electoral process. The Clifford Constitution provided a motivation for the early rise of nationalist movements and also the evolution of political parties in the country. It was during the period that the first Nigerian National Democratic Party (NNDP) which was led by Herbert Macaulay was formed. Also, the Nigerian Youth Movement and the National Council of Nigerian Citizens were formed.

Historical evolution of broadcasting in Nigeria

Radio broadcasting was introduced in Nigeria in 1932 by the then British Colonial authorities as part of the empire service of the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC). The service, which was called Radio Diffusion System (RDS), used wired systems and loudspeakers with which it relayed overseas service of the BBC to Nigeria. The National Broadcasting Service (NBS) Act was enacted in 1956. By 1957, the RDS also underwent a name change and became the Nigerian Broadcasting Corporation (NBC) to provide a nationally representative domestic service and external service. Seizing the opportunity of the colonial constitutional review which gave federal and regional governments concurrent powers in the ownership of broadcasting stations, the government of the western region established television and radio stations in 1959 (Udimisor, 2013:2225).

By 1959, the Premier of Nigeria's Western Region, Chief Obafemi Awolowo had established the Western Nigeria Television (WNTV), touted to be the first in Africa.

According to Udimisor (2013), the introduction and expansion of television in Nigeria was hinged on political and educational factors. This position was collaborated by Umeh (1989) who asserts that Awolowo sought to utilise the WNTV as a tool for furthering the educational quest of the Yoruba people and for building societal peace and harmony.

Nigerian media reportage of elections

Nigeria plunged straight into political anarchy barely six years after independence from Britain, in part caused by the disputed general elections that took place during the first republic. According to Olayiwola (1991:36), during Nigeria's inglorious first republic 1960-1966, there were mixed party and non-party media, government-owned and controlled media, political-party newspapers and the press of private concerns. The ownership of these was largely reflected in their coverage of national issues of paramount importance, such as the census, election campaigns, regional crises, ethnic and group interests, among others. The leading political party newspapers were not only locked in combat but all the media provided remarkable examples of over-zealous, irresponsible partisanship and recklessness.

The major debate between the north and the south in Nigeria has always been whether the media mostly based and owned in the south, could be fair and objective in dealing with matters outside its region. Since this is a deeply-held perception, it has always been difficult to suggest that the mix of experiences that make up the peoples of the south is itself so diverse that they cannot be narrowly streamlined as "southern."

To be sure, the south is diverse; for instance, one south-western part is a mix of Christians, Moslems and other religions while another south-eastern region is largely Christian. A huge gulf of ethnic differences separates them all. There are, certainly, problems in coverage. Generally, newspapers tend to be purely reportorial in their attitude to coverage, sacrificing analysis, and in that process failing in a fundamental obligation to offer their readership the critical choices upon which they might make

intelligent decisions. Newspapers often do not engage in a lot of analysis or interpretation. This gap, plus a penchant for the deification of personalities, opens the window for bias and misrepresentation. This is often linked to the interests and/or aspirations of the owners of such newspaper outfits.

Media reportage of elections during Nigeria's second republic was as atrocious as that which led to the civil war. Olayiwola (1991:38) remarks that consistent public discussion, as set by the Nigerian press, formed the fulcrum of discussions during the transition programmes which culminated in the advent of Nigeria's Second Republic. Apart from the military leaders' acknowledgement of mass media responsibility for interpreting and informing the electorate of the issues, the 1979 Constitution also required special obligations from the press on Fundamental Objectives and Directive Principles of state policy.

The period 1979 to 1983, known as Nigeria's second republic, was characterised by an increase in the quantity of newspapers in circulation and by the brazen nature of their editorials and reportage on issues of political significance. This considerably led to a high level of political participation and interest in a democracy by the vast majority of the Nigerian populace. According to Olayiwola (1991: 39), at the peak of the run up to the 1979 presidential election in Nigeria, every political pressure group in the country established its own newspaper to serve as a flagship and a voice in the often 'noisy' political landscape in Nigeria. Newspapers became sources of conflict before, during and after elections.

Commenting on the impact of ownership on newspaper reportage of elections in Nigeria, Daramola (2013: 44) asserts that newspaper ownership in Nigeria is closely tied to ethnicity and by extension to ethnic considerations in political reporting. Daramola recalls the role played by *The Record* (1891-1930) of Thomas Horatio Jackson, *Lagos Daily News* of Herbert Macaulay and *Eko Akete* in 1923 during the campaign for the first election in Nigeria. The available newspapers took positions as pro-NNDP; anti-NNDP and a few were neutral. Omu (1978) affirms that during political campaigns, even when

the election had been conducted, the newspapers were overtly partisan and were a divisive force in the country.

Other factors that can explain press bias in Nigerian political communications are ethnicity and religion. Many Nigerian elected or traditional rulers are aware of the damage these factors could do and have often warned people to guard against the menace of ethnicity and religion. Writing on the 1979 elections, Bolaji (1980) observed that, just as the voting trend in the elections took on a 'strong ethnic colouration', much of the country's press reflected the same pigmentation in their reports and comments.

According to Oso (2012), the political elite in Nigeria have often made news a scarce commodity reserved for the few because of the highly contested public space for its propaganda and publicity value. Those with ownership and access therefore set agenda and frame public issues. Hence, Oso argues that news is not in any way neutral, but ideological. This position is in consonance with the comment of Bennett & Entman (2001:118) that failure to control the news is often equated with political failure. So, while the press was weaned from the control of the state and political parties, it went into the open arms of commercial and corporate interests. It was more of a case of the exchange of state control for the control of capital (Oso, 2012).

Ibrahim (1989) in a study of effects of media ownership points out that whether the ownership of the country's media are vested in the hands of private or government, the media are mere megaphones in the hands of those in control. Citing the *National Concord* owned by then late Chief MKO Abiola, an NPN stalwart, the ruling party in Nigeria in 1979, the publisher over ruled that some stories which authenticity could not be verified should be published in order to achieve some political gains. A case in point was the publication of a land scam against Chief Obafemi Awolowo, who was alleged to have bought the whole of a sizeable part of Lagos.

A similar streak of partisanship was noticed in the media's coverage of a long-standing debate surrounding the quota system in Nigeria. Oso (2012) observed that the press tended to reflect the debate in the manner in which its owners affect them---the major point to note is the extent to which the media has been so much their master's voices, that they pass individual opinions and positions on the federal character debate as group positions and interest.

Similarly, ownership played a vital part in the content of newspapers vis-à-vis the Shari'ah crises in Nigeria. A keen observer of the trend in reportage during the peak of the clamour for full implementation of Shari'ah in most part of northern Nigeria would conclude that it was a 'tug-of-war' between Christian southern owners and Muslim northern owners. *The Guardian Newspaper* has a Christian as owner, this significantly played out during the Shari'ah debacle.

Ado-Kurawa (2006) believes *The Guardian* was overtly condemning of the planned implementation of Shari'ah in most of Nigeria's northern states. The Ibru Centre, an international ecumenical centre designed to enhance inter and intra religious affairs has often been chastised for been pro-Christian in its views and ideologies. During the peak of the Shari'ah agitation, the Ibru Centre pages of *The Guardian* provided a telling tale of how *The Guardian*, which is supposedly national and objective, promoted Christian views to the detriment of Islam and in particular the Shari'ah rouse.

It is obvious that the press in Nigeria and indeed most developing countries in the world are entangled in the political milieu they find themselves. Indeed, analysis of media coverage in past Nigerian elections has been negative. The Commonwealth Observer Group report on the 2007 elections that significant state ownership of the broadcast media negatively impacted on and influenced the coverage in favour of incumbents' parties (COG, 2007).

Fear of government proscription, ownership, ethnic and religious bias has been the bane of journalism practice in Nigeria, particularly as it concerns election reportage. The major challenge has been ensuring that every citizen has equal access to information before, during and after elections. According to the Centre for Democracy and Governance (CDG, 1999:3), vital to the health of any democracy is ensuring that every citizen has equal access to information that would aid their political decision making process. This, according to the CDG is important for two reasons. First, access to information equips citizens with the needed knowledge that would aid their decision making rather than acting out of ignorance or misrepresentation. Second, information provides the citizenry with the means with which to question elected officials when they fall short of their promises to the electorate.

3.4 Summary

This chapter took an exhaustive look at the media's method of reporting elections and the impact it has on peace in the society. Although the main focus was to analyse media's election reportage in Nigeria, it was important to look at media coverage of elections across the world to determine the extent of similarity with coverage in Nigeria and possible lessons that can be learnt. Case studies of media reportage of elections in Malaysia and Kenya were presented and the current mode of Nigeria's media reportage of elections was reviewed.

CHAPTER FOUR

INSTIGATORS OR MEDIATORS: EXPLORING THE ROLE OF THE MEDIA IN ELECTORAL VIOLENCE

4.0 Introduction

‘Our Republic and its press will rise or fall together. An able, disinterested, public-spirited press, with trained intelligence to know the right and courage to do it, can preserve that public virtue without which popular government is a sham and a mockery. A cynical, mercenary, demagogic press will produce in time a people as base as itself. The power to mould the future of the Republic will be in the hands of the journalists of future generations’ (Joseph Pulitzer 1904).

We have seen from previous chapters that although democracy is typified by regular free and fair elections, an election does not mean that a country is democratic. It is however agreed they are necessary for democratic governance. With the spread of ‘democracy’ across the world, elections have also spread to nearly every country with associated increase in complaints about the role of violence in democratization and the use of violence as an electoral tool. This chapter will delve on the role of the media in electoral violence. The aim is to ascertain the extent to which electoral violence can be attributed to media reportage.

4.1 Exploring electoral violence

According to Hafner-Burton et al. (2013: 4), in countries without a well-developed respect for the rights of their citizens, elections increase political polarization and potentially increase human rights abuses. However, elections in liberal states ultimately bring about wider political involvement, civic commitment and political accountability, all of which will improve respect for human rights over time.

Electoral violence seems to be the norm rather than an occasional occurrence in most countries around the world, particularly in African countries. Hyde and Marinov (2012) assert that from 1960 to 2010, the world witnessed more than 350 unique cases of

violent post-election protest. With exceptions from a few countries, election periods in Africa are always observed with great trepidation because so often they culminate in preventable violence and bloodshed. Countries like Nigeria, Kenya, Democratic Republic of Congo etc. whose governments are largely authoritarian and the people are severely divided along ethnic lines always find the management of political opposition Herculean (Bekoe, 2010:1).

Albert (2007:133) describes electoral violence as 'all forms of organized acts or threats – physical, psychological, and structural – aimed at threatening, harming, blackmailing a political stakeholder before, during and after an election with a view to determining, delaying, or otherwise influencing an electoral process'. Thus, one can safely adduce that electoral violence has effects that are multidimensional, having physical, psychological and structural dimensions.

Many factors contribute to the problem of electoral violence in Africa. In most African countries, electoral violence is perpetrated both by the incumbent in office who, against the will of the people, wants to hold on tenaciously to power and avoid defeat (Omotola, 2008:53). Also, opposition elements seeking to wrestle power from the incumbent often also instigate electoral violence to the detriment of the society they claim to want to govern.

Suffice to add that electoral violence is not synonymous to Africa alone. According to Meadow (2009:238), the 2004 national parliamentary elections in India were marred by unprecedented pre-election violence resulting from calls for a boycott by Kashmir separatists. In a bid to enforce their call for boycott of the election, radical groups associated with the Kashmir nationalist effort staged a wave of assaults and bombings intended to scare voters. Similarly, Bilefsky (2008) states that scramble for ethnic Albania votes by supporters of two ethnic Albanian political parties led to the electoral violence experienced in the nation of Macedonia during the 2008 national parliamentary elections.

Though electoral violence in Africa is closely connected with the neo-patrimonial character of the African state, the nature of contestation for power, the weak institutionalisation of democratic architectures, including political parties and electoral management bodies (EMBs), this chapter delves on an often-neglected factor in most electoral violence in the world-the media.

4.2 Phases of electoral violence

Electoral violence can occur before, during and after an election. Politicians initiate violence at different phases of the electoral process depending on their motives. For instance, Hafner-Burton et al. (2013: 6) believe incumbents utilise pre-election violence to instill fear in opponents thereby reducing her electoral competition. This ploy often induces opposition parties to boycott elections making it less likely that a promising opposition candidate will run. For example, the presidential candidate of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) Mr. Morgan Tsvangirai was forced to withdraw from the 2008 presidential election when his supporters claimed they were been attacked by supporters of the ruling ZANU PF.

Stremlau and Price (2009: 5) are of the opinion that violence often occurs before and after elections and in most cases not during the election proper. They aver that often, it is during campaigns or when results start trickling in that violence starts.

Election Day violence, unlike pre-election violence which occurs before the commencement of actual elections, occurs on the day of elections. Omotola (2010: 56) describes Election Day violence as activities which comprise the forceful snatching of electoral ballot boxes, threats and assaults on opposition agents and party members and even outright intimidation and harassment by security agents.

Borzyskowski (2013: 5) defines post-election violence as physical force intended to hurt or kill individuals or groups and arises in reaction to an announced election result. This logic, according to him, is different from pre-election violence, which can be used to influence turnout and vote choice on election-day. Hafner-Burton et al. (2013) state that

after elections, incumbents who remain in power, whether legitimately or not may still be challenged by an election-induced threat. They are of the opinion that public protests, often resulting from dissatisfaction with the electoral process frequently lead to post-election violence. Post-election protests indicate that citizens are willing to mobilize against the regime and have solved their collective action problem.

From the aforementioned phases of electoral violence, one can agree with Hoglund (2009:417) motive and timing are the only factors that separate electoral violence from all other known forms of violence. The timing of electoral violence is specific-before, during and after elections, while the motive is simply to influence the outcome of the electoral process.

4.3 Why do elections turn violent?

Like earlier stated, electoral violence has as its central motive, the disruptions of the electoral process in such a way as to influence the final outcome of the process in favour of certain individuals or groups. Hoglund (2009: 415) is of the opinion that when incumbents feel that their popularity is waning and that they are probably on the verge of losing out during elections, they result to violence.

Orji (2013: 393) states that electoral violence constitutes a serious challenge to democracy in Africa in two major ways. Firstly, the worth of democracy as the government of the people, for the people and by the people is greatly undermined by electoral violence because the act or threats of violence often discourages voters and political aspirants from participating effectively in the democratic process. Secondly, according to Orji, electoral violence may also reduce public confidence in elections and sadly legitimize other forms of power transfer.

Electoral violence in Africa differs from one country to the other in their nature, causes and effects. In countries like Nigeria, Kenya and Ethiopia where there have been electoral violence in recent years, electoral violence are often ripple effects of other underlying factors such as poverty, inter-communal competition and perceived ethnic or

regional domination. On the other hand, Orji (2013) is of the opinion that in countries like Zimbabwe and Ivory Coast issues such as complicated interfaces over land complaints, the constructions of nationhood and nationality, and the centralised use of political violence have been more important than ethnicity and regionalism.

4.3.1 Ethnicity and perceived marginalisation

Ehinmore & Ehiabhi (2013: 47) trace the foundation of electoral violence in Nigeria to the amalgamation of Nigeria in 1914 by the British colonialists who without due consideration to the country's diverse ethnic groups, forged a 'marriage' of convenience rather than compatibility. They assert that issues of ethnicity and perceived marginalisation can be regarded as a colonial package bequeathed Nigerians without their consent. Fearing the domination of certain ethnic groups over others, the British foisted a 'marriage of convenience' on Nigeria's diverse ethnic groups and that 'wound' is refusing to heal.

According to Berman (2010: 6), the seed of ethnic division currently plaguing the African continent is traceable to the colonial state which rather than recognize the fact that Africans lived in tribes and ethnic groupings, used the tools of modern state power to define and classify Africans through scientific instruments such like maps and censuses that assigned individuals and communities to what were believed, often incorrectly, to be ancient prehistoric identities. Fearon (2004:2) is of the view that ethnicity is socially relevant when people's everyday life, decisions and actions are conditioned and motivated by their ethnic affiliations or cleavages. Politically, it is when political alliances are prearranged along ethnic lines, or when entrée to partisan or economic benefits depends on one's ethnic alliance.

Mapuva (2013: 90) avers that most of the civil wars that have been fought on the African continent have their root in division brought about by ethnicity. Ethnicity, according to Mapuva was the main force behind the anti-colonial struggle. In Nigeria for instance, the likes of Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, Chief Obafemi Awolowo, Sir Tafawa Balewa

and Sir Ahmadu Bello fought for the independence first as ethnic leaders, then eventually as national leaders.

Though the 'founding fathers' of Africa's independence are still credited for their sacrifices during the struggle for independence, they held on to their ethnic 'lordship' for fear of losing significance. According to a Human Rights Watch report for 2011, politicians and freedom fighters found comfort and relevance in their tribes, wielding the influence of tribal lords and rather than initiate the process of nation building, they inadvertently sowed the seeds of discords all in a bid to protect their 'tribe' from economic and cultural domination from their perceived rival ethnic groups (Human Rights Watch, 2011).

The position of the Human Rights Watch is similar to that held by Eifert, Miguel and Posner (2010: 494) who state that traditional loyalties to kith and kin in Africa means that ethnic identities are much stronger than national identities. They argue that people in Africa first identify with their ethnic groups before they identify with the nation. While the position of Eifert, Miguel and Posner is considerably true in most African countries, it is however important to state that issues of ethnicity and religious bigotry in most African countries only rear their ugly heads during elections as politicians seek to win power at all cost.

For instance, most of the elections in Nigeria have been decided by ethnic mergers and/or agreements. The deep-seated ethnicity in the country has led to the 'election' of mediocre leaders who rode to leadership positions by the support of their kinsmen. Credibility and competence have been sacrificed on the altar of ethnic affiliations and loyalties, leading to the denigration of proficiency to the background. This has also led to the recurrent cases of ethnic clashes in the country. According to Igwe (2012: 55), ethnicity has polarised the Nigerian political climate into extreme conservatives and progressives with each side seeking to have the upper hand by pursuing its interest albeit with severe consequences such as violence.

Huber (2012: 987) views ethnicity, particularly as it concerns elections as either group or party-centred measures. According to Huber, ethnicisation and possibly electoral violence increases when voting behaviour by members of a particular group become more unified, thus making the outcome predictable when one knows the ethnic group he/she belongs to it is referred to as group centred ethnic voting. Huber states that in the United States for instance, blacks have been found to vote overwhelmingly for democrats making it easy to predict the vote of a black person simply by knowing his/her race.

Belgium is another classic example of ethnicisation in politics. According to Huber (2012: 988), Belgian voters also vote along ethnic lines as the Flemish are more likely to vote Flemish candidates, while the French will also most likely vote French candidates. Thus, if one knows an individual's language, one knows which of the several parties the individual might support and parties the individual will doubtlessly oppose. The implication of this type of voting culture, especially in countries with less developed democracies like Nigeria and most of sub-Saharan Africa, is that it becomes easy for group mobilisation for conflict whenever election results do not reflect the expectation of a particular group.

4.3.2 Poverty and inequality

Africa's teeming unemployed youths have become ready-made tools in the hands of politicians who exploit their idleness to perpetrate electoral violence. Ikejiaku (2012: 127) is of the opinion that while there are disagreements about the specific interface between poverty and conflict, there is no debating the fact that both impact negatively on democratisation and development, and often lead to instability, particularly during the electoral process.

Frimpong (2012) affirms that most of the electoral violence experienced in Africa is caused by poverty and societal inequality. Given that poverty in Africa is very frightening, this gives room for the continent's youths who are the majority in most countries to be manipulated and used as tools for electoral violence.

In the same vein, Ehinmore and Ehiabhi (2013: 47) believe the intractable obstacles to free and fair elections since independence in Nigeria can be linked to poverty and unemployment. For a nation that has over 60% of its population in the youth bracket (2006 Census figures), the number of unemployed youths is staggering and it has fuelled the existence of nefarious activities such as kidnapping, smuggling and terrorism. Politicians, sensing the obvious gap, have used the youths as political tools for the perpetration of violence.

The views of Ehinmore and Ehiabhi (2013), is in tandem with that earlier held by Omotola (2010: 58) who states that poverty is a common ill that plagues almost every African nation. The poor state of most Africans has made the continent a breeding ground for aggrieved youths who are susceptible to all forms of negative manipulations, especially during elections. Although most African countries now hold regular elections, they cannot in any way be regarded as free and fair. The processes are severely compromised and hugely contested, thereby creating legitimacy crisis for most governments in the country.

Kwasau (2013: 185) declares that continued consolidating democracy in Nigeria is frequently hampered by poverty which is reinforced by mass unemployment particularly amongst Nigeria's teeming youth. In a nation where the average citizen lives below a dollar a day, hunger and deprivation is commonplace. Thus, an individual deprived of the basic wherewithal cannot participate effectively in a democratic process and is a ready prey in the hands of politicians.

However, Douma (2006: 66) believes it is imprudent to conclude that poverty directly results in political violence. He avers that level of poverty in absolute terms cannot be directly related to the occurrence of violent conflict within societies. However, once group identity and poverty are linked, or a perception of discriminatory treatment can be discerned, the tendency towards violent opposition to the state or other groups becomes apparent.

Douma's position is in consonance with an earlier held view by Sambanis (2004:14) who maintains that persistent disparity leads to growing poverty and hopelessness, which strengthens the demand for political revolution. Sambanis avers that poverty in itself does not cause conflict, but group inequality does, as it increases complaints. The highest risk of violent conflict occurs in societies like that obtainable in Sub-Saharan Africa where there is an overlap between poverty and ethno-religious cleavages.

According to Fjelde and Østby (2011:6), poverty as a source of violence, principally electoral violence, can be traceable to ethnic group demarcations and perceived inequality. They observed that in Africa ethnic group demarcations and sub-national regional borders often overlap, with each region often being dominated by a particular ethnic group.

They are also of the opinion that there is a link between economically disadvantaged regions and groups that feel excluded from economic power. During elections, it is usually common to observe group resentments which often emanates from the perceived closeness of certain other groups to the central government. It is believed particularly in Africa, that any group that is close to the government will enjoy certain economic benefits. This perceived imbalance can lead to collective violence with the aim of altering the election results, which in turn will alter the distribution of goods such

as access to farming land, but also to more obliquely haul out state benefaction through agitation (Fjelde & Østby 2011).

Fjelde and Østby (2011) further argue that the intensity of the struggle is increased by the lack of regulating institutions that could prevent the disadvantaged groups from checking exploitative behaviour. Within the patrimonial state there is no strong institutional framework of checks and balances that regulate the competition for political and economic assets between groups. This in itself enhances the attractiveness of taking radical action to alter economic and political relations, compared to seeking inter-group compromises when efficient enforcement is out of sight.

4.3.3 Politics of patronage

Höglund (2010) argues that in most cases where elections have turned violent, political leaders are, in most cases, key instigators. She is of the opinion that political leadership serves two main functions in electoral violence that often plagues African states. First, according to her, political leaders encourage electoral violence through framing, i.e. socially constructing certain identities for and images of supporters and rivals of the party that are often bipolar (“us” vs. “them”) e.g. through militant rhetoric and hate speech.

The second function is implementing, which refers to the process of mobilizing perpetrators from deeds to acts in carrying out the actual violence. This includes creating concrete and selective incentives for those involved in carrying out the violence.

Such inducements are often directed in the form of benefaction, e.g. cash payments, provisions of food, alcohol and drugs, or in the form of longer-term enticements such as expectations of getting employment for family members, gaining powerful positions or state contracts for various jobs etc. (Höglund 2010).

4.4 The role of the media in electoral violence

To what extent does media reportage instigate the several election related violence that have plagued most African countries? The role the media played in the Rwandan genocide and the destructive use of the media as a propaganda weapon during Hitler's Nazi regime suggests that the media and its effect on society cannot and should not be underrated.

Assenting to the immense impact the media has on society in general, Stremlau and Price (2009: 8) state that the media provides members of the society awareness into political dynamics and the level of dialogue within the society. The media also has the 'power' to suggest the level of divergence in a society like it did with hate messages targeted at minority Tutsis in Rwanda, the progress of compromise and, in the case of post-election violence, the possible avenues for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

Matei (2013: 78) is of the opinion that one of the main objectives of the media is to act as a source of information for the populace, the fast-paced nature of society today means that most people do not have the time to source for news themselves, so they depend on the media to provide them with information on the political happenings in the country, government policies, the electoral process, foreign policies and international developments. The public relies significantly on the media to provide the needed information that will aid them into making informed choices.

In addition, Hillenbrand (2012) is of the opinion media can inform society about issues that were hitherto not a topic of public debate by consciously setting such issues as agenda for public discourse. Through its interpretative role, the media can also bring new interpretations, opinions, and arguments to an existing story in ways that may instigate violence or mitigate existing conflict.

The media wield enormous influence regarding how the public view and interpret social issues. According to Meadow (2009), the media affects electoral violence in two key ways: firstly, they are sources from where members of the public gather evidence that

an election is illegitimate or being contested domestically whether or not it was fair or certified by the electoral management body. The media provides interpretative frames that can lead to the conclusion by the members of the public that the election has not been free and fair and that could lead to tension in the polity.

Secondly, the media can also instigate violence by showing graphic pictures of member so of the public who have been killed or hurt in the process of exercising their right to choose their leaders. This unfortunately has the ability to incite reprisal attacks from aggrieved groups thereby leading to more violence (Meadow, 2009).

4.5.1 Case studies

4.5.1 Kenya

The whole of Africa was shocked by the 2007 post-election violence that rocked the nation of Kenya, once touted as one of Africa's most peaceful countries. The conflict that ensued after election results were announced was due in part to the ethnic and geographic diversity of the Kenyan politics and uncontrolled media reportage. According to Ojwang (2009: 24), the violence was precipitated by heightened expectations, hyped pre-election opinion polls and media reports of alleged unavoidable rigging.

Ojwang (2009) asserts that during the run up to the 2007 general election, the Kenyan public depended heavily on the media to play its role as society's watchdog by monitoring the election and reporting it in an unbiased manner. Through their live updates at the national vote tallying centre, the media set the tempo of public interest as a national conflict unfolded amid finger-pointing and showboating by political party loyalists.

One sad way in which most conflicts in the world emerge is through the creation of the 'we' vs. 'them' scenario that often labels one party 'the enemy' in issues of divergences. During the build-up to the 2007 general elections in Kenya, Ojwang (2009) revealed that a consortium of private media owners-*the Standard Group, The Nation Media Group* and *Royal Media Services*, in an attempt to mobilise the Kenyan populace, ran a campaign with the title 'give us back our country'. Though it was supposed to basically be a campaign of the public against the inaction of the state, using the inclusive phrases 'us' and 'our' somewhat pitched the public against the government.

Soon afterwards, headlines from leading Kenyan newspapers created a sense of hopelessness in the Kenyan people and gave the impression that the nation had reached a boiling point. A classic example was the recurring headline-'Kenya Burns' that made the front page of the *Standard* for the first two weeks of January 2008. In the same vein, *The Daily Nation's* edition of February 3, 2008 had as its headline-'the Republic of Kenya was a smouldering burnt out shell' (*Daily Nation*, February 3, 2008:1).

According to Stremlau, Blanchard, Gabobe and Ahmed (2009: 18) radio broadcast shortly after the election contributed in no small measure in fuelling the post-election violence that rocked the country. They observed that the major culprits were the vernacular radio stations which broadcast in local languages of *Luo, Kikuyu, Kalenjin* and other local languages. The stations overtly broadcast hate messages which similarity with the messages had used during the unfortunate Rwandan genocide. The mainstream English media seemed obliged to remain unbiased as its messages were largely objective, while the vernacular stations fuelled the embers of hatred and divisions.

Stremlau et al (2009: 18) maintain that vernacular radio stations provided Kenyans with a ready-made platform with which to vent their anger against the government and

against other ethnic groups. Live phone-in programmes that were difficult to censor provided polarised and bigoted Kenyans with the stage with which they encouraged divisions amongst Kenyans and called for ethnic war. It was a stark reminder of the hate speech perpetrated by Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) during the Rwandan genocide. RTLM had broadcast covert hate speeches placed alongside sophisticated use of humour such as "you [Tutsis] are cockroaches! We will kill you!"

Like the Rwandan genocide, hate speech in the Kenyan media during the election consisted of open incitements and hate speech in the Kenyan election period consisted of both overt incitements and subtle use of metaphors and epithets that were understood only by speakers of the language. A report by Integrated Regional Information Networks (IRIN, 2008) claims that there were incidences where vernacular music understood only by the native speakers was used to incite ethnic tensions in the country. For instance, *Kameme and Inooro*, two Kikuyu stations were accused of playing songs that denigrated the person of the opposition leader Raila Odinga and his Orange Democratic Movement (ODM). The stations referred to them as 'beast from the west'. Similarly, a Luo station, Radio Lake Victoria played a song by DO Misani in which he referred to the government as leadership of baboons.

The impact of the post-election violence in Kenya was colossal. The death toll from the violence was estimated at around 1300. According to Adeagbo and Iyi (2011: 177), the resultant violence that ensued after the declaration of the election result left about 600,000 people displaced across the country.

4.5.2 Zimbabwe

In a case similar to what happened in during the 2007 general election in Kenya, Zimbabwe was also swept by a wave of pre and post-election violence in 2008 during presidential and parliamentary election. The election, which pitched the incumbent, President Robert Mugabe of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), and Simba Makoni, and independent candidate turned violent when the MDC candidate refused to accept the election result.

Several factors contributed to the resultant conflict; however, the role played by the media has been largely overlooked. Mutanda (2012) remarks that the government-controlled media, *The Herald* instigated violence in the country by labelling members of the rival MDC as violence perpetrators. The April 11, 2001 edition of *The Herald* commented thus, “*the MDC is provoking violence and this should be nipped in the bud before it develops further like it did in last years’ parliamentary elections...*”

Such unguarded remark by the newspaper stirred hatred for MDC members by loyalists of the ruling ZANU-PF. According to Mutanda (2012), during the period leading to the 2008 general elections in Zimbabwe, the media had already created a much polarised society by castigating the opposition and private media as Western puppets who depended on foreign guidance and could hardly act autonomously. The media was vehement in its effort to disparage opposition politicians and stalwarts by using manipulative overtones seeking to gain legitimacy in the face of a dwindling electorate. Mutanda (2012) affirms that the MDC was portrayed as a puppet party of the West because of its known links with countries in Western Europe.

Kanengoni (2010) in an article published in *The Herald* of October 13, 2010 stated thus: “Let us for a moment ignore the fact that MDC was created by the whites. Let us ignore the fact that over 90 per cent of their funding comes from Western international capital”.

Consequently, according to Mutanda (2012), the insults meant that all the people who criticised the procedures of land occupation were labelled “sell-outs and unpatriotic” by the state-controlled media.

This tension, though related to the land reforms programme of the Robert Mugabe led government snowballed into the electoral violence that the country experienced in 2008. It can be argued that the stage was already set for violence by the state-owned media that polarized the country along political party lines and to some extent along ethnic lines.

4.5.3 Nigeria

The Nigerian media is arguably one of the most vocal on the African continent and yet one of the most polarized. With over 250 ethnic groups and close to 400 languages, Nigeria presents a telling case of how irresponsible and unguarded reportage can ignite conflict. Anyadike (2013) states that the Nigerian media have the arduous responsibility of reporting social issues to the public within the limits of media laws and ethics, however they have severally reneged on their responsibilities and have the notorious record of either telling half-truths or complete lies altogether.

According to Duyile (1987), the Nigerian press was very active during the quest for political emancipation by acting as recruiters and mobilisers of the public. The newspapers of that period were divided along party lines; they served as vehicles for changing political consciousness and for the propagation of the idea of nationalism. The press also largely recruited people to political movements, contributed to party organisation and encouraged the penetration of political activities into the then existing provinces.

During the electoral process of 1953 Nigerian newspapers were identified as falling into three groups: the Igbo-led Pro-NNDP, exemplified by the *Record Newspaper*, anti-

NNDP, exemplified by *The Advocate*, *The Tribune* which was the campaign medium for the ethnic Yoruba-led Action Group, while the NCNC had the Pilot.

This political division was evident during the electoral process of the first republic, 1960-1966. Olayiwola (1991:35) is of the opinion that the newspapers were not only locked in malicious scuffle but also all the media provided remarkable examples of obsessive, irresponsible partisanship and irresponsibility. The seeds of mutual distrust, running battles and endless hostilities between regional media and the federal media, on the one hand, and between different regional media and political party newspapers, on the other hand, all of which were sown during the colonial, independence and first republic periods.

Olayiwola (1991) remarks that signs that the nation was on the verge of a crisis was evident during the census of the first republic, because the census sparked a bitter inter-ethnic hostility and divided the political leadership along ethno-regional front lines. The largely ethnic media and its irresponsible reportage can be said to be responsible for the controversy that rocked the 1964 federal elections, the attendant constitutional stalemate and the violent collapse of the First Republic. It can be argued that the Nigerian civil war of 1967-1970 was first fought in the pages of newspapers before actual combat started. It can be said that media reportage in the run up to the general elections in the First Republic ignited the already fuelled and tension-soaked political climate in Nigeria.

Shortly after the census for instance, the Northern region's government paper, *The Citizen*, sensing that the population of the north had been underreported, described the Ibos, who had returned home to be counted, as being 'industrious, migratory... impenetrably united tribesmen', adding that, for the census, they flew to the East, exaggerated the population there, and returned smiling to continue to thrive prosperously in the North. This of course kindled the hatred of the northerners towards the Ibos (Olayiwola, 1991).

Even during the Second Republic, Olayiwola (1991) recounts that the media was sectional as it overtly lined up behind one political party against another thereby causing divisions and tensions in the country. The press failed to bridge the obvious divisions in the country and instead fell prey to politicians' whims and caprices. Thus, the media was sadly unable to develop the required ethos of professionalism, impartiality, responsibility, objectivity and balance in its reportage of political events, particularly elections.

The veracity of the media and the credibility of their practitioners became questionable. This was one of the factors that contributed to the fall of the Second Republic in December 1983. The consequences of all these were disastrous for the nation. Nigeria again began to manifest the drift and hopelessness which preceded the collapse of the First Republic. The signs were obvious and ominous: intense and violent political rivalry, unguarded and inflammatory public statements, and deliberate destruction of public and private properties. Eventually, the military intervened again.

4.6 Chapter summary

Several factors contribute to the prevalence of electoral violence across the world, in Africa and most developing countries of the world, poverty and inequitable distribution of resources have been several linked to the susceptibility of the populace to be ready preys in the hands of desperate politicians.

Though I agree with the position put forward by Douma (2006: 66) who believes it is imprudent to conclude that poverty directly results in political violence because, according to him, level of poverty in absolute terms cannot be directly related to the occurrence of violent conflict within societies. I however contend that the fact that most of the electoral violence experienced in the world occur in Third World and developing countries where the prevalence of poverty is much higher than the 'developed countries'

suggests that poverty and perceived inequality can act as a trigger for electoral violence particularly when there is a financial exchange involved. Aside poverty, other factors such as fear of the possibility of losing elections by incumbent, faulty electoral systems, ethnically polarised public sphere etc. also impinge on electoral credibility and fuel electoral violence.

However, as can be observed from the case studies put forward, the media, when not appropriately applied is also a major cause of electoral violence. In Kenya, Zimbabwe and Nigeria, media reportage has been linked to the electoral violence that the countries have experienced.

Like Stremlau and Price (2009: 8) state, the media provides members of the society awareness into political dynamics and the level of dialogue within the society. The media also has the 'power' to suggest the level of divergence in a society like it did with hate messages targeted at minority Tutsis in Rwanda, the progress of compromise and, in the case of post-election violence, the possible avenues for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

CHAPTER FIVE

THE IMPACT OF TRAINING ON JOURNALISTS' CONFLICT-SENSITIVE REPORTAGE OF ELECTION.

5.0 Introduction

Chapter four demonstrated a clear link between irresponsible media reportage and electoral violence, as what seen in Kenya where media instigated post-election violence in 2007 led to the death of about 1300 people and the displacement of close to 600,000 others (Youngblood, 2012). No doubt, the post-election violence that devastated Kenya further shows that the media is indeed a two-edged sword and that it is capable of inflicting to society whatever society allows it to. Thus, it is pertinent to ensure that media personnel are trained in conflict-sensitive reportage of societal issues in ways that will engender peace and nonviolence.

Due to the fact that the mass media have the ability to effectively report and enlighten people, Utor (2000:21) accords the mass media the duty of decision moulder and that of society's teacher. Similarly, Abagen (2009:39) asserts that the media have evolved over time into an essential ingredient in the dynamics of political rebirth. Foster (2010:142) observes that by virtue of this responsibility, the mass media shape the opinion and attitude of people, especially in their capacity as voters and in their capability to remain nonviolent before, during and after elections. This immense influence of the media requires that media personnel are trained in ways of reporting social issues in a conflict-sensitive and responsible manner.

As Rabbani (2007) remarks, the best way to ensure productivity, quality of media output and effectiveness of media personnel is through capacity building, improvements in quality and access to facilities and equipment, new media of and advocating adherence to ethical practices of journalism agreed upon by the media professionals themselves.

5.1 The necessity of training

Training is an integral part of an organisation's growth and development strategy. Truitt (2011: 2) believes growth and continuous innovation will help corporations follow continued progress, manage fast changes in their external environments, as well as progressively competitive international markets. One sure way to ensure that an organisation's employees remain competitive enough in the ever changing business environment is by strengthening and expanding their knowledge base, skills and abilities through capacity building.

Similarly, Liu (2012) asserts that beyond holding seasonal trainings, employees development should be incorporated and adopted into a formal system that ensures that training and retraining is institutionalised. Chiabruru and Teklab (2005) define training as a deliberate effort by management or group to enhance the performance of individuals or groups through targeted capacity building.

It is rather unfortunate that traditional/war journalism skills provided in journalism schools do not have modules on how best to report elections and the electoral process in such a way that no individual or group will feel cheated. Journalists are trained to report the stock market, public health, entertainment, sports and other equally important topics, but there are no specialisations in election reportage. This calls for great concern particularly when one considers that the dynamics of electoral violence, vis-a-vis its instigation, development and resolution are not taught or understood by most journalists covering the electoral process.

According to Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), few journalists have been trained in the area of conflict analysis and theory; thus, they are not well equipped to report issues that have consequences on societal peace. Training of journalists in conflict sensitive reportage is imperative because journalists covering conflict are inescapably involved in the events and processes they are reporting on-whether they like it or not.

The significant uniqueness of a responsible media is playing an impartial part in reporting issues of newsworthiness without giving needless propaganda to appeal to the attention of the gullible public with the object of making money. However, the current state of media reportage in most African countries is manifest in reportage mainly motivated by factors such as ownership, geopolitical location and religious/ethnic inclination.

For instance, Ado-Kurawa (2001) believes the dominance of southern based newspapers in Nigeria has made most of newspaper reportage of socio-political issues such as elections pro-south and anti-north. He is of the opinion that the imbalance in the spread of newspapers in Nigeria has led to biased reporting of the events in the North, particularly of Islam. This bias, according to Akinfeleye (2003) has made most Nigerians view media reportage with suspicion and question the veracity of information put forward by the media.

Often, sometimes without intending to, journalistic reportage have either led to conflicts or fuelled existing ones. The unfortunate Rwandan genocide gives credence to the immense influence the media wields in instigating violence in society. Palluck (2009) equates the media's role in the Rwandan genocide as "the voice of the devil"; he believed the media incited the public into one of the most gruesome genocides in recorded history.

Conflict-sensitive reportage training of journalists is extremely crucial particularly in volatile nations. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:16) are of the opinion that an informed understanding of conflict leads us to expect that statements put out by parties to a conflict will also be part of that conflict. Without this expectation, journalists may become stuck in what they termed, the reality based community', oblivious to the way realities are being created around them, and indeed their (journalists) part in creating them.

Peace journalism training is beneficial to journalists because it will equip journalists with the skills to pick up on suggestions for non-violent responses from whatever quarter, and remitting them into the public sphere. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:18) are of the opinion that there is never, in any conflict, any shortage of non-violent responses and it is the duty of the journalist to focus on them.

In the words of the distinguished peace researcher John Paul Lederach:

'I have not experienced any situation of conflict, no matter how protracted or severe, from Central America to the Philippines to the Horn of Africa, where there have not been people who had a vision for peace, emerging often from their own experience of pain. Far too often, however, these same people are overlooked and disempowered either because they do not represent "official" power, whether on the side of government or the various militias, or because they are written off as biased and too personally affected by the conflict' (Adapted from Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005:18).

5.2 Does peace journalism work?

Lynch (2007:2) is of the opinion that convention seem to have governed most journalistic work today. He remarks that since speed is essential in the journalistic practice, formulating responses to breaking news would be near impossible from its first principles, starting afresh every time. Conventions can be challenged and supplemented if journalists and civil society combine their self-awareness and efforts at reforms and collectively push forward the idea that peace journalism can indeed work if given its pride of place in society.

Thus, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) believe the peace journalism model does really work. In order to proffer proofs of the efficacy of peace journalism as a tool for promoting peace in the society, they conducted a series of studies in four countries- Australia, the Philippines, South Africa and Mexico. In each of these countries, the duo produced a total of 42 television news pack ages (two versions each of 21 stories), one an unedited 'regular' news story, while the other versions were skewed to have elements of peace journalism inserted into the news stories. Both versions were

subsequently played to over 550 participants (Lynch, 2012: 3). The positive feedback they got from their study confirmed their view that peace journalism does work, no matter how little the effect.

5.2.1 The Australian study: from anger to empathy.

The Australian study conducted by Lynch and McGoldrick focused on the most pressing social theme in Australian news-the handling of the ever-increasing case of asylum seekers. The public it seems often takes the brunt of the claims and counterclaims from opposing political parties on the issue. Expectedly, when participants at the workshop organized by Lynch and McGoldrick were played a standard news package, based on opposing views from the political divides, the major reaction was anger aimed at the perceived 'other side' of the argument from the respondent's point of view (Lynch, 2012).

Lynch and McGoldrick (2007: 5) remark that what is often missing in traditional journalism is a content that is people-centred. This is where peace journalism differs from war journalism because whereas war journalism is elite oriented and focuses on males that are able-bodied, acts as their spokesperson and provides names of perceived evil-doers, peace journalism differs in that its focus is on all forms of sufferings, no matter who is involved, giving a limelight to peace makers and providing a voice for the voiceless in society.

Lynch described the impact the people-oriented content of their adjusted version of the asylum seekers story had on participants thus:

For our adjusted version, then, we included an interview with a refugee, Ali Jafari: a Hazara man who'd fled Afghanistan by boat and successfully settled in Australia. This awoke people's empathy, and now the anger tended to be directed towards the iniquitous system in which people like Mr. Jafari are locked up for long periods waiting for their claims to be processed. And there was a notably increased appetite for hearing about suggestions for change: the 'solution orientation' that is another key aspect of PJ (Lynch, 2012: 3).

5.2.2 The Philippines: shows of strength vs. solution oriented news.

The Philippines has had a long drawn battle between the Communist Party of the Philippines and the government of the Philippines. According to Lynch (2012), while talks were ongoing on the possibility of ending the protracted conflict that had beleaguered the nation, the NPA set landmines, while the Armed Forces of the Philippines made high-profile arrests in 'dawn raids'. This unfortunately threatened to scuttle the ongoing peace process.

Lynch remarks that news reportage of the peace process did not inspire confidence in the populace. Most viewers lost hope of a possibility that the problem could be solved with many even stating that what the nation needed was an intensified military suppression. Sensing that public dissatisfaction was growing at a fast-pace, a peace journalism version of the same issue was aired. The new version contained interviews with a prominent leader of the NPA, Ka Oris in Mindanao and gave background information on why people join the organisation. The news also provided exhaustive backgrounding and context on the remote and immediate causes of the conflict.

Lynch (2012:3) described the impact the peace journalism story had on the public thus:

'The peace journalism news also featured pictures of a peace rally, and heard from a local Protestant Bishop, and two Indigenous, or 'Lumad' leaders, on what they wanted to come out of the talks. Justice, in respect of deprivation and disenfranchisement, was the dominant theme of their 'wish-list'. Viewers were now much more likely to favour holistic solutions, with optimism that peace could be produced, again with the proviso that Philippines society must be made fairer and more inclusive if the roots of the problem were to be adequately addressed.' (Lynch, 2012:3).

By shifting focus from victory orientation of war journalism to solution orientation of the peace journalism which brought peace initiatives to the public fore, mitigates the possibilities of more war, focuses on structure, peaceful society and cultural heritage, there was a renewed belief in the minds of members of the public about the possibilities of a peaceful resolution to the protracted conflict.

5.2.3 South Africa: 'turning a corner' from a rape case.

Lynch (2012) reports that at the time of their study in South Africa, the dominant news was the horrendous incident in which a gang of young men raped a disabled young woman, recorded it and posted it on the internet. As expected, heinous crime generated unprecedented public outcry. Expectedly, news reports concerning the incident were mostly reactive and focused only on visible effects of the violence meted on the young woman.

Lynch (2012) states that in contrast to the war journalism that was the norm in South Africa during the period, the peace journalism version of the news played to participants had an interview with Dumisani Rebombo, an activist and educator with Sonke Gender Justice, a Johannesburg based NGO. It was a deliberate 'turning of a corner' aimed at providing viewers with actors of peace.

Lynch reports the effect this had on participants thus:

'He told us how, over three decades ago, he too had taken part in a gang rape, considered an 'initiation ceremony' among his teenaged peers. Years later, he'd sought out the survivor of the attack and begged her forgiveness. She set one condition: make sure neither you, nor your son, ever does this to anyone again. At this, Dumisani began running workshops, drawing on his experience to challenge men and boys about their attitudes to women. Viewers of the PJ version were just as horrified, and felt just as sorry for the young woman who'd suffered the gang rape, as the WJ viewers. But they were less likely to 'externalize' the problem: to blame 'them down there' for doing it, and to regard punitive responses as representing a solution. And they were significantly more likely to accept that a single incident of direct violence is constructed by many contributory factors of structural and cultural violence (albeit none of them put it in quite those terms!) It is, therefore, implicitly incumbent on everyone to think what they themselves may be able to contribute to addressing those factors, as Dumisani had done'.

As can be observed from the remarkable story of Dumisani, by focusing on positive peace efforts in the society, peace journalists are able to shift focus from the impact of

violence to the solution to violence, that way, peace journalists encourage the proactive mindset that seeks ways of improving society.

5.2.4 Mexico: Peace journalism and the ‘war on drugs’.

The drug law that ravaged Mexico under President Felipe Calderon was threatening to destabilize the country. The intensified ‘war on drugs’ declared by the President had left as many as 60,000 casualties in six years (Lynch, 2012: 4).

The tension in Mexico at the peak of the ‘drug war’ put enormous pressure on the President who was about to conduct an election. Also, media reports were awash with the rising death toll from the resultant chaos and it seemed there was no respite in sight. Lynch (2012) remarks that in the Mexican study, a peace journalism version of the happenings in the country deliberately focused on success stories and agents of change rather than the rising death figures and combating drug lords.

According to Lynch (2012: 4), for the peace journalism version of the continuing drug war, interviews were conducted with members of the public who were actually doing something about the drug problem that plagued the country. Eduardo Galloy Tello who had lost his daughter to the drug war advocated a regulation of drugs in such a way as to make it lose its market value and subsequently drop down the price, thereby making it less attractive to criminals. Likewise, interview was conducted with Erik Ponce, a young man who was rescued by a local community centre from a life of drugs and is now studying music at university.

Lynch (2012) is of the opinion that ending the terrible violence can only be achieved when young men like Erik are provided with opportunities to tell their sides of the story and work for peace. This is part of what is known as peace with justice and widely understood by viewers of the PJ version of the story.

After conducting successful peace journalism research in four countries, Lynch concluded thus:

‘Our research shows that peace journalism works. It does indeed prompt its audiences to make different meanings about key conflict issues, to be more receptive to nonviolent responses. At a time when fears are being expressed that commercial funding models will be unable to sustain good journalism, which is an invitation to non-commercial funders to step in. And if they sponsor initiatives in peace journalism, they can be confident, on the basis of our findings, that they will be making an important contribution to societal resources for peace’.

5.3 Peace-journalism training and the reportage of elections: case studies.

5.3.1 Kenya: when journalists decided to ‘write right’.

The 2007 post-election violence is still fresh in the memories of most Kenyans. The preventable loss of lives and property and the hundreds of thousands of displaced people as a result of the violence was tied to several factors, including the ever vociferous Kenyan media.

According to the International Crisis Group (2013), Kenyan media were not adequately prepared for the 2008 post-election violence that affected the country. This unpreparedness was evident in their inability to communicate the election results and the violence that ensued afterwards without prejudice. The vernacular radio stations were the worst culprits; rather than work for peace, they incited the public against one another by overtly taking sides with politicians and deliberately providing them with the medium with which to disseminate hate speech. However, the media played a more responsible role in the 2013 general elections by reporting the election in a way that fostered peace amongst Kenyans. Unlike the 2007 general election that polarized the Kenyan public along ethnic lines with the media acting as the battlefield, the 2013 election saw a major shift in the way the Kenyan media handled issues pertaining to the election.

Several training and retraining programmes were conducted for journalists in Kenya in a bid to forestall a recurrence of the unfortunate violence that engulfed the country in 2008 that was regrettably linked to unprofessional media reportage. For instance, the Peace Journalism Foundation (PJF), an East African based peace media NGO with the aim of creating a peaceful society through the media conducted training for Kenyan journalists in the run off to the elections. The training was facilitated by the Director of the Centre for Global Peace Journalism at Park University in Parkville, Missouri, Prof. Steven Youngblood (Laker and Wanzala, 2012: 7).

Given that vernacular radio programmes were severally accused of hate speech that incited the public into violence, one of the focus areas of the training included training presenters into taking charge of phone-in programmes on radio and also in-studio guests to avoid public incitement and/or the spread of hate speech. Print journalists on the other hand were trained on the need for vigilance regarding the content of their news so that they do not unintentionally incite the public into violence. Also, print journalists were trained to be vigilant about the news content before publishing so as to ensure that their stories are balanced and provides opportunities for all relevant voices to be heard rather than focusing only on politicians.

Similarly, several other organisations such as the International Media Support Group conducted trainings for Kenyan journalists with the aim of ensuring that they were safe during elections and also that they are able to provide balanced and fair reportage through a journalism style that is conflict-sensitive. The journalists were also provided with access to trauma counselling (*Rasmussen, 2013*). According to Rasmussen, more than 200 journalists in hot-spots most prone to violence were trained by the Media Council of Kenya in collaboration with various stakeholders.

It is important to state that while the 2013 general election in Kenya cannot be said to be perfect (I believe there are no perfect elections), it is however a marked improvement from the 2007 election that was marred with violence. The media, a major perpetrator of the 2008 post-election violence played a more responsible role this time

by mobilizing and sensitizing the public towards peace and nonviolence. It will be imprudent to completely attribute the peaceful election in Kenya to media reportage, however, the fact remains that the media played a very significant role and much of this was achieved through effective training of journalists on conflict-sensitive reportage.

5.3.2 Zimbabwe

Zimbabwe was also swept by a wave of pre and post-election violence in 2008 during presidential and parliamentary election similar to what happened in during the 2007 general election in Kenya. The election, which pitched the incumbent, President Robert Mugabe of the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), Morgan Tsvangirai of the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), and Simba Makoni, and independent candidate turned violent when the MDC candidate refused to accept the election result.

Though the media was not directly accused of inciting the public into violence like it occurred in Kenya, Mutanda (2012) however remarks that the government-controlled media, *The Herald* instigated violence in the country by labelling members of the rival MDC as violence perpetrators. The April 11, 2001 edition of *The Herald* commented thus, “*the MDC is provoking violence and this should be nipped in the bud before it develops further like it did in last years’ parliamentary elections...*”

According to Mutanda (2012), the media was vehement in its effort to disparage opposition politicians and stalwarts by using manipulative overtones seeking to gain legitimacy in the face of a dwindling electorate. The MDC and its stalwarts were portrayed as a puppet party of the West because of its known links with countries in Western Europe.

In order to prevent a repeat of the 2008 electoral violence in Zimbabwe, the Zimbabwe Electoral Commission (ZEC) with the assistance of the Electoral Institute for

Sustainable Democracy in Africa (EISA) organized a media training workshop for local journalists in the country with the aim of equipping them with the necessary skills need for conflict-sensitive reportage of elections. The idea to engage the media regularly emerged during ZEC`s Strategic Plan consultative workshops where the media was identified as one of the key stakeholders in the electoral process. The media thus plays an important role in educating and informing the public about the electoral process. ZEC also has the mandate to monitor the coverage of elections by the media in accordance with the provisions of Statutory Instrument 33 of 2008.

It can be argued that the impact of the training on the election was evident in the peaceful and nonviolent manner in which the election was conducted. The Zimbabwean media was largely responsible and unbiased in its reportage and this played a huge role in ensuring that the Zimbabwean public remain peaceful despite misgivings in some quarters regarding the conduct of the elections.

5.4 Summary of the chapter

The connection between provocative media and electoral violence has been established in numerous places around the world. Kenya, Zimbabwe, Ghana, Nigeria etc. have experienced electoral violence connected to inciting media. Likewise, the connection between nonviolent elections and responsible peace-oriented media has been established in countries such as Ghana, Kenya and Zimbabwe have experienced nonviolent elections credited to responsible media reportage.

The extensive research conducted by Lynch and McGoldrick (2012) across four nations-Australia, Philippines, South Africa and Mexico proved the efficacy of peace journalism training on journalists reportage of sensitive social issues such as elections and on peace in the society. Peace journalism does not overwrite conventional journalism; it encourages its audience to be receptive to nonviolent responses to

conflicts by making different meanings about key conflict issues. I am of the opinion that peace journalism as a model for responsible journalism can only be imbibed by journalists through consistent training and retraining.

PART III: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The aim of this part, which comprises two chapters—six and seven—is to discuss the research methodology adopted for this study. Chapter six will dwell on the research design and data collection methods, while chapter seven will focus on the research methodology.

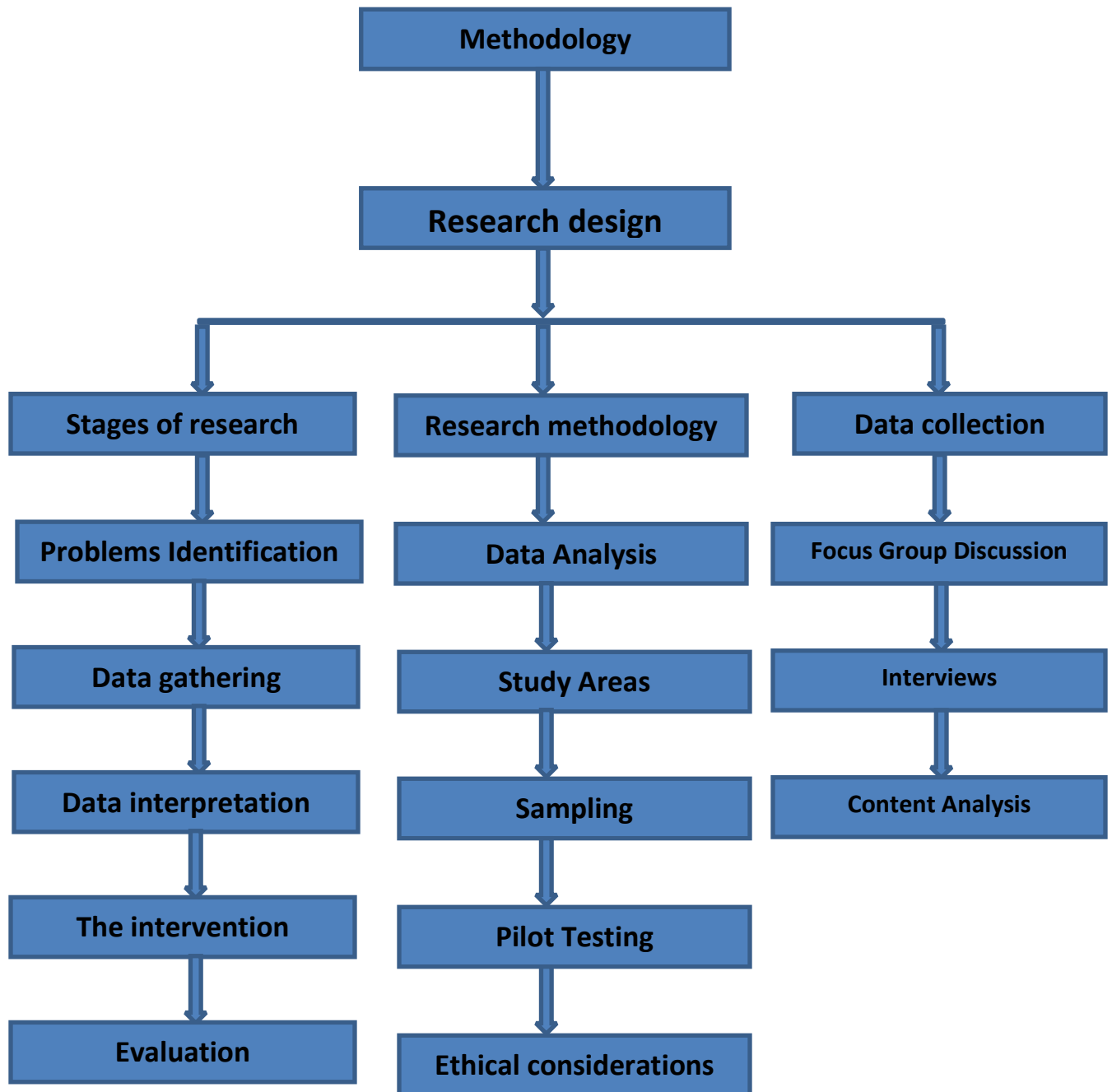


Figure 6.1: Flowchart showing direction of research methodology

CHAPTER SIX

METHODOLOGY

6.1 Introduction

This chapter follows the terminology of the standard South African research text by. Burns and Grove (2003:195) define research as “a blueprint for conducting a study with maximum control over factors that may interfere with the validity of the findings”. Parahoo (1997:142) describes research design “a plan that describes how, when and where data are to be collected and analysed”.

6.2 Research design

6.2.1 Action research

The research design adopted for this study is the action research. Reason and Bradbury (2001:1) define action research as:

‘A participatory, democratic process concerned with developing practical knowing in the pursuit of worthwhile human purposes, grounded in a participatory worldview which we believe is emerging at this historical moment. It seeks to bring together action and reflection, theory and practice, in participation with others, in the pursuit practical solutions to issues of pressing concern to people, and more generally the flourishing of individual persons and their communities’.

According to McCutcheon and Jung (1990), Action Research (AR) is a reflective investigation of a personal interest, problem or challenge. Somekh (2006:7) sees action research as integrations research and action in a series of elastic cycles which have to do with the collection of data about a particular topic under investigation, the analysis of such data, the planning and introduction of actionable strategies to initiate positive change as a result of the strategies and the evaluation of those changes through the collection of more data, analysis and interpretation.

Action research bears similarity with qualitative research in that both are highly contextualised in the local knowledge of practitioners. According to Huang (2010:94), while action research deals with practitioners, qualitative research is about practice. This critical difference often leaves the work inactionable, i.e. not something that practitioners can even wish to make practical use of.

My plan for this research is to design a training programme for journalists in Kwara state in Nigeria's North-Central region on conflict sensitive reportage with the sole aim of instilling on the journalists the attitude of responsible reportage that would aid in stemming the tide of electoral violence in Nigeria. Afterwards, the impact of the training on the journalists vis-à-vis their reportage of conflict sensitive issues will be evaluated.

6.2.2 Stages of action research

Action research normally cycles through the following phases: identifying a problem that needs intervention; collecting, organizing, analyzing, and interpreting data; and taking action based on this information (Sax and Fisher, 2001:72). Figure 6.1 above shows diagrammatically the stages involved in action research. It is a way of analysing a social system and generating knowledge about it with the aim of changing it. This attempt at changing social systems can be achieved by following a set of process.

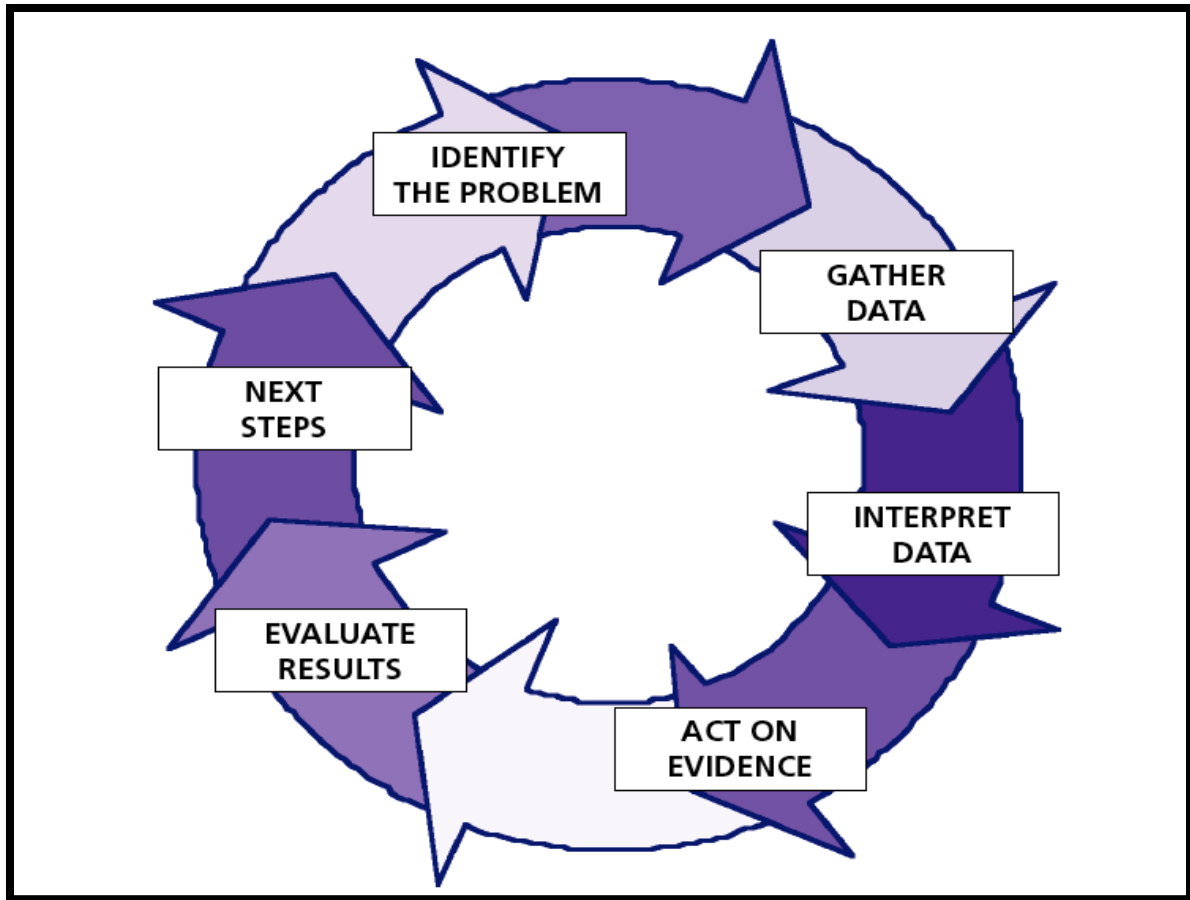


Figure 6.2: The action research process (www.sitesupport.org)

- **Problem identification**

The success of any action research is dependent on deciding from the start the main problem the research hopes to provide intervention for. Johnson (2011) states that the first step in any research study is deciding exactly what to study. Given that the main aim of action research is to effect change in a given situation, it becomes important to first identify the situation that requires change. Johnson (2002:21) is of the opinion that problems cannot be solved unless they are first identified and defined. Recognizing the problem occurs when the situation is observed and there is an acknowledgment that things could be done better. It also involves seeking to understand the nature of the situation and discovering the possible causal factors. Effectively identifying the problem

helps in the formulation of the research questions for the study. For example, why do journalists report the way they do? What factors influences journalists' style of reportage? Does journalistic reportage affect the outcome of elections? Etc.

- **Data gathering**

After clearly identifying the problem, the next stage is the collection of data that would aid the design of an appropriate intervention. Information gathering in the case of this research can be as simple as talking with journalists, media owners and/or politicians in the research area with the aim of gauging their perceptions of the proposed research problem and possibly to probe for ideas. In order to get relevant data that will boost the attainment of the research goal, decisions must be made about the appropriate instruments or other data collection techniques that will be used in the study. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003:41) suggest three main categories of data collection techniques. Though their suggestions are directly applicable to action research in an educational setting, they have profound applicability in peace research.

First, they suggest a process of observation of participants involved in the study. In the case of an educational setting, they state that these participants might include students, other teachers, parents, and administrators. In order to describe what is been seen and heard, they suggested researchers use field notes or journals to record their observations.

Secondly, they suggest the use of interviews to collect relevant data for the study. Typically, interviews involve oral exchange of questions and answers between two or more people; it is mostly interpersonal in nature. However, interviews can also be conducted in a written manner through the issuance of questionnaires (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003:42).

Thirdly, Fraenkel and Wallen (2003:41) recommend the analysis of existing records as another way of gathering data for action research. They believe it is convenient considering that it is often the least time consuming, since the data have already been

collected. The responsibility of the researcher is to make some sense of what is already there. A few examples of this type of data include attendance records, minutes of meetings, newspaper features, policy manuals, editorial style etc.

- **Data interpretation**

Once the data has been obtained, the next important step is to analyse the data in order to arrive at a reasonable conclusion that will guide the direction of the research. According to Sagor (2000:6), a number of relatively user-friendly procedures can help a practitioner identify the trends and patterns in action research data. During the process of analysing data, the researcher will be able to identify the major 'story' told by the data and why the story played out in that particular way. Analysing data can help the action researcher acquire improved understanding of the occurrence under investigation and as a result can help in formulating the necessary interventions.

- **The intervention**

The aim of action research is primarily to take action or intervene when a problem has been identified and sufficient relevant data have been obtained. Lim (2007:10) states that before action is taken, the researcher determines whether or not the data collected answers the research questions. Similarly, Creswell (2005) states that in order to preserve the cyclical nature of action research, it is important to effectively monitor, evaluate and revise the process during the implementation process of the action plan.

- **Evaluation**

When interventions are carried out in action research, it is always very important to determine whether or not the interventions had any meaningful impact. Lienert (2002:16) states that project evaluation is an important element of the action research process, it is an opportunity to 'stand back' and reflect on the intervention that has been carried out and write down observations that will aid the process of strategising. Townsend (2013:109) remarks that evaluation is consistent with the cyclical representations action

research that requires each cycle to conclude with phases of monitoring and reflection that seek to ask the following questions:

- What effects have my actions have?
- How does this relate to what I wanted to achieve?

Sincere answers to the above questions will help the researcher question his/her context for the intervention and deciding how and when to respond based on the understanding gathered from reflection and observation. According to Townsend (2013:111), evaluation is concerned with trying to untangle what has been learnt from the process of intervention and judge whether it is adequate for the desired change process and raises questions about what should come next, this could mean further investigation of the context or nature of practice or make changes to the practice.

Evaluation also involves determining whether or not the intervention resulted in behavioural change. This is very fundamental because behavioural change often leads to change in action either for good or for bad. For the case of journalists' reportage, change of conduct would mean altering the way they see situations which in turn affects the way they report such situations. Townsend (2013:111) is of the opinion that behavioural change means asking the question: how has what has been learnt so far led to new practices and how these practices differ from what has gone before. Guskey (2002) lists levels of information that will aid the evaluation process:

i. Participants' reaction

Participants' are crucial to the success or failure of the action research process. How participants view the process to a large extent determines the outcome of interventions. In determining participants' reaction, Guskey (2002) states that you attempt to find out whether or not they feel the time they spent at the training was worth it, whether the material (in my case, the training manual), makes sense to them and whether or not the participants find the information useful. Some otherwise mundane questions such as finding out whether or not the participants felt the coffee was hot and ready on time,

whether or not the room was at the right temperature, whether the chairs were comfortable and the seating arrangement adequate etc. can play a major role in shaping the outcome of the intervention.

Information on participants' reactions is usually collected via questionnaires handed out before and after a session or activity. Guskey (2002), remarks that these questionnaires normally include a mixture of rating-scale items and open-ended response questions that allow participants to make personal comments.

ii. Participants' learning

One of the most important feedbacks during evaluation is to ascertain whether or not participants learnt something from the exercise. One way this can be determined is by measuring the knowledge and skills that participants gained. Guskey (2002) suggests involving anything from a pencil-and-paper assessment to a simulation or full-scale skill demonstration. In the case of journalists, conflict scenarios can be created and the journalists asked to report the scenarios before and after the training, the impact of the training on the journalists' reportage will then be assessed afterwards.

iii. Organisation Support and Change

Most action research interventions, as laudable as they are, often don't have the desired results even when all the individual aspects of the intervention are done right because of lack of organisation support to participants in the process. For instance, journalists trained in conflict-sensitive journalism may still have challenges putting the knowledge to practice because of the challenge of media ownership, organisational house style and even editorial control. According to Guskey (2000), organisation policies and practices may frustrate the most valiant efforts to effect positive behavioural change because in the long run, it is organisations that initiate implementation of change.

For my research, questions like did the training promote changes that were in consonance with the main aim of the research? Were changes at the individual level encouraged and supported at organisational level? Were sufficient resources made available, including time for sharing and reflection? Were successes recognized and shared? etc. will be asked from participants using questionnaires and interviews to determine whether or not the training was impactful.

iv. Participants' use of skills and knowledge garnered

In the end, the goal of the action research intervention is to transfer knowledge to participants and hope that the knowledge gained is used to initiate the change envisioned by the researcher. Evaluating participants' use of skills and knowledge obtained during training will involve determining whether or not the skills participants learned made a difference in their professional practice? Guskey (2000) suggests that in order to gather relevant information on this level, it will be vital to specify clear indicators of both the degree and the quality of implementation, this will require patience because enough time is required to allow participants to adapt the new ideas and practices to their locales. Due to the gradual and uneven nature of policy implementation, progress or change may need to be measured at several time intervals. Table 6.2 below presents a list of points to take into consideration when undertaking evaluation of training effectiveness.

Evaluation Level	What questions Are Addressed?	How Will Information Be Gathered?	What is Measured or Assessed?	How Will Information Be Used?
1. Participants ' Reactions	Did they like it? Was their time well spent? Did the material make sense? Will it be useful? Was the facilitator knowledgeable and helpful? Were the refreshments fresh and tasty? Was the room of the right temperature? Were the chairs comfortable?	Questionnaires administered at the end of the session.	Initial satisfaction with the experience	To improve program design and delivery
2. Participants ' Learning	Did participants acquire the intended knowledge and skills?	Questionnaires administered at the end of the session. Simulations Demonstrations Participant reflections (oral and/or written)	New knowledge and skills of participants	To improve program content, format, and organization
3. Organization Support & Change	What was the impact on the organization? Did it affect organizational climate and procedures? Was implementation advocated, facilitated, and supported? Was the support public and overt? Were problems addressed quickly and efficiently? Were sufficient resources made available? Were successes recognized and shared?	Content analysis of journalists' reportage Questionnaires Structured interviews with participants and their editors	The organization's advocacy, support, accommodation, facilitation, and recognition.	To document and improve organizational support To inform future change efforts
4. Participants ' Use of New Knowledge and Skills	Did participants effectively apply the new knowledge and skills? (How are participants using what they learned?) (What challenge are participants encountering?)	Questionnaires Structures interviews with participants and their editors. Participants reflections (oral and/or written) Content analysis of participants reportage	Degree and quality of implementation	To document and improve the implementation of program content

Table 6.1: Training evaluation guide.

Adapted from Guskey (2000:11)

Below are examples of researchers conducted using a participatory action research methodology; they provide examples of the effectiveness of action research as a tool for providing interventions in areas of identified social need.

Location:	Hong Kong
Background:	Jackie Yan-chi Kwok and Hok-Bun Ku write as scholars of policy and development in Hong Kong.
Goal:	The goal of their study was to help marginalized women become participants in urban planning.
Research practice:	First, they gathered a group of immigrant women and children from one of the high density locations on the island. They asked them to take photos of their everyday life that represented the issues they wished addressed by new policy. Gathering the group back together for a workshop there was dialogue about the photos and images of overcrowding naturally were quite provocative.
Collaborative action:	A three-dimensional planning kit to scale was then made available to help turn good ideas into concretely actionable planning decisions on how to get more sunshine and play spaces for their children. Together with social workers, they disseminated the new plans via radio and news publications. The Housing authority followed up further to invite participative assessment of public housing and invited advice on how to improve existing housing stock.
Results:	The intervention produced practical improvements. More sustainably, it also produced insights on how to lessen social distancing between policy makers and those affected by allowing for cycles of input and feedback.

Table 6.2: Urban Policy in Hong Kong

Adapted from Huang (2010:96).

Location:	Bath, United Kingdom.
Background:	Margaret Gearty of the University of Bath conducted an action research project called ‘low carbon works’. The interdisciplinary project, convened by the university and supported by government grants, brings engineers, social scientists and organizational leaders together.
Goal:	The goal is to better understand the impediments to organizational embrace of low carbon technologies and to experiment how to overcome them. Gearty and her organizational studies colleagues frame their effort as a way to understand and encourage change amid the complex interlock of human, organizational and systemic factors that hold the status quo in place.
Research practice:	The project convenes regular meetings of its scholarly and practitioner stakeholders as well as new business leaders who can attend.
Collaborative action:	Gearty both contributed content to the workshops in the form of ‘learning histories’ (an action research practice) and then also uses the workshops as sites for validation and dissemination of the content of those learning histories. The learning history practice used the rules and methods of qualitative research to tell a jointly told tale of researchers’ and practitioners’ learning efforts. In bringing the practitioners together, Gearty validated the ‘tales’, in that the workshop afforded a deeper dive into discussions of what really was important for their organization in making change. In having newcomers listen to these learning oriented conversations, dissemination of learning also occurred.
Results:	Gearty’s action research both generated the learning histories and documented the effects of this method of disseminating learning among six different organizations. The very creativity of the workshops and the beautifully designed learning history reports (with video) represent the project’s overall embrace of new forms of learning history that can engage learning across multi-organizational boundaries.

Table 6.3: Low Carbon Works

Adapted from Huang (2010:96).

Location:	Massachusetts, U.S.
Background:	Leslie Perlow's work is entitled 'the time famine: Toward sociology of work time'.
Goal:	The study was a qualitative study of how people use their time at work, why they use it this way, and whether their way of using time is optimal for them or their work groups.
Research practice:	The project convened regular meetings of its scholarly and practitioner stakeholders as well as new business leaders.
Collaborative action:	As a result of the collaboration, which involved training engineers on how to manage their time and how to priorities issues, the engineers began to experiment with preserving part of their day without interruption.
Results:	This led to their agreeing to no longer allow spontaneous drop in meetings (which required organization level agreement) or to take phone calls. The experiment proved helpful to the engineers and afforded Perlow a deeper understanding of time management in the workplace.

Table 6.4: Towards sociology of time

Adapted from Huang (2010:96).

Evidence-Based Intervention to Prevent Childhood Obesity.

Location:	Western Norway
Background:	Health care professionals in Norway were increasingly worried about the negative trend they observed in the number of overweight and obese children and adolescents. The Norwegian Child Growth Study measuring 3rd graders from a national representative sample of 127 schools, in which nine of ten children took part, demonstrated a 3% increase in obesity from 2008 to 2010, and 22% of the girls and 17% of the boys were estimated to be overweight or obese in 2010.
Goal:	To implement a new evidence-based program for the prevention of childhood obesity and collaboration and sharing of work between specialist and community health care professionals in parts of a county in western Norway.
Research practice:	The study was a comprehensive locally developed project, with diverse partners: two local hospitals within the same hospital trust, and two different municipalities, a university college and The User Association for Obesity in Norway.
Collaborative action:	Researchers used a community-based training programme that involved training members of the community (including parents of obese children) on practical steps to prevent obesity and to manage already obese children and adolescents. The training sessions which included simulations, also involved nutritionists and physical trainers.
Results:	After the training session, the parents of obese children and adolescents applied the physical training and nutrition tips they were taught to their children and adolescents. The impact was almost immediate as there was marked reduction in new cases of obesity. It shows that community-based participatory research approach to solving social issues is more efficient and sustainable. By this approach evidence-based practice can be delivered based on research, user knowledge, and provider knowledge in the field of childhood overweight and obesity in a certain context.

Table 6.5: Preventing childhood obesity

Adapted from Huang (2010:96).

6.3 Research methodology

6.3.1 Mixed research methodology

A mixed research method will be adopted for this study. This research method is appropriate because, according to Mouton and Marais (1990:160-170), a single approach is limited in investigating phenomena in social science that are tightly enmeshed. Thus, by combining qualitative and quantitative research, there is greater possibility of understanding human nature and reality.

Creswell and Clark (2007:5) define mixed research method as:

“A method which involves philosophical assumptions that guide the direction of the collection and analysis of data and the mixture of qualitative and quantitative approaches in many phases of the research process. As a method, it focuses on collecting, analysing and mixing both qualitative and quantitative data in a single study or series of studies. The central premise of a mixed research method is that the use of quantitative and qualitative approach in combination provides a better understanding of research problems than either approach alone”.

The uniqueness of the mixed method research is the fact that data collection and analysis will be carried out quantitatively and qualitatively. Creswell and Clark (2007:6) state that ‘quantitative data includes closed-ended information such as that found on attitude, behaviour or performance instruments. They are of the opinion that the collection of this kind of data might also involve using closed-ended checklist, on which the researcher checks the behaviours seen.

A major source of quantitative data will come via content analysis of newspapers and broadcast media news, features, analysis, documentaries and editorials that cover electoral violence and the role of the media. As observed by Creswell and Clark (2007:6), some quantitative information is found in documents such as census records or attendance records. It can also be found in printed materials such as newspaper stories.

According to Creswell and Clark (2007:6), qualitative data on the other hand consist of open-ended information that the researcher gathers through interviews with

participants. In my case, I hope to gather information through interviews from journalists. Also, quantitative data can be collected by observing participants on sites of research, gathering documents from a private or public source (diary or minutes of meetings), or collecting audio-visual materials such as videotapes or artefacts.

6.3.2 Quantitative data

The need to compute data led to the emergence of quantitative research around 1250 A.D. According to Leedy and Ormrod (2001:101):

“Quantitative research has dominated the western cultural as the research method to create meaning and new knowledge. What constitutes a quantitative research method involves a numeric or statistical approach to research design. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) alleged that quantitative research is specific in its surveying and experimentation, as it builds upon existing theories. The methodology of a quantitative research maintains the assumption of an empiricist paradigm (Creswell, 2003). The research itself is independent of the researcher. As a result, data is used to objectively measure reality. Quantitative research creates meaning through objectivity uncovered in the collected data”.

Quantitative research can be used in response to relational questions of variables within the research. “Quantitative researchers seek explanations and predictions that will generate to other persons and places. The intent is to establish, confirm, or validate relationships and to develop generalizations that contribute to theory” (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001, p. 102). Quantitative research begins with a problem statement and involves the formation of a hypothesis, a literature review, and a quantitative data analysis.

6.3.3 Qualitative research

The study will involve the gathering of some quantitative data; however, the main focus will be qualitative analysis. A qualitative approach allows the researcher to gain knowledge of the issues in-depth and thus enables the researcher to have a greater understanding of the situation. According to Marshall and Rossman (2007:2), qualitative researchers are fascinated by the intricacies of social connections communicated in daily life and by the meanings that the participants themselves give

to these interactions. Thus, qualitative research is practical, explanatory and grounded in the lived experiences of people.

The qualitative aspect of the study will focus on Nigerian journalists with reference to their perceptions on a wide range of issues pertaining to their reportage of conflict-sensitive socio-political issues (Hyde, 2000). Flick, Von Kardoff and Steinke (2004: 3) explain quantitative research as a method which seeks to contribute to a better understanding of social realities and to draw attention to processes, meaning patterns and structural features that often remain closed to non-participants, but are also, as a rule, not consciously known by actors caught up in their unquestioned daily routine. They state that qualitative research makes use of the uncommon or the divergent and unanticipated as a basis of understanding and a mirror whose reflection makes the unknown noticeable in the known and the known perceptible in the unknown.

6.4 Data collection methods

6.4.1 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Data for quantitative research can be collected in different ways: data can be collected through Focus Group Discussions and In-depth interviews. They are two of the most utilised instruments that researchers use to collect and analyse data. According to Kairuz, Crump and O'Brien (2007), focus group is a deliberate and purposely prearranged group discussion which seeks to classify perceptions, opinions and parodies of a selected group of individuals concerning a specific topic of inquiry.

Madriz (2000) recounts that Focus Group Discussion as a method of data collection was formalised in the early 1940s by Paul Lazarsfield and Robert Merton. The duo used the method to conduct a government sponsored research which sought to gauge public attitudes towards the involvement of the US government in World War II. They gauged the attitudes through a study of media effects by identifying "salient dimensions of complex social stimuli as precursor to further quantitative tests" (Lunt, 1996: 81).

In order to achieve the set goal of eliciting information from participants in the group, the moderator (in this case me the researcher) ensures that the discussion should be made as simple as possible so that participants view the process as non-threatening, thereby allowing them the freedom to express any kind of opinion, whether or not this opinion is shared by the other participants. The researcher is thus able to garner valuable data often left out by quantitative data especially when the participants represent small groups.

According to Onwuegbuzie, Dickson, Leech and Zoran (2009:4), researchers often use only what participants stated during the focus group discourse as their only source of data during focus group discussions. They nonetheless aver that there are other methods of data collection such as audiotapes or responses by members of the group, notes taken by the moderator or his assistants and items recalled by the moderator and his assistants. The data can be sufficiently analysed; what differs is in the time and rigour required to analyse them.

Morgan (1998) suggests the following principles for the adoption of focus groups:

- Focus group discussion can serve as a detached method of research relating to group norms, meanings and processes.
- It can also be adopted for use in a multi-method design when exploring a topic or collecting group language and/or narratives to be used in later stages
- It can also serve as a tool with which clarifications, extensions and qualifications of data collected through other methods is carried out.
- It also helps participants receive feedback from the research

In focus group interviews, the focus is the participants; it provides opportunities for group dynamics and help the researcher capture hitherto 'hidden' shared experiences from the perspectives of participants. This helps the researcher to access elements that other methods may not be able to access. This method permits researchers to uncover aspects of understanding that often remain hidden in the more conventional in-depth interviewing method. Madriz (2003:21) asserts that focus group's importance lies in the fact that it is able to reduce the imbalance in

power relations between the researcher and participants, thereby granting the researcher the 'authoritative' voice.

In focus group discussions, the control of the interactions is in the hands of the participants and not the researcher; this is because the information the researcher needs is in the hands of the participants. This interaction amongst participants often substitutes for their exchange with the researcher thereby giving more prominence to the points of view of participants. It provides an opportunity for the researcher to 'stand back' and listen to the salient points emanating from the voices of participants.

Alluding to the above position, Ivanof and Hultberg (2006: 126) state that focus group's uniqueness lie in its ability to give voice to the participants and afford them the opportunity to define what is relevant and important from their own perspectives. Focus group meets the needs of recognition in the lives of those who normally would not have a 'voice' in society by giving people the opportunity to narrate their experiences and realities in an open and nonthreatening environment. This helps the researcher get closer to the data in ways that would have ordinarily been impossible.

What constitutes the 'group'?

According to Hennink (2007:6), the goal of focus group discussion is to bring together 6-8 people with similar sociocultural background and who are affected directly or indirectly by the same experiences or concerns. These people are brought together to discuss common issues which are moderated by a researcher who makes sure participants feel comfortable enough to freely air their views. The aim is not necessarily to reach a consensus.

This type of conversation inspires a range of reactions which provide a better appreciation of the outlooks, behaviour, sentiments or insights of participants on the research issues'. For a focus group to be regarded as successful, it must be hinged on ensuring that the environment of discourse is permissive and nonthreatening and that participants are comfortable to discuss their opinions and experiences without fear of being judged or ridiculed by other members of the group (Hennink, 2007: 6).

6.4.2 Interviews

Another very important way of obtaining data for qualitative research is through interviews. Gill et al. (2008:292) aver that researchers adopt interviews as data gathering methods because they provide the opportunity to obtain information from respondents that would have been difficult or impossible to obtain from questionnaires and/or Focus Group Discussions. They further assert that a lot goes into planning interviews; the goal is to gather as much information as possible about the issue at hand and also address the aims and objectives of the research put forward.

Gill et al. (2008:291) further distinguished between the three major types of interviews: structured, semi structured and unstructured. They aver that when interviews are orally administered, they are said to be structured, they typically contain a list of predetermined questions that have no follow-ups that could have provided more insights, or that require further explanation. Their advantage is that they are fast and easy to administer (2008:291). On the other hand, unstructured questionnaires are spontaneous and devoid of strict organisation, they are not designed in any way to mirror any model or theory (Gill et al, 2008:291). Semi-structured interviews differ from others in that they contain key enquiries that provide sufficient background and definitions for the areas to be discovered, they also are unique in that they allow the interviewer or interviewee some measure of flexibility in that they can deviate from a central theme in order to pursue an idea or response in more detail. This method is flexible because it allows for discovery or elaboration of information that is vital to participants but that may not have been previously thought of as important (Gill et al, 2008:291).

6.4.3 Content analysis

“If there were only one truth, you couldn’t paint a hundred canvasses on the same theme”--Pablo Picasso, 1966.

Given that the main thrust of this research is to build capacity of journalists to report elections in a conflict- sensitive manner, it becomes important to understand how journalists report conflict with a view to bridge the existing knowledge gap(s). One way this can be attained is through the analysis of existing data (in this case, media content), through content analysis. McNamara (2005:1) defines content analysis as a study of transcripts of interviews in the forms of texts, analysis of narratives and forms of films, television programmes, newspaper and magazine features, editorials, advertising content, political communication etc. Krippendorff (1980) describes content analysis as a research method for making replicable and valid inference from data to their context, purposively to provide knowledge, new insights, a representation of facts and a practical guide to action.

The use of content analysis as a method of collecting and understanding data was introduced as a systematic method to study mass media by Professor Harold Lasswell (1927), originally to study propaganda in the Second World War. Lasswell, who is regarded among communication scholars as the founder of content analysis and as the scholar responsible for its integration within the field of communication, led a team of researchers who specially scrutinized Hitler’s speech in order to determine his personality by examining his vocal characteristics, his non-verbal performance, the content of his words and his interface with the audience as a major source of information (Levyatan, 2009:55).

Content analysis is not without its criticisms; Levyatan (2009:55) states that one of the serious problems of content analysis is insubstantial categories. Content analysis research demands deep acquaintance with the subject, lack of acquaintance leads to poor categories which will result in a weak outcome. Another problem is the abundance of coding categories, which makes coding a complicated task. Oftentimes, questions arise from content analysis that queries its effectiveness, questions such as: will two different coders arrive at exactly the same conclusion from the same text?

According to Paton (2002):

Qualitative content analysis involves a process designed to condense raw data into categories or themes based on valid inference and interpretation. This process uses inductive reasoning, by which themes and categories emerge from the data through the researcher's careful examination and constant comparison. But qualitative content analysis does not need to exclude deductive reasoning (Patton, 2002). Generating concepts or variables from theory or previous studies is also very useful for qualitative research, especially at the inception of data analysis (Berg, 2001).

Hsieh and Shannon (2005) discussed three approaches to qualitative content analysis, based on the degree of involvement of inductive reasoning. The first is conventional qualitative content analysis, in which coding categories are derived directly and inductively from the raw data. This is the approach used for grounded theory development. The second approach is directed content analysis, in which initial coding starts with a theory or relevant research findings. Then, during data analysis, the researchers immerse themselves in the data and allow themes to emerge from the data.

6.5 Data analysis

Analysis of data obtained from qualitative research is significantly different from the analysis of data obtained from quantitative research. While quantitative data can be reduced to numbers during analysis, Anderson (2010:1) affirms that qualitative research on the other hand, involves the collection, analysis, and interpretation of data that are not easily reduced to numbers. These data, according to him, relate to the social world and the concepts and behaviors of people within it.

Qualitative research's uniqueness stems from the fact that it recognises the fact that data must be understood in the context of their production. The research questions put forward in the study must be the basis upon which the analytical approach is taken (Anderson, 2010:4). Data obtained for the study will be analysed separately based on the method of data collection. Data will be analysed in the following ways:

6.5.1 Analysing data obtained from interviews

Qualitative data can be analysed in two ways, inductively and deductively. Burnard et al (2008) state that when a researcher imposes his/her structure or predetermined theoretical framework on the obtained data during transcript analysis, the approach is known as deductive data analysis. It simply involves using a structure or predetermined framework to analyse data. Deductive approach is most suitable in studies where researchers are already aware of probable participant responses (Burnard et al, 2008:430).

Inductive approach on the other hand, involves analysing data with little or no preset theory, structure or outline and uses the actual data itself to derive the structure of analysis. According to Burnard et al (2008), inductive approach is time-consuming and is most appropriate where little or nothing is known about the study. Inductive analysis is the most common approach used to analyse qualitative data. In analysing data obtained from interviews, Anderson (2010:3) suggests that the researcher should select quotes from the interview(s) that are important or most representative of the research findings and that the settings and speakers should be established in the text at the end of the quote.

In my research, I plan to conduct interviews with journalists where I plan to ask questions related to the research objectives. When these interviews are conducted, data can then be obtained through the process of transcription. Transcription of interviews helps the researcher record participants' responses on questions posed and easily refers to them for clarification or store them for future use. Transcriptions also help the researcher look beyond what is said; to what is meant because the meanings of utterances are profoundly shaped by the way in which something is said in addition to what is said. According Bailey (2008:129), transcriptions need to be very thorough to capture features of talk such as emphasis, speed, tone of voice, timing and pauses because these elements can be important for interpreting data.

Analysing data from interview can be cumbersome at times. Casterle, Gastmans, Bryons and Denier (2011:2) state that because the transcribing of the narrative interview does not always proceed smoothly, the researcher is inclined to add too

much concrete information to the scheme in order to make them clearer and complete, thereby risking focusing too much on details and losing sight of the essence of the story.

Casterle et al (2011:3) recommend that constant revision of the interview data is important in order to determine whether or not the data obtained essentially responds to the research questions. Burnard, Gill, Stewart, Treasure and Chadwick (2008:429) assert that though interview transcripts, observations and field notes provide a descriptive account of the study, they do not however provide explanations or answers to the 'why' question. They suggest that the responsibility lies with the researcher who has to make sense of the data that have been collected by exploring and interpreting them.

6.5.2 Analysing data from focus group discussions

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) provide a great opportunity for researchers to interview and acquire data from multiple people at the same time. The ability to interview more than one person at the same time is an economical, fast, and efficient method for obtaining data from multiple participants. It also provides a socially-oriented environment that gives participants a sense of belonging to a group, thereby making them feel safe to divulge information (Krueger & Casey, 2000).

Data from FGDs can be obtained in the following ways: through individual data, group data, and/or group communication data (Duggleby, 2005). There are contentions amongst focus group theorists about the most appropriate unit of analysis for focus group data. While some are of the opinion that individual or the group should be the focus of the analysis instead (Kidd & Marshall, 2000), most focus group theorists adopt the group as the unit of analysis by coding the data and presenting emergent themes (Onwuegbuzie, Dickson, Leech & Zoran, 2009:4).

There are several techniques available to the researcher to analyse data obtained from FGDs. However, the analytical techniques that best interpret data from FGDs are constant comparison analysis, classical content analysis, keywords-in-context, and discourse analysis.

- **Constant comparison analysis.**

Constant Comparison Analysis (CCA), otherwise known as the method of constant comparison was developed by Glaser and Strauss (Glaser, 1978, 1992; Glaser & Strauss, 1967, Strauss, 1987) and was first used as a tool in grounded theory research. According to Straus and Corbin (1998), there are three major stages of constant comparison analysis. In the first stage, the data are broken into small units and the researcher attaches a code to each of the small units. The second stage involves grouping the codes into categories. Lastly, the researcher develops one or more themes that express content of each of the group.

Charmaz (2000) declares that focus group data can be analyzed through CCA, particularly when there are multiple focus groups within the same study. This allows the focus group researcher to assess saturation in general and across-group saturation in particular since focus group data are analyzed one focus group at a time, analysis of multiple focus groups effectively serves as a representation for theoretical sampling, which is when additional sampling occurs to assess the importance of the themes and to refine themes. The advantage of using multiple groups is that the researchers could use it to assess if the themes that emerged from one group also emerged from another group(s).

Onwuegbuzie et al (2009:6) is of the opinion that researchers design their studies with multiple focus groups to have groups with which to test themes. They refer to this design as an emergent-systematic focus group design, wherein the term emergent refers to the focus groups that are used for exploratory purposes and systematic refers to the focus groups that are used for verification purposes.

- **Classical content analysis**

Classical content analysis has some similarities with the constant comparison analysis the difference however lies in the fact that while both analysis involves creating smaller chunks of data, the codes in classical content analysis are placed into similar groupings and counted. Morgan's (1997) gives three unique ways to use classical content analysis with focus group data: (a) the analyst can identify whether each participant used a given code

- (b) the analyst can assess whether each group used a given code, and
- (c) the analyst can identify all instances of a given code.

- **Keywords-in-context.**

Focus group data can also be analysed using keywords-in-context approach. The approach simply involves determining how words are used in context with other words, it means the researcher's analysis of the culture of the use of the word (Fielding & Lee, 1998). Using this approach is important considering that people use the same words differently. Same words can have several meanings in the same cultural setting. Fielding and Lee further state that the contexts within words are especially important in focus groups because of the interactive nature of focus groups.

Thus, each word uttered by a focus group member not only should be interpreted as a function of all the other words uttered during the focus group, but it should be interpreted with respect to the words uttered by all other members of the focus group. As is the case for classical content analysis, keywords-in-context can be used across focus groups, within one focus group, or for an individual in a focus group (Onwuegbuzie, Dickson, Leech & Zoran, 2009:6).

- **Discourse analysis**

The main position of discourse analysis as put forward by Potter and Wetherell (1987) is that to understand social interaction and cognition, it is essential to study how people communicated on a daily basis (Potter & Wetherell, 1987). Broadly speaking, this form of discourse analysis involves selecting representative or unique segments or components of language use (e.g., several lines of a focus group transcript) and then analyzing them in detail to examine how versions of elements such as the society, community, institutions, experiences, and events emerge in discourse (Phillips & Jorgensen, 2002).

More specifically, Cowan and McLeod (2004) conceptualized that discourse analysis operates on three fundamental assumptions: people's descriptions cannot be

deemed true or false portrayals of reality, how people's constructions are formed and undermined and reflexivity.

Discourse analysis depends on the researcher's sensitivity to language use, from which an analytic tool kit is developed that includes facets such as rhetorical organisation, variability, accountability, positioning, and discourses (Cowan & McLeod, 2004). With respect to rhetorical organisation, the analyst examines selected talk or text to determine how it is organized rhetorically to make assertions that are maximally credible while protecting the speaker from challenge and refutation (Billig, 1996).

According to Potter (2004), discourse analysts maintain "a specific focus on the way versions and descriptions are assembled to perform actions" (p. 207). When using language, people perform different social actions such as supporting, questioning, or criticizing. Language then varies with the action performed. Thus, variability can be used to demonstrate how individuals employ different discursive constructions to perform different social actions.

6.6 Study areas

The study will be carried out in two Nigerian cities: Lagos and Ilorin. The cities were chosen because of their socio-political histories.

6.6.1 Lagos

With a population of about 18 million people (UN estimates, 2006), Lagos is Nigeria's and sub-Saharan Africa's largest city. The city, formerly Nigeria's seat of government, is now geographically grouped as a state in Southwest Nigeria. A coastal state, it is bounded by the Republic of Benin on the west, Ogun state on the North and the Atlantic Ocean down south providing a beautiful coastline. The city, though densely populated, is Nigeria's smallest in land mass with a total of 3,577 square kilometers, out of which 787 square kilometers is made up of lagoons and creeks such as the Lagos Lagoon, the Harbour, Five Cowry Creek, Port Novo Creek, New Canal, Badagry Creek, Lighthouse Creek and the popular Kuramo Waters.

Lagos has been the hotbed of the opposition in Nigeria's politics. For instance, in the First Republic, the Action Group as the opposition party had Lagos as its political base. In the present dispensation, Lagos (and to a large extent the entire southwest region) has been in the opposition from the onset of the return to democracy in 1999. Thus, a capacity building exercise in Lagos for journalists is not out of place. Another reason for the choice of Lagos as a study area is because of the convergence of media houses in the state. Almost all the newspapers and broadcast stations have their headquarters in Lagos; those with headquarters elsewhere have Lagos as a regional headquarters for the southwest. This portends great possibilities for gathering a large number of journalists, especially editors and media owners who play a big role in the news contents.

6.6.2 Kwara State

Kwara State was created on 27 May 1967, when the Federal Military Government of General Yakubu Gowon broke the four regions that then constituted the Federation of Nigeria into 12 states. At its creation, the state was made up of the former Ilorin and Kabba provinces of the then Northern Region and was initially named the West Central State but later changed to "Kwara", a local name for the River Niger.



Map 1: Map showing Kwara State Source: www.the-nigeria.com

Kwara State has since 1976 reduced considerably in size as a result of further state creation exercises in Nigeria. On 13 February 1976, the Idah/Dekina part of the state was carved out and merged with a part of the then Benue/Plateau State to form Benue State. On 27 August 1991, five local government areas, namely Oyi, Yagba, Okene, Okehi and Kogi were also excised to form part of the new Kogi State, while a sixth, Borgu Local Government Area, was merged with Niger State.

The reason I chose Kwara State as a project site for the study is because of the state's unique characteristics of being multi-ethnic, multi-religious and politically vociferous. It is at the centre of Nigeria geographically with majority of Nigeria's main ethnic groups represented in the state. Kwara state also has the enviable position of being one of the most peaceful states in Nigeria, with the states aptly known as the state of harmony.

Ironically also, the state has the tendency of erupting into violence because of the existing ethnic cleavages and perceived marginalisation felt by the Christians in the southern part of the state. Elections in the state can potentially be violent if the appropriate mechanisms, including training of journalists for conflict-sensitive reportage are put in place.

6.7 Sampling

The study will focus on journalists from leading Nigerian media outfits (in both the print and broadcast media). A total of 100journalists (50 each for both print and electronic media) will be involved in the study in Ilorin, Kwara State.

I plan to carry out an additional training programme for journalists in Ondo State, Southwest Nigeria, baring the success of the training programme in Ilorin. This will

mean an additional 100 journalists will be involved in the study in Ondo State. In total, I hope to conduct peace journalism training for 200 Nigerian journalists.

Purposive sampling technique will be adopted for this study because of its appropriateness to the study. Purposive sampling technique, also called judgment sampling, is the deliberate choice of an informant due to the qualities the informant possesses. It is a non-random technique that does not need underlying theories or a set number of informants. Simply put, the researcher decides what needs to be known and sets out to find people who can and are willing to provide the information by virtue of knowledge or experience (Bernard 2002, Lewis & Sheppard 2006). Purposive sampling techniques have also been referred to as non-probability sampling or purposeful sampling or “qualitative sampling.” As noted above, purposive sampling techniques involve selecting certain units or cases “based on a specific purpose rather than randomly” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003: 713).

For this study, the inclusion criteria require the participants to be practicing journalists of about 2 years on the field news reporting experience. The participants must also be registered members of the Nigerian Union of Journalists. I plan to recruit participants for this study through letters sent out to their managing editors and news editors. I also will liaise with the Nigerian Union of Journalists from where consent letters will be obtained as assent for participating journalists.

6.8 Pilot testing

According to Wiersma and Jurs (2005:491), pilot testing is the process whereby the research design for the prospective research study is tested to gain information which could improve the major study.

By conducting a pilot study, researchers can enhance the probability of successfully completing the main study by identifying and avoiding mistakes that could otherwise ruin the main study, such as not protecting participants’ anonymity and confidentiality

or not addressing queries regarding ethical considerations, proposed research design, logistics, recruitment, and sampling (Thabane et al., 2010).

The research design for this study will be pilot tested using journalists in Lagos, Nigeria and the information obtained, coupled with the response of the journalists to the pilot questionnaire, FGDs and interviews will form the bedrock upon which the trainings in Kwara and Lagos states will be carried out.

6.9 Ethical considerations

With background in ancient Greek philosophy, ethics deals with the process of reaching a decision concerning what is right and wrong. Ethics is crucial in research because it guides the researcher on the ways to ensure dignity of subjects or participants in a research and also guides how materials or research data are sourced. Schüklenk (2005:3) states that the aim of ethics or ethical consideration is to get a direction on how to act in a given situation and to provide concrete reasons for acting in such ways.

There are several major ethical issues to consider in ensuring that the research abides by laid down ethical considerations. Suffice to add that I ensured that all the requirements are met and an ethical clearance letter to that effect has been issued by the department.

- **Informed consent**

Informed consent is a major ethical issue in conducting research. Fouka and Mantzorou (2011:4) define it as a process by which a person knowledgeably, voluntarily, without coercion and intelligently, in a clear and manifest way, gives his consent concerning his involvement in the research. Obtaining informed consent in research is important because it prevents unnecessary assault on participants and protects their liberty. Free and informed consent needs to incorporate an introduction to the study and its purpose as well as an explanation about the selection of the research subjects and the procedures that will be followed (Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011).

Informed consent also requires the researcher to inform participants about the method to be adopted for the study which will be used to protect anonymity and confidentiality and indicate a person with whom they can discuss the study. The researcher is also expected to inform the participant that participation in the study is voluntary and no penalties are involved in refusal to participate.

For the purpose of this research, informed consent has been sought and obtained from the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ), the regulatory body in charge of journalists and journalism practice in Nigeria. Letters to journalists will be 'screened' by the NUJ and journalists invited thereafter by the body.

- **Respect for anonymity and confidentiality**

Confidentiality and anonymity in research is essential because it is basic to humans' societal beliefs that individuals matter and that individuals have the right for their affairs to be private. The issue of confidentiality and anonymity is closely connected with the rights of beneficence, respect for the dignity and fidelity. Anonymity is protected when the subject's identity cannot be linked with personal responses. If the researcher is not able to promise anonymity he has to address confidentiality, which is the management of private information by the researcher in order to protect the subject's identity. Confidentiality means that individuals are free to give and withhold as much information as they wish to the person they choose. The researcher is responsible to "maintain confidentiality that goes beyond ordinary loyalty" (Fouka and Mantzorou, 2011).

CHAPTER SEVEN

DETERMINING JOURNALISTS TRAINING NEEDS FOR CONFLICT-SENSITIVE REPORTAGE.

7.0 Introduction

One of the most common mistake researchers undertaking action research intervention make is to assume that they know the training needs of participants. This supposition often leads to intervention programmes that do not meet the immediate needs of participants. In cases where the participants do not express their resentment, the researcher unwittingly leaves with the impression that he has achieved his aim for the study.

In this chapter, I present the factors that determined the training needs for my research participants-Nigerian journalists. The aim of the training is to instil in Nigerian journalists, through training, the attitude of reporting elections and other sensitive social issues in ways that encourage peace and nonviolence.

7.1 Owning the process

“Ownership: 'A commitment of the head, heart, and hands to fix the problem and never again affix the blame.’ John G. Miller.

One of the major standout differences between action research design and other research designs is the fact that it is participatory in nature because it involves the voluntary participation and collaboration between the researcher(s) and participants (which could be an organisation or community). This active participation by research participants gives them a sense of ownership of the process, thereby making them more susceptible and amenable to change.

Creating a feeling of ownership involves recognising that within political, economic and social contexts, people are social beings. It also involves acknowledging that participants are contributors to the success or failure of the process and not just subjects of research (McDonald, 2012: 39).

Anderson (1994:24) suggests that although the purpose of training is ultimately to teach people new ways of doing things, it should not be limited to that. He suggests that training must also seek to build on what people already know. Proactive training deliberately seeks out new ways of helping people leverage on positives they already possess with the aim of further encouraging an improvement in the quality of their contribution to their organisations and communities. When the training need is collaboratively decided upon, the sustainability and adaptability to the new knowledge will practically be guaranteed.

Training in traditional journalism is often limited to gathering and disseminating news to the public. Howard (2009:4) is of the view that training in traditional journalism has not included study of how best to cover violent conflict, and has ignored any understanding of violent conflict as a social process. Often, it is required that that journalists have knowledge, expertise and experience, such as reporting on business and economics, public health, music, sports, or other topics. But the dynamics of violent conflict – its instigation, development and resolution – are not much understood by most journalists nor proficiently reported on.

7.2 The need for introspection

In determining the training needs of journalists, I had to undertake a content analysis of past media reportage of sensitive issues and how it adversely affected the society, especially a fragile state like Nigeria. An example that readily comes to mind is the unfortunate crisis that rocked the Northern Nigerian city of Kaduna in 2002. The fact that the media has been severally accused of instigating the conflict that claimed close to 250 lives shows a dearth in conflict-sensitive reportage awareness.

Salawu (2013:44) recounts that the 2002 Miss World Pageant that was scheduled to take place in Nigeria was violently disrupted owing to a media report that pitched Christians against Muslims in Nigeria's restive Kaduna state. A style writer with *Thisday Newspaper*, one of Nigeria's leading dailies had written a feature article published on the 16th of November 2002 in which she stated that:

"The Muslims thought it was immoral to bring 92 women to Nigeria to ask them to revel in vanity, what would Mohammed think? In all honesty, he would probably have chosen a wife from one of them." (Thisday Newspaper, 16th November, 2002).

Suffice to add that before the article, there had been growing discontent, particularly amongst Nigeria's northern Muslims against the planned pageant. Expectedly, given the already tensed Muslim-Christian relationship in Northern Nigeria, the story did not go down well with Muslims who accused the newspaper of deliberately denigrating the Prophet Mohammed and Islam. Hence, they resorted to violent attacks on Christians and churches, killing, maiming and burning.

The fact that the reporter did not take into cognisance the volatile nature Nigeria's interfaith relations and the already tensed socio-political state of the nation at that time is proof of a dearth of or lack of adherence to conflict-sensitive journalism practice. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) in advocating for paradigm shift for journalists, remark that to pull off this sleight-of-hand about what to report, how to report it, are commonly disguised as natural and obvious.

Another sad aspect of the conflict was in the way it was reported by the Nigerian media. The reportage, rather than attempt to calm already tensed nerves, seemed to arouse the possibility of a reprisal attack from other sections of the country. Newspaper reportage of the planned implementation of Shari'ah divided the country along ethnic and religious lines; even journalists were not spared of the overt polarisation; for instance, southern based newspaper, mostly owned by Christians, were critical of the move, while newspapers based in the north and mostly owned by Northern Muslims seem to be pro-Shari'ah in their reportage.

The December 12 and 18 2002 editorials of the *New Tribune Newspaper* gave a clear indication of the polarity the planned Shari'ah introduction had caused in Nigeria's polity. The newspaper blatantly opposed the planned introduction of Shari'ah and called on the government to stall the process. The paper condemned the fatwa (death sentence) imposed on Isioma Daniel, the style editor who purportedly wrote the article that ignited the conflict.

Another area where there is an obvious lack of conflict-sensitivity in the reportage of sensitive social issues by Nigerian journalists is in the prejudicial slant of their reportage. Ado-Kurawa (2006) is of the opinion that the ideological inclination of any newspaper in Nigeria can easily be deconstructed. He asserts that most newspapers, their reporters and editors overtly display ethnic and religious prejudice in their reportage. Hence, at the peak of the agitations for the implementation of Shari'ah law by most of Nigeria's northern states, it was not surprising that most of the southern based Nigerian newspapers did not support it. Ado-Kurawa (2006) believes newspapers from the mainly Christian south consistently presented their position as civilized and the supporters of the Shari'ah as uncivilized and barbaric. He summarised newspaper reportage of the Shari'ah crises thus:

In the main, I think most of the anti-Shari'ah apostles have not shopped for new arguments and attitudes. More troubling is that they have not been totally honest about their grouse. Rather than let everybody know that their position is influenced either directly or remotely by a religious ideology; they pretend a certain hatred for barbarism or a passionate love for humanity. The religious or worldly ideology under which they hide have their own share of barbarity and inhumanity in the view of others (Ado-Kurawa, 2006).

While Ado-Kurawa's views on the role played by the southern newspapers during the planned full implementation of the Shari'ah in Nigeria is debatable, one fact remains that most of the newspapers had (still have) southerners as their owners and southern Christians as their editors-in-chiefs. This undeniably had an impact, albeit subtly on the slant and tilt of the reportage of the Shari'ah crisis.

Building journalists' capacity is crucial when one considers that reporters as humans are vulnerable to emotional responses to social issues and may unwittingly lace their stories or features with emotive opinions capable of inciting violence. Frequently, journalists' ethno-religious preferences have the tendency of come in the way of their professional or responsible reporting during conflicts. Ahmad (2008:6-7) states that in the case of Kashmir, the Indian reporting or media analysis generally reflects considerable similarity to India's official position on the dispute. Likewise, in Pakistan, while religiously-inspired terrorism has emerged as the most potent national security

threat, those reporting and analyzing it, or offering their opinions in the media, do so only in a reactive manner. Consequently, if in the first case, the conflict has become protracted because of the absence of an informed public opinion in India and its consequent impact on the country's official policy not.

The introduction of Shari'ah by most states in Northern Nigerian almost led to a religious conflict of monumental proportion. Most Nigerians are of the opinion that the radical Islamist sect, Boko Haram is an offshoot of the Shari'ah imbroglio that rocked Nigeria at the early stage of the Fourth Republic that commenced in 1999. While the sect may have found an avenue for expression with the introduction of the Shari'ah law, the fact remains that poverty, inequality and deprivation are the main drivers of the sect. This view is shared by Kukah (2012) who affirms that the rising case of insurgency as perpetrated by Boko Haram may not be unconnected with the deep-seated feelings of political marginalisation and economic depravity in most parts of Northern Nigeria.

Sadly, during the heated agitations for the implementation of Shari'ah, politicians and religious organisations used the media as theatre of war in their bid to 'win' their cause. For instance, *The Guardian Newspaper* was openly critical in its editorial titled 'Shame in Zamfara' in which it described the planned implementation of Shari'ah as sad and outdated.

According to this paper:

Many Moslem scholars are unanimous that the authority for Shari'ah derives from the Koran and traditions of Prophet Muhammad. The Zamfara amputation incident has no parallel in the times of the Prophet. There was the sad era when the law was applied in some parts of the Moslem world. But such medieval times cannot be repeated in the world now (Guardian Newspaper, 2001).

There is also a need for journalists to be trained in the area of writing editorials that will engender peace rather than instigate violence. Editorials are arguably one of the most potent avenues through which the press can influence public discourse and ultimately set agenda. According to Duyile (2005:23), an editorial is an official position by a media organisation concerning a particular policy, action or idea. It is the logical perception of the newspaper on a social issue, often laced with the

proprietor's thoughts or views for the purpose of persuading the readers (audience) to kick against an idea, policy or an action based on facts available.

Nigeria's polarisations further came to the fore during the peak of the Shari'ah crises. This polarisation was even more evident in media reportage as the debate because a tussle between Southern and Northern newspaper. Olorunyomi (2000) argues that the southern orientation of the media caused bias against the north, they contended that a resolution of the country's problems could be solved only if the press learned not to complicate matters and if the southern media in particular learned an important lesson in preaching tolerance, this is an important area to teach training in diversity reportage.

One of the biggest problems plaguing traditional journalists is that they lack the capacity to report the ever-changing conflict environment. Due to a lack of or insufficient conflict-sensitive reportage training, journalists find themselves ill-equipped to address the important social issues that demand so much of their attention. Howard (2009:3) states that members of the society are increasingly accusing the media of being an integral part of the problem of conflict. He avers that because of the peculiar nature of conflict-stressed countries, working journalists are more aware than their colleagues in the developed world that as journalists and citizens, their work may significantly be harmful to societal wellbeing.

Howard (2009:9) states that training for journalists is hinged on the belief that well trained journalists will inevitably present news stories that are accurate, reliable neutral and responsible and that will go a long way in ensuring that the society is peaceful. Part of the objectives of capacity building for journalists is to as much as possible disengaging them from the outcome of their work; this is part of the requirements for their neutrality and objectivity. Howard further affirms that when journalists' capacities are built, they become strengthened and able to deepen the information and debate that citizens need to live their lives and make important political decisions.

7.3 Training needs assessment survey

Another way I plan to determine the training needs of participants is by conducting training needs assessment survey in order to ascertain, from the participants, the trainings they deem necessary and of utmost importance. This is very crucial when one considers that trainings must be reinforced continually through consistent self-examination. This 'self-examination' involves the extraction of meaningful data about the need for training in the organisation.

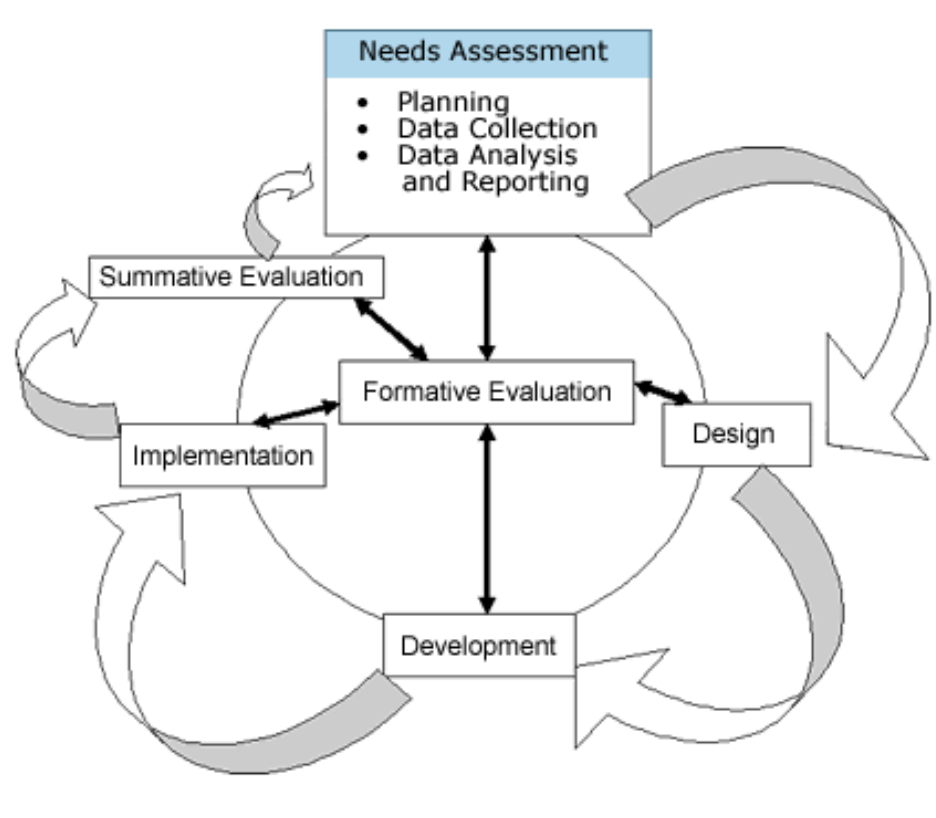


Fig 7.1: Training needs assessment chart. Source: <http://www.hr-survey.com/TrainingNeeds.htm>

The purpose of the survey is to gather data to determine what training needs to be developed to help individual journalists and their media organisation accomplish their goals and objectives, while also achieving the underlining aim of the research which is to entrench in the journalists a culture of conflict-sensitive reportage of social issues, with particular reference to elections. The assessment will look at journalists' current knowledge, skills and abilities to identify any gaps or areas of need. Once the training needs are identified, they will be developed in line with the objectives of the

study and of the training. These objectives will form criteria for eventual evaluation of the outcome of the study.

McGehee and Thayer (2008) are of the opinion that an adequate training program depends upon securing reliable data as a basis for answering the following persistent questions:

- Who is in need of training?
- What areas of their professional life need capacity building?
- Who is to be the training facilitator?
- How will the training be conducted?
- How will the training be evaluated for impact and effectiveness?

Most critics of conflict-sensitive journalism training contend that the training unwittingly turns journalists into advocates for peace; Howard (2008:6) disagrees. He is of the view that doing that would mean exceeding professional standards of independent reporting. The benefit of training in conflict-sensitive journalism, according to Howard, is the new prominence conflict resolution is accorded in the minds of trained journalists and ultimately in their work. Howard further argues that training helps journalists treat conflict-sensitive journalism as an equally a subject of enquiry that is equally legitimate along with the conventional reporting of conflict symptoms such as body counts, citizens that are victimized and traditional focus on elites.

Conflict sensitive journalism fits within a framework of media development initiatives. It more specifically addresses the media's role in conflict resolution than do conventional training and support programs. It remains informational programming which can enable cognitive change, or perhaps attitudinal change (Howard, 2008).

7.4 Reliability and validity

7.4.1 Reliability

Validity and reliability are very important aspects of qualitative research, their importance, particularly as it concerns the success of qualitative research are well documented in literature. According to Hair et al (2006:3), reliability simply implies the degree to which findings of a particular study can be replicated successfully in other situations.

Hair et al (2006:3) further assert that a variable is considered to be reliable when it is consistent in what it intended to measure. They further state that reliability also occurs when there is consistency in the values of multiple measurements. Joppe (2000) avers that reliability is: “the extent to which results are consistent over time and an accurate representation of the total population under study is referred to as reliability and if the results of a study can be reproduced under a similar methodology, then the research instrument is considered to be reliable”. Stenbacka (2001) views reliability as “purpose of explaining” in quantitative approach and “generating understanding” in qualitative approach to research.

According to Patton (2001), the following questions should be answered by the researcher desirous of determining validity and reliability.

- How were integrity, validity and accuracy of findings ensured? What methods and techniques were adopted?
- Is the study’s validity and reliability going to be strengthened by the researcher’s experience and qualifications?
- Is the study predicated on any assumptions?

The primary focus of qualitative research such as I plan to undertake is to ensure that the life experiences of the study population (in this case Nigerian journalist) are captured, documented and presented in a manner that is convincing enough to prove that the researcher fully understand the case (Lukka and Modell, 2010:3).The

use of multiple sources of data will go a long way in ensuring the validity of the study; also, data obtained will be handled in such a way as to develop precise and plausible empirical claims with the data.

PART IV

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Part IV of the research focuses on the findings of the study derived from fieldwork undertaken in Ilorin, Kwara State Nigeria. Data was obtained through interviews and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) conducted during training sessions organised for journalists at the Nigerian Union of Journalists headquarters, Ilorin, Nigeria. Pre and post-training questionnaires were issued to participants with a view to determining why elections in Nigeria often turn violent, particularly the role of journalists and the methods through which journalists can help foster peaceful elections in Nigeria. This section explains how insensitive media reportage can negatively affect society and also identifies the relationship between conflict-sensitive reportage training and societal peace, with specific reference to nonviolent elections.

The data analysis has been carried out with the aim of proffering answers to the study's objectives. Thus, chapter eight reports the views of journalists regarding the media's current mode of operation as regards election reportage and the extent to which the media may be responsible for electoral related violence in Nigeria. The research objectives of the study are:

- i. Drawing data from a sample of journalists, determine the media's current mode of operation as regards election reportage with particular reference to Nigeria.
- ii. To examine the extent to which media may be responsible for electoral related violence, with particular reference to Nigeria.
- iii. To determine the training needs of media personnel particularly as regards conflict-sensitive reportage.
- iv. To implement the training of media personnel in order to build media's capacity to operate in a way that encourages nonviolence.
- v. Carry out preliminary evaluation of the outcome of the training

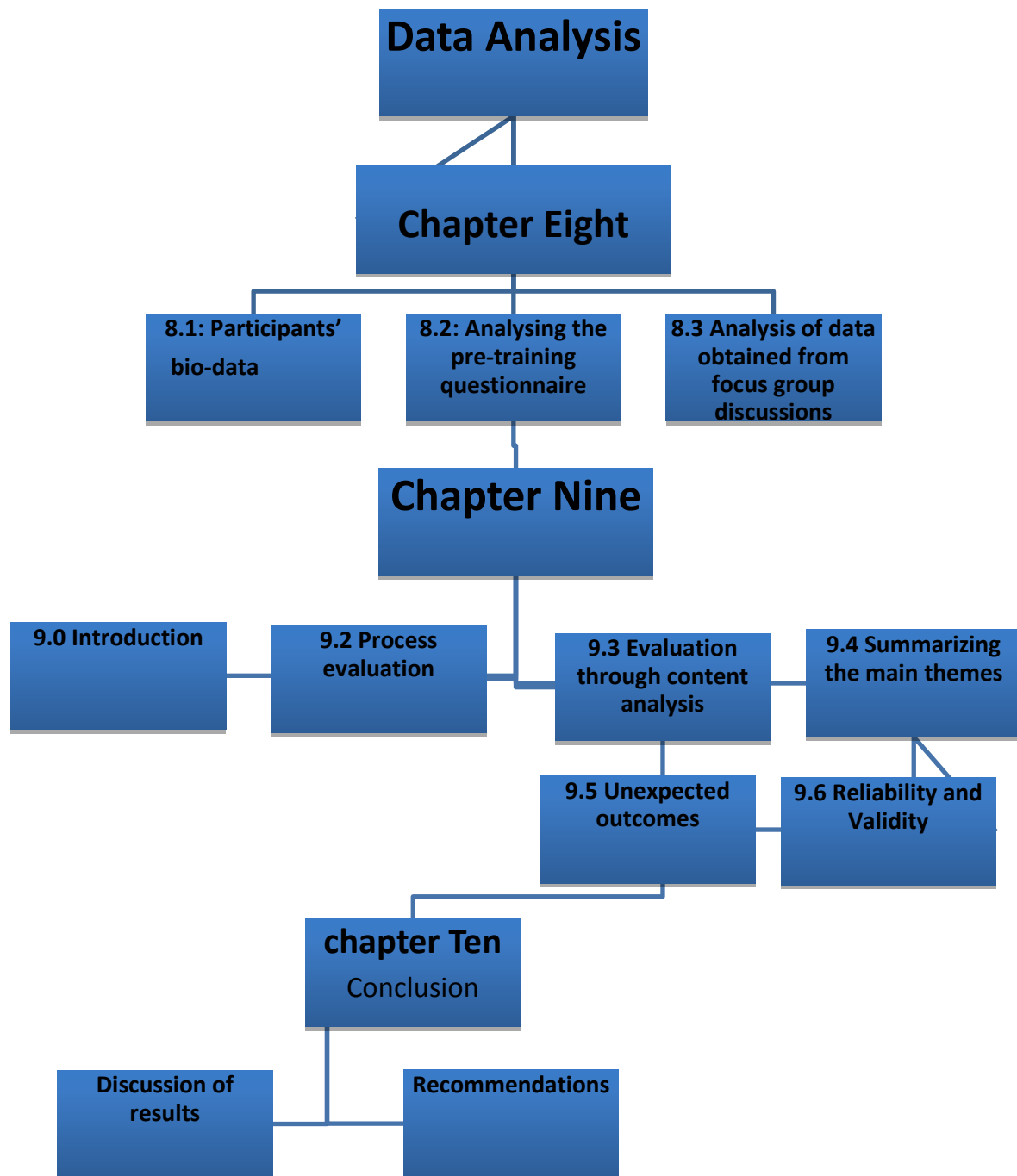


Fig 8.1: Chart showing direction of data presentation and analysis

CHAPTER EIGHT

TRADITIONAL AND CONFLICT-SENSITIVE MEDIA REPORTAGE OF ELECTIONS

8.0 Introduction

The difference(s) between traditional and conflict-sensitive journalism have been exhaustively discussed in this study (see table 2.1. pages 20-29). The main aim of the research is to build the capacity of journalists to inculcate the tenets of peace journalism in their reportage so as to ensure societal peace and harmony. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:5) define peace journalism (PJ) as a deliberate and sustained selection and reportage of social issues such that it creates opportunities for member of the society at large to consider alternatives to violence as response to conflict. Using insights from conflict analysis and transformation, PJ seeks to update the concept of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting, thereby providing new route maps for tracing the connections between journalists, their sources, the stories they cover and the consequences of their journalism; it also deliberately builds an awareness of nonviolence and creativity into everyday editing and reporting.

In order to achieve the aforementioned aim, a capacity building training involving forty journalists drawn from the print and broadcast media was organised in Ilorin, Kwara State in North-Central Nigeria. Suffice to add that the training was guided by the need to proffer answers to the research objectives of the study (see section 1.5). Pre-training questionnaire was designed and administered to the participating journalists with a view to determining their current mode of reportage, examine the extent to which media may be responsible for electoral related violence, with particular reference to Nigeria and determine the training needs of media personnel particularly regarding conflict-sensitive reportage.

Participants were selected through purposive sampling technique. The researcher had to liaise with the Nigerian Union of Journalists who mobilized their members to attend the training programme voluntarily. Letters were sent to political editors of both private and public media institutions in the state who in turn selected political reporters to attend the training.

The research timetable is presented in the following table:

S/n	Activity	Dates	Section
1.	Administration of pre training questionnaire	19 August, 2014.	8.2
2.	Modification of training manual	20-25 August, 2014.	8.2
3.	Training (Focus Group Discussions)	27 August 2014	8.3
4.	Post-training evaluation (administration of post-training questionnaire)	29 September, 2014	9.2
5.	Analysis of post training questionnaire and content analysis	18 October 2014 – 19 December, 2014	9.2
6.	Content analysis	December 2014 –March 2015.	9.4

Table 8.1: Research timetable

8.1 Participants' bio-data

As stated earlier, a total of 40 participants took part in the study and their bio-data is presented in this section.

Age	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
18-30	4	10
30-45	14	35
45-55	12	30
Above 55	10	25
Total	40	100

Table 8.2: participants' age

As can be gleaned from table 8.1 above, participants above the age of 30 made up 90% of the trainees. The need for mature journalists to report elections was echoed by the secretary of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) Ilorin Chapter who remarked thus:

“The NUJ as a body makes it mandatory for journalists covering elections to have spent at least ten years as practicing journalists. This step was taken after the unfortunate case of insensitive reportage by a junior reporter with Thisday Newspaper which led to the death of many people in 2001 in the city of Kaduna. Not only do we expect our reporters to have spent at least ten years on the field, we also expect that they must have been members of the NUJ for the same number of years”(Interview, August 2014).

Cassidy (2008) states that due consideration should be given to a reporter's age and years of experience before assigning him/her to a political beat. He affirms that within the concept of socialisation, it is reasonable to assign only senior journalists to report sensitive political issues such as elections because they have fully incorporated the workings of the newsroom and are more familiar with professional norms of journalism. Peiser (2000) alludes to the fact that elections should be covered and reported by mature reporters because senior journalists can construct political news differently compared to less experienced journalists.

Sex	Number of Participants	Percentage (%)
Male	26	65
Female	14	35
Total	40	100

Table 8.3 participants' sex

There was no particular gender preference for the selected participants. However, because of the perceived notion that gender affects a reporter's coverage of vital social issues such as elections, the researcher sought to determine the number of males and females in the political desks of the selected media outfits. Table 8.2 clearly shows that male reporters outnumbered their female counterparts in the training group.

The dominance of males in newsrooms has been a subject of discourse in recent times. Grabe *et al* (2011) conducted a study on the impact a reporter's gender has on his/her coverage of political events like elections. They found that of a total of about 328 election stories sampled, 247 (75.3%) were covered by men, while 81 stories (24.7%) were covered by women. The reason for this imbalance can be traced to the fact that in most democracies, men dominate the political landscape. Men are the main contenders for office positions and even campaign managers and members of campaign teams are mostly men. Crouse (2003) avers that women are few in the campaign structures of political parties; citing the example of the US, Crouse affirms that women are in the minority governmental decision making bodies including positions such as Chief Press Secretaries.

8.2 The pre-training questionnaire

The pre training questionnaire (see appendix) was administered to the participating journalists after they had signified intent to attend the training through letters sent through the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) Kwara Chapter. The questionnaires were administered to the participating journalists one week before the actual training took place. This gave the researcher ample time to effect adjustments where necessary before the training.

8.2.1 Addressing research objectives 1 and 3

The first objective of the study was to determine from the responses of a sample of journalists, the current mode of operation of journalists in Nigeria. Determining the journalists' mode of operation was expected to give clues into the areas where peace journalism training would be required (objective 3). Responses to the questions were ranked on the scale of 1-5 with 1 meaning extremely important, 2 meaning very important, 3 meaning somewhat important, 4 meaning of little importance, while 5 meaning not important at all.

The role of journalists in society

The first question sought to find out from the participating journalists what they thought the role of journalists in society is; their responses are discussed below:

- **To be an absolutely detached observer.**

The sampled journalists were unanimous in their position that journalists ought to be detached observers in the polity of the nation. All 40 respondents ticked the number 1 which signifies that they believe a journalist should be absolutely detached in his/her reportage or coverage of social issues. The fact that the journalists unanimously averred that they are supposed to be detached observers when reporting social issues meant an adjustment of the initially designed training manual to inculcate the need for journalists to consciously 'get into' the story they are reporting if they hope to make any meaningful impact to society.

Hoover (2009:3) believes journalists should, as part of their social responsibility, be more than detached observers. He is of the opinion that journalists should practice more of Gonzo Journalism, a theory propounded by Hunter Thompson which requires journalists to move away from the traditional mode of 'objective' reportage to a more subjective one in which the journalist is actively part of the story. The journalist consciously participates in the events he/she is reporting, thereby having significant impact on how the event turns out.

Hoover's position is related to that held by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:218) who state that the 'feedback loop' which allows journalists to sieve news stories by reporting them in a way that brings to fore their previous experiences as observers and media audiences. Hackett (2007) believes this process of supporting news reportage/coverage with a journalists previous experience(s) helps in expecting the nature of their coverage or reportage that will elicit appreciation for positive alternative options.

Lynch and McGoldrick aptly describe the feedback loop thus:

Report incidents of political violence without context...and you are likely to incentivize a 'crackdown', because someone, somewhere, will assume the public have received, from such reports, an idea that this will form a fitting and effective response (p. 218).

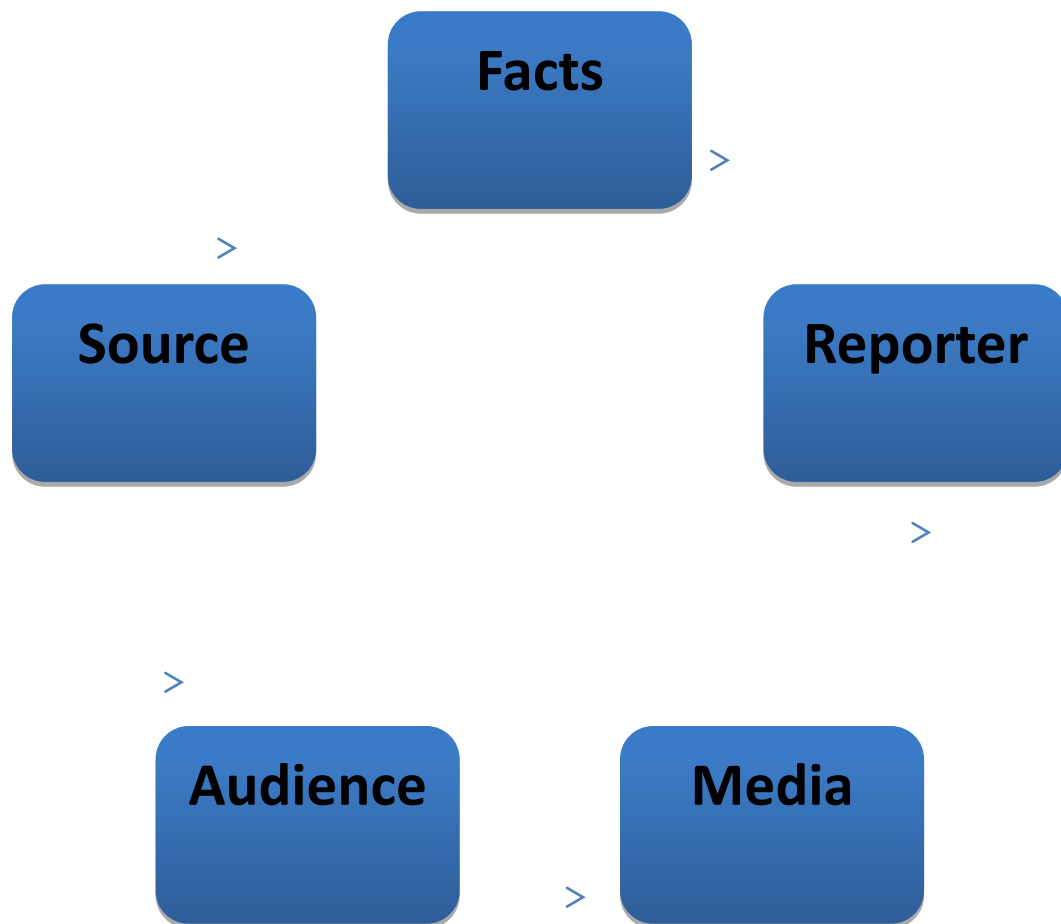


Figure 8.2: The feedback loop. Source: (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005:217)

The implication of the feedback loop is that journalists, whether consciously or unconsciously, are active participants in the conflict cycle and cannot be detached unobtrusive observers, this is because patterns of news reporting will often influence the course of events as political actors plan their strategies using their understanding of news and its dissemination as weapon (Hackett and Zhao 1998).

- **To act as watchdog of the government**

Most of the respondents assert that the journalists' role as society's watchdog is one of the ways through which they maintain order in society. All the 40 respondents affirm positively that the journalist is expected to play an active role in ensuring that democracy is sustained and the citizenry are kept in the know regarding happenings in the society capable of altering their lives.

The watchdog role of the media is derived from the social responsibility theory which states that the journalists should pay more attention to efforts geared at enlightening the people, entrenching democratic values and safeguarding the freedom and liberties of individuals in communities as outlined by the constitution. Thus, Dunnu and Ugbo (2014:2) are of the opinion that journalists' should focus more on 'protecting' society rather than servicing the economic system.

- **To provide citizens with the information they need to make political decisions.**

Arnold (2006: 1) remarks that journalists have the responsibility of reporting to the public happenings in the political domain. This responsibility includes reporting the day to day activities of politicians in such a way as to demystify them, thereby providing the public with ample knowledge and information with which they can make informed political decisions such as voting for particular candidates, campaigning for or against certain candidates and whether or not they should remain politically apathetic. In other words, journalists should provide what democratic theorist Robert Dahl refers to as the search for and deliberate presentation of independent sources of information to the public.

All the participating journalists agreed that journalists hold the society a responsibility of providing them with the needed information with which they can make informed political decisions. They contend, like Arnold (2006:2), that candidates make several promises when seeking elective positions but rarely fulfil these promises. The respondents were of the opinion that a regular flow of unbiased information regarding government's (in)activities ensures that they (government) are on their toes because their activities are in full public glare.

- **Determining journalists approach to news coverage**

In the second part of the pre-training questionnaire, the researcher attempted to find out specifically how journalists approached the process of news coverage and reportage. Their responses to the questions posed are analysed below. Suffice to add that the questions were asked in order to know the direction to tilt the training

towards. The responses obtained played a huge role in helping to shape the content of the training programme.

- **My beliefs and convictions do not influence my reporting.**

Nigeria is a multi-religious and multi-ethnic nation. With over 250 ethnic groups and over 400 languages, Nigeria is one of the most diverse nations on earth. This diversity has led to several conflicts in the country since the amalgamation of the Northern and Southern Protectorates by the government of Lord Lugard in 1914. Since the merger of the Northern and Southern Protectorates, which was an involuntary 'marriage' of opposites with dissimilar cultural and religious beliefs, some of which were rivals and overlapping imperialists in the pre-colonial times.

Nigeria's diversity is also very evident in the journalism practice. Journalists in Nigeria come from the various sociopolitical and socio-cultural locations in the country and this often plays out in their reportage of social issues with the possibility of inciting violence in the society. An example of the impact beliefs and diversity has in newspaper reportage is the conflict that ensued after the planned implementation of the Shari'ah law by most of Nigeria's northern states and the consequent social unrests that resulted.

Ado-Kurawa (2006:23) states the Shari'ah debate that ensued after the then Governor of Zamfara State in North-Western Nigeria, Alhaji Sani Yerima declared the full implementation of the Shari'ah penal code in the state once more brought to the fore the ethno-religious and geographical polarity of Nigeria's effervescent press. Most of the newspapers based in the southern part of the country were mostly critical of the planned implementation of the Shari'ah. For instance, Ado-Kurawa (2006) argues that the title of the *Guardian Newspaper's* editorial in which the planned declaration of Shari'ah was regarded as shameful was derogatory to say the least.

According to the paper:

Many Moslem scholars are unanimous that the authority for Shari'ah derives from the Koran and traditions of Prophet Muhammad. The Zamfara amputation incident has no parallel in the times of the Prophet. There was the sad era when the law was ad in some parts of the Moslem world. But such medieval times cannot be repeated in the world now (Guardian Newspaper, 2001).

According to Ado-Kurawa, the newspapers did not restrict their 'attacks' to editorials, which are the official positions of media organisations, the content of the reportage was also tailored in such a way that overtly suggested propaganda against the planned implementation of Shari'ah. In a 2006 study, Ado-Kurawa, examine the position of two newspapers in the country- *Thisday* and *Guardian*. He was particularly hard on *Guardian* because, according to him, the paper presented a façade of a national daily, while secretly perpetrating propaganda. His findings revealed that the newspapers front page during the period of review revealed a deliberate attempt to fit into existing stereotypes of Shari'ah as archaic and intended to frustrate non-Muslims. The caption **"Presidency Summons Sani over Shari'ah"** was, according to Ado-Kurawa (2006) an overt show of intimidation designed to scare supporters of Shari'ah.

It is based on the foregoing that the researcher sought to determine from the participating journalists whether or not their belief and ethnic affiliations affects their reportage. Out of the forty (40) participants, 29 said their beliefs and convictions do not affect their reportage. The other 11 said it does, albeit slightly. Given that the pre-training questionnaire was administered before the actual training, the researcher had to adjust the training manual to address the issues raised; particularly the impact ethnicity has on journalists' reportage. Thus, the first module of the training manual (see page 8 of training manual) which focused on helping journalists to understand the concept of conflict, it causes, management and/or prevention.

- **My claims are made only if the evidences are hard and reliable**

It is often argued that objectivity is one of the major cardinals of the journalism profession. It is common to hear the public decrying any media messages that seem to tilt in favour of or against any particular individual or group. As important as journalistic objectivity is, it is not without its flaws, particularly when it comes to reporting political happenings in conflict-prone societies.

McGoldrick (2006:10) remarks that the work of journalists is an arduous one which requires a very high level of commitment. She states that journalists are faced with hard choices-why this story and not the other? She further remarked thus:

...Then, once you have decided that, why interview this person, or use that organisation as a source of information and not another? This issue was defused, as the methods of Objective Journalism hardened into industry conventions, by the habit of indexing– projecting such basic decisions onto an external frame of reference that was not, apparently, of the journalist's own making (McGoldrick, 2006:10).

The problem with journalistic 'objectivity' is that more often than not, it encourages overreliance on one source of information, particularly government sources, over others of lesser influence or power. McGoldrick (2006:2) is of the opinion that objectivity, in its traditional journalism form, is typified by reportage that is bias in favour of official sources, a bias that is in favour of events over process and a bias in favour of dualism in reporting conflict. All over the world, national dailies are mostly awash with pronouncements and deeds of those in government. What this does, is that it empowers the government and political office holders to subtly manipulate the minds of the populace. The researcher sought to find out whether or not the participants understood the concept of journalistic objectivity. The aim is to tilt the training manual towards helping them understand the need to practice journalistic objectivity with conflict-sensitivity.

All the forty participants maintained that they would report an event as long as they can verify the source and evidence. During the training proper, the participants, divided into focused groups, were given the opportunity to shed more light on what they meant by 'verifiable sources', their response suggested that they either knew little or nothing about infusing their reportage with conflict-sensitive angles without necessarily sounding partisan or overly meddling. While standard news reportage requires that stories provide answers to the 5Ws and H (who, what, why, when, where and how), McGoldrick (2006) believes the traditional journalist often does not take the time to delve into the 'why' of an issue. The problem with a lack of focus on the why of conflicts is that without some exploration of the underlying causes of conflicts, they can appear, by default, as the only sensible response to disagreements.

- **In a dispute, I always make clear which side has a better position**

Journalists often claim their neutrality in issues is evident by the fact that they present both sides of an event in a way that allows society make informed decisions. The presentation of 'both sides of a story', laudable as it seems, is not without its pitfalls. What usually ensues when journalists attempt to present both sides of the story is that the media outfit becomes a battlefield for tug-of-war. McGoldrick (2006) refers to it as a bias in favour of dualism. She affirms that dualism fuels conflicts in that it escalates a conflict by turning it into a must win contest in which parties face only two alternatives-victory or defeat. This position is in consonance with that held by Francis (2002) who states that the dualistic model of conflict is seldom the whole picture; according to him, there are always a third (or more) parties involved in the conflict, but whose involvement may be hidden or not noticeable.

29 of the 40 respondents to the pre-training questionnaire stated that they often make it clear which side in a conflict has a better position. They held that this makes their news more objective. This position meant that the training manual had to be adjusted to include emphasis on the difference between peace and traditional journalism, particularly as it concerns the reportage of elections and the need to not

just present the position of candidates in a contest, but also the position of third parties, vis-à-vis their role in the eventual turn out of the elections.

- **Irrespective of the ‘benefits’ inherent in a story, if it portends danger or harm to others, it is always wrong.**

Can violence be justified? This question is important when one considers that journalists often fall victim to the ‘trap’ of justifying violence, thereby escalating conflicts. The protracted Israeli-Palestinian conflict is an example of a conflict that has been given varying interpretations by the public depending on which part of the world you are, and also depending on media reportage. For instance, Kempf (2014:1) affirms that German press coverage of the conflict is often tilted towards a pro-Palestinian advocacy. In order to determine the slant of press coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict, Kempf (2014) conducted a content analysis of Germany’s big five national dailies-*Die Welt* (DW), *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* (FAZ), *Suddeutsche Zeitung* (SZ), *Frankfurter Rundschau* (FR) and *Die Tageszeitung* (TAZ) Kempf found that the German media was very sympathetic of the Palestinians in a reportage style that displayed overt one-sided narrow partisanship for the Palestinian position.

Maurer and Kempf (2014) state that media coverage of the Israel-Palestine conflict by the German media was complex and created a win-lose situation where the German public was constantly informed of attacks and reprisal attacks in a way that suggested one country was winning while the other was losing. Despite efforts by the German media to satisfy the quality norms of journalism by reporting objectively and in a detached manner, there was still noticeable negative reportage that produced an escalation-prone bias of conventional journalism (Maurer and Kempf, 2014).

Given the nature of traditional journalism in Nigeria, particularly with regards to the ongoing insurgency perpetrated by Boko Haram, it became very important to find out from journalists what they felt about reporting in ways that will ensure that all members of society are protected. From data obtained, it was obvious most of the

journalists felt obligated to report stories with potential hurt, as long as they can justify its 'authenticity'. Of the 40 sampled journalists, 37 affirmed that they would report such stories as it shows they are objective and unbiased.

- **I adhere strictly to my organisation's house style in my reportage.**

Media house styles are rules and guides regarding the usage and editing of news stories to ensure stylistic consistency. While house styles typically focus on such matters as abbreviations, capital letters, numbers, date, formats, citations, spellings and address, they sometimes also focus on what constitutes news and where to place such news. Thus, most journalists claim they are under obligation to stick to the house styles and editorial policies of their media organisations in the discharge of their duties.

The implication of the above is that most media owners force their beliefs and ideologies on their staff to the detriment of society. One of the major fallouts of the planned full implementation of Shari'ah in most of Northern Nigeria was the unfortunate Kaduna riots that claimed thousands of lives in 2002. As Salawu (2009) states, the 2002 Miss World pageant scheduled to take place in Nigeria was scuttled after a newspaper publication allegedly cast aspersions on the person of Prophet Mohammed (SAW). One of the style writers of *Thisday Newspaper*, one of Nigeria's leading newspapers had quipped that if Prophet Mohammed had seen some of the girls who converged in Nigeria for the pageant, he would have picked one for wife. Muslims regarded the comment as derogatory and sarcastic and the resultant conflict that ensued led to the death of several hundreds. Most Christians in Nigeria are Southerners. So, the attacks were on Southerners, especially the Igbo stock residing and doing business in the Northern cities.

The researcher posed the question in order to understand journalists' views on the impact organisational style has on their reportage and whether or not they would report a conflict-sensitive story as long as it adheres to their organisation's house style.

- **I ensure that politicians of my ethnic group get favorable coverage from me**

Nigeria's political landscape is often characterised by ethnicity and bigotry. Political office holders and aspirers are repeatedly assessed more by their ethnic lineage rather than their ability or political philosophy. This unfortunate situation has led to conflicts before, during and after elections as every ethnic group tends to push for the emergence of the candidates from their region.

The participating journalists were asked whether or not they would support candidates in their reportage if he/she is from their ethnic group. This question was vital considering that the Nigerian media has been severally accused of partisanship and bigotry. 27 of the sampled journalists affirmed that they have 'unconsciously' used their media outfits as platform for political candidates who hail from their ethnic cleavage. 10 said they found it unethical while 3 were indifferent. Their responses gave me insight into a need to adjust the training manual to take into awareness a need for neutrality and objectivity in conflict-sensitive reportage of elections.

Nwozor (2014:155) is of the opinion that the decreeing or wishing for peace will never produce a culture of peace. He avers that positive peace ensues from deliberate and conscious efforts by members of the society to work for peace and subsequently enthrone it. He further affirms that the failure by successive governments in Nigeria to assiduously work towards building a harmonious environment where every ethnic group or nationality can achieve their dreams and aspirations is the basis for the endless conflicts that seem to bedevil the nation. Consequently, due to the media's wide reach and ability to socialise members of society, it was positioned as a tool for propaganda used to maintain and create new ethnic boundaries.

- **During violent political campaigns and elections, it is my responsibility to present graphic images of injured and killed people.**

The researcher sought to determine from participants whether or not they would present graphic images of injured or killed people during the electoral process. The aim was to determine journalists' view of graphic pictures as possible cause of

electoral violence, often evident in reprisal attacks. This is vital considering that one of the major features of violent conflicts in Nigeria is reprisal attacks. For instance, whenever there are skirmishes in the Northern part of the country between 'indigenes' and 'settlers', northerners in the south often fear reprisal attacks, and as such, they either flee or are objects of harassment and/or attack. One way through which reprisal attacks are perpetrated is through media reportage.

Research (Parry, 2011; Neumann & Fahmy, 2012; Huang & Fahmy, 2012, Huang and Fahmy, 2013; Bleiker, et al., 2013; Dahmen, 2012; Brantner, et al. 2011) have shown that readers are more captivated by pictures that accompany news stories, more than the actual stories. This means that readers may take actions regarding a particular news story by simply giving meaning to pictures. This portends grave danger to society at large.

The respondents were divided in their response to the question put forward. 21 of the 40 journalists affirmed that they would publish graphic stories as it is their social responsibility, while 19 said they would not publish graphic pictures because of the effect it may have on societal peace. The researcher took this into cognizance during the training as journalists were trained on the need to be conflict-sensitive when reporting the electoral violence as it has the tendency of eliciting electoral violence. Journalists are quick to state that they hold society a responsibility of telling 'the whole story'. However, journalism ethics caution against undue manipulation of tragedies through visual framing as it elicits strong emotional responses (Brantner, et al, 2011).

- **Whether or not elections turn out violent depends to a large extent on media reportage.**

How much influence do journalists really wield? How much of happenings in society are instigated by journalists' reportage? Do journalists themselves know how 'powerful' they really are? The following questions were asked the participating journalists in order to ascertain their views on the impact their reportage has on whether or not elections turn violent. All the sampled participants averred that their

reportage is capable of determining whether or not elections are violent or nonviolent.

Assenting to the immense impact the media has on society in general, Stremlau and Price (2009: 8) state that the media provides members of the society awareness into political dynamics and the level of dialogue within the society. The media also has the 'power' to suggest the level of divergence in a society like it did with hate messages targeted at minority Tutsis in Rwanda, the progress of compromise and, in the case of post-election violence, the possible avenues for the peaceful resolution of disputes.

- **With proper training, journalists can help foster peaceful elections**

“Our Republic and its press will rise or fall together. An able, disinterested, public-spirited press, with trained intelligence to know the right and courage to do it, can preserve that public virtue without which popular government is a sham and a mockery. A cynical, mercenary, demagogic press will produce in time a people as base as itself. The power to mold the future of the Republic will be in the hands of the journalists of future generations” (Joseph Pulitzer 1904).”

It is important to restate that the main thrust of this research is to determine the effectiveness of conflict-sensitive reportage training on journalists' reportage of elections. Thus, I sought to ascertain from the participants whether or not they think training can help their conflict-sensitive reportage skills and help in fostering nonviolent elections.

All forty participants declared that training was a veritable avenue through which their practice of journalism and indeed their reportage of elections can be enhanced. This view is in line with that held by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:16), who are of the opinion that an informed understanding of conflict leads us to expect that statements put out by parties to a conflict, will also be part of that conflict. Without this expectation, journalists may become stuck in what they termed, the reality based

community', oblivious to the way realities are being created around them, and indeed their (journalists) part in creating them.

8.3 Analysis of data obtained from focus group discussions

In the previous section, an analysis of data obtained from the pre-training questionnaire administered to participating journalists was carried out. Pre-training questionnaires were administered to determine journalists' current mode of reportage of societal issues with a bid to ascertaining specific training needs. The responses obtained from the questionnaire led to an adjustment in the training manual which was already prepared. The manual was adjusted to meet the yearnings and expectations of the journalists, and to also fill the obvious knowledge gap in journalists' conflict-sensitive reportage of elections. In this section, data obtained from the focus group discussions which took place during the training sessions will be analysed.

The interactions emanating from the various focus groups were analysed using elements of conversation analysis (Silverman, 2006; Putchta e al., 2004). Putchta et al. (2004) describes conversational analysis as the study of talk in interaction and examines conversation as action taking place between actors. The goal of analysing focus group using conversation analysis is to understand how society produces orderly social interactions through laid down methods and processes (Silverman, 2006).

8.4 The training module

As part of the plan of achieving the research's main aim of building the capacity of journalists to report elections in a conflict-sensitive manner, a research manual was designed from which journalists were trained. Suffice to add that the manual was designed by the researcher with assistance and inputs from the supervisor. It is also vital to note that substantial parts of the module on peace journalism were adapted from Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick's book titled *Peace Journalism*.

CHAPTER NINE

THE TRAINING

9.0 Introduction

The main objective of the training was to equip journalists with the basic conflict-sensitive journalism skills that will empower them to cover election processes in a fair, balanced and non-partisan way and through them encourage the culture of nonviolence and enable citizens to get the opportunity to become well-informed, interested and active participants in the country's political decision processes. The manual was made up of three modules (see appendix 1). The first module focused on helping participants understand the concept of conflict, its causes, and effects and how they can manage or avoid it through their reportage. The expected outcome for the module included;

- A clear understanding of the term conflict, the causes of conflicts,
- The relationship between journalists' reportage and societal peace or conflict
- The expected qualities of a journalist with respect to impartiality, accuracy and responsibility.

The second module focused on introducing participants to the peace journalism model. The expected outcome from the module included:

- A clear understanding of the term peace journalism
- A clear understanding of the differences between traditional (war) journalism and peace journalism.
- A detailed exploration and understanding of Jake Lynch's 17 point plan for peace journalism.

Module three focused on training journalists on the process of election reportage. The expected outcomes included:

- Helping journalists clearly identify the important issues that need their attention during the electoral process and the professional way of covering it.

- Equipping them with the skills to recognize the need to be fair, impartial and objective in their reportage
- Building their capacity to sensitize the public on the need to be peace and nonviolent throughout the electoral process.



Picture 9.1: Some participants at the training for conflict-sensitive reportage of elections

For each of the modules, participants were broken into five focus groups consisting of 8 journalists in each group. The manual contained icebreakers that required journalists to deliberate in groups after which their responses were captured on a flip chart. The deliberations and the feedback obtained from the focused groups will be discussed below:

9.1 Module I: Understanding conflict

Icebreaker 1: What are the possible causes of conflicts not listed in the manual?

Groups	Dominant discourse
Focus Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Disagreements over sharing of inheritance• Discord arising from relational misunderstandings
Focus Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ethnic and religious stereotypes• Incompatibility
Focus Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Religious bigotry and sentiments• Intra-family conflicts
Focus Group 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• The class system• Weak and uninspiring leadership
Focus Group 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Traditional belief systems• Corruption and a lack of due process

Table 9.4: focus group responses to icebreaker 1

The responses obtained from the five focus groups suggests that individuals (and/or groups) have varying opinions on what they think are the causes of conflicts. The standout points from the groups, as shown in table 8.3 above clearly reflects the many issues that have snowballed into violent conflicts in Nigeria. Most of the responses emanating from the groups are similar. For instance, the role tradition plays in conflicts played out in almost all the groups. Disagreements over inheritance, traditional belief systems, class system and intra-family conflicts are all common causes of conflicts listed by almost all the groups. In the same vein, ethnicity and religious bigotry also played out in two of the groups.

Having determined that journalists have an idea of what causes conflicts, the researcher then went further to train them on the need to focus more on the WHY of conflicts and not just on the WHO, WHAT, WHERE, WHEN and HOW (the 5Ws and H). According to Lynch and Galtung (2010:4), it is imperative for journalists to understand conflict and thereafter focus on its transformation. They aver that it is important for journalists to know that even though there is always a threat and reality of violence during conflicts, their reportage should be done in such a way as to focus on the WHY, which is the root of unresolved issues.



Picture 9.2 Some participants at the training on conflict-sensitive reportage of elections

The researcher, along with the co-facilitators, trained journalists on the need to understand the dynamics of conflict. Drawing from Lynch and Galtung (2010:4), journalists were made to understand that when people, groups and even countries are in conflict, often due to incompatibility of goals, there is a clear and present danger of violence. However, journalists were trained to view conflict as avenues to foster peace in society by using what is supposed to be a conflict situation as stepping stone to transform the conflict in ways that further create opportunities for peace in society.

Icebreaker 2: Do you think some of the conflicts experienced in Nigeria have been instigated by media reportage?

The follow-up question sought to determine from the participants whether or not they think some of the conflicts we have experienced in Nigeria were media instigated. The aim was to proffer answer to research objective II which seeks to examine the extent to which media may be responsible for electoral related violence, with particular reference to Nigeria.

All the five groups unanimously mentioned the unfortunate Kaduna riots of 2002 instigated by a feature story by style writer for *Thisday Newspaper*. Nigeria was on the verge of hosted the Miss World beauty pageant and there had been widespread protests and condemnation from Muslim groups in the country, particular in the predominantly Muslim north, then came the infamous quote:

"The Muslims thought it was immoral to bring 92 women to Nigeria and ask them to revel in vanity. What would Mohammed think? In all honesty, he would probably have chosen a wife from one of them." (*Thisday Newspaper*, 16 November, 2002).

The feature did not go down well with Muslims in some Northern cities of Nigeria who resorted to violent attacks on Christians and churches, killing, maiming and burning. Given that most Christians in Nigeria are Southerners, the attacks were on Southerners, especially the Igbo stock residing and doing business in the Northern cities. The journalists affirmed during the focus group discussion that the violent conflict ensued after the unfortunate reportage would have been avoided had the media practised conflict-sensitive reportage.

The Nigerian media has an unenviable record of partisanship in their reportage in the lead up to elections which may fuel election violence. For instance, Iruonagbe et al. (2013:16) are of the opinion that the pockets of violence that rocked the nation after the 2003 General Elections can be traced to a large extent, to sensational and irresponsible reportage. They recall that one of Nigeria's leading magazines *Tell Magazine* instigated feelings of reprisal attacks in Northern Nigeria with its provocative February 2003 edition titled; *"War in the East as Politicians turn Igboland to Killing Fields"*. The magazine also had an inflammatory screaming headline in its April 7 edition titled; *'Looming War in the Oilfields'*. The implication was that the polity was avoidably heated up the media, in most cases for selfish gains.

Similarly, the 2011 General Elections in Nigeria which pitched the incumbent President Goodluck Ebele Jonathan and General Muhammadu Buhari were marred by widespread post-election violence that claimed over 800 lives. That unfortunate incident, and the role played by the media was also a dominant discourse at all the focus groups.

9.2 Module II: the Peace Journalism (PJ) Model.

The second module in the training manual delved on the PJ model and how it can be applied to election reportage in such a way as to promote nonviolent elections. The researcher, along with his co-facilitators, introduced the model to the participating journalists, the differences between war (traditional) and peace journalism, as well as a detailed exploration of Jake Lynch's 17 point plan for PJ (see attached training manual). After the training session, participants were divided into five focus groups of eight participants each. The groups were asked to discuss the following topics which are analysed below:

Icebreaker 3: What in your opinion should constitute peace journalism?

Groups	Dominant discourse
Focus Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PJ should consist of objective and unbiased reportage of social issues• PJ should consist of telling the truth, no matter whose ox is gored• Journalists should present both sides of an issue with accuracy and balance.
Focus Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objectivity should be the hallmark of PJ.• Journalist should avoid financial inducements• PJ should consist of balance reportage
Focus Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Objectivity and fairness• PJ should eschew ethnic and religious bigotry• Balance and objective reportage should be the hallmark of PJ
Focus Group 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PJ should endeavor not to come across as advocacy journalism.• Balance and objective reportage
Focus Group 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• PJ should create opportunities for proponents of peace to be heard• PJ should focus more on the 'WHY' of issues rather than the WHEN, WHERE, WHAT, WHEN and HOW.

Table 9.6: focus group responses to icebreaker 3

Responses obtained from the groups clearly show an improved understanding of the peace journalism model. Unlike what was obtained from the pre-training questionnaire where the journalists mostly revealed familiarity with traditional journalism, the sampled journalists displayed a comprehension of what peace journalism entails.

Participants in the first focus group stated that peace journalism consists of objective and unbiased reportage of social issues, truth telling and balance reportage of issues such as elections. The researcher was however quick to explain that in the context of peace journalism, objectivity should be treated with caution. McGoldrick (2006:2) states that in a bid to be objective, journalists often fall victim to manipulation from government official sources that would usually skew messages in ways that paints them as good or portray rivals or opposition as bad.



Fig. 9.3 Researcher addressing participants at the training

Group 2 participants also shared similar points as group 1. They also asserted that Objectivity and balanced reportage should be the hallmark of PJ. The further stated that journalists will only be able to practice their profession effectively when they are able to reject every form of financial inducement. Group 3 members stated that journalists hoping to apply the principles of PJ should eschew ethnic and religious bigotry in their reportage.

Members of focus group 4 and 5 highlighted similar points raised by the other groups about what they feel should constitute peace journalism. They mentioned such as balance, objectivity and neutrality. However, group 5 mentioned a key point which is that peace journalism should focus on the why of issues and not just on the 5 Ws and H. This is consonant with earlier point raised by Lynch and Galtung (2010:4) who admonished that journalists should endeavour to seek the WHYs in every news story, particularly conflicts. They argue that understanding the WHYs of conflicts often helps in preventing reoccurrences.

9.3 Module III: Reporting Elections

The last module for the training session was titled reporting elections. As stated earlier, the objective was to equip journalists with the basic knowledge and skills of election reporting in a conflict-sensitive manner by applying the peace journalism model in their reportage of elections so as to ensure that they are free, fair and nonviolent. As usual, during the course of the training, participants were broken into focus groups from where their response to the central theme was obtained.

Icebreaker 4: How can journalists help foster nonviolent elections in Nigeria?

Groups	Dominant discourse
Focus Group 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By providing balanced headlines • By undertaking unbiased public surveillance • By refusing financial inducements • By practicing the principles of fairness • By focusing on issues and not personalities • Ensuring that stories are adequately referenced • Avoiding inciting language • Not announcing election results before they are announced officially • Avoiding religious bigotry • By being transparent
Focus Group 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Creating awareness amongst the populace on the rules and regulations of elections • By being conscious of the effect of reportage on societal peace • Not announcing election results before they are announced officially • Avoiding sensationalism • Avoiding biased reportage • Avoiding unnecessary exaggeration of disagreements between political parties

Focus Group 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objectivity and fairness in reportage • By avoiding the temptation to take sides • By focusing on issues and not personalities • By being mindful of the choice of words used • By being keen observers of happenings in the society • Educating the populace on the need to be nonviolent • Avoiding brown envelopes
Focus Group 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure that all parties are given equal media space and coverage • Not announcing election results before they are announced officially • By keenly observing happenings in the society so as to nab conflicts in the bud through reportage • By avoiding financial inducements • By conducting interviews in a transparent manner • Avoiding arm-chair journalism • Assigning only experienced journalists to cover elections • By focusing on issues and not personalities • By avoiding sensational headlines
Focus Group 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining focus on the electoral issues at hand • By interacting with electorates and not politicians alone • Fair and objective reportage • By assigning experienced journalists to cover elections • By ensuring that reporters are autonomous • Ensuring that election results are announced only by the electoral body • Avoiding financial inducements

Table 9.7: focus group responses to icebreaker 4.

After the training session (module III), journalists were broken into focus groups and were asked to suggest ways through which they can help foster nonviolent elections in the country through the application of the principles of peace journalism. As can be gleaned from table 8.5 above, all the groups proffered several ways through which they can nurture peaceful elections in the country, however some points raised cut across all the groups. For instance, all the groups mentioned the need for balance and fair reportage of the electoral process (from pre to post election). The need for balance and fair reportage during the electoral process cannot be overemphasized; this is because of the immense influence the media wields in society. Ojwang (2009:27) states that journalists can alter the state of society for either good or bad because news reports offer a wide view of what constitutes social reality and promote social solidarity through deliberately strengthening national identity and shared principles through language choices.

One very salient point raised by the journalists however is the need for journalists to ensure that election results are only released by the electoral body and not by journalists. They affirmed that if that is done, the likelihood of electoral violence will be greatly reduced. This affirms the position held by the SADC guidelines on media coverage of elections (2014), which states that:

“Media covering elections are obliged to inform the electorate of the election results in a comprehensive way, as they become available, whether provisional or final, as released by the Electoral Management Body. Journalists should take special care when predicting final results based on partial results available. When reporting on parallel vote tabulation, journalists should be aware that parallel vote tabulation is an estimation of final results of an election based on the collection and aggregation of election results obtained at polling station level”(SADC, 2014).

The SADC’s guidelines on media coverage state categorically that journalists are only to release results as released by the Electoral Management Body (EMB). This guideline is important considering that when journalists assume that a particular candidate is leading and thereby release results or suggest through their reportage that the candidate is leading, it may lead to conflicts if the said candidate does not emerge from the results released by the EMB.

OIF and Reporters without Borders (2013:6) aver that announcement of result is a very sensitive issue and should be treated with great care. They reckon that if not handled properly and with the sensitivity it requires, it may lead to an outbreak of conflicts especially when there had been claims and counterclaims about plans to commit electoral fraud. The central tenet is that a journalist must never announce or air election results before the election commission has officially announced them. In most countries, journalists and news organisations face legal penalties for breaking this rule (OIF and RwB, 2013).

All the groups also suggested that electoral violence can be eliminated if journalists would shun sensationalism in their reportage. They are of the opinion that most conflicts result from journalists’ irresponsible reportage often depicted through sensational headlines. Likewise, the entire group affirm that journalists should avoid

accepting financial inducements; they argue that inducements often clouds journalists' reportage.

In a 2009 study, Ekeanyanwu and Obianigwe (2009) discovered that monetary inducements (popularly known as brown envelope syndrome) is a major challenge affecting Nigeria's media landscape. They conducted a survey on 184 journalists from ten media organisations in Lagos and found that 61% of the participating journalists affirmed that they habitually receive financial inducements while on reporting assignments, while 39% said they often rejected such enticements. What this portends is that journalists find themselves arm-twisted into doing the bidding of the person or organisation offering the bribe. The 'bidding' may mean skewing news reports, exaggerating realities or even presenting falsehood as truth, thereby risking instigating conflict in society.

The excuse most journalists give for accepting financial inducements is that they are poorly paid. This issue was one of the dominant topics in all the focus groups. This explanation is reasonable given the many accounts of economic misfortunes. In Cameroon (Ndangam, 2009, p. 834) and Nigeria (Adeyanju & Okwori, 2006, p. 10), for example, it is common for journalists to go unpaid for months. They therefore consider other ways of securing a reasonable income, thus moonlighting – i.e. having a second (often covert) job besides the main occupation – has become common (Mabweazara, 2010; Okunna, 1995; Oloruntola, 2007).

Journalists were also unanimous in their position that another way through which nonviolent elections can be promoted is by consciously focusing on issues and not personalities during the electoral process. They reckon that personality based reportage often fuels feelings of resentment and revenge in politicians who result to a victim personality. Journalists frequently fall victim to focusing on personalities and not issues affecting members of the public, this tendency reaches higher levels during election campaigns because journalists become target of freebies from politicians to advance their political interest.

This position is similarly held by Iyengar (1991) who regards media focus on personalities and events as 'episodic news framing'. He affirms that this type of news framing, if not curtailed, could be a possible springboard for conflict in society. According to him framing that is episodic is that which shows tangible events that illustrate issues, while contextualising political issues can be regarded as thematic framing.

According to London (2014:23):

"...subjects shown episodic reports were less likely to consider society responsible for the event, and subjects shown thematic reports were less likely to consider individuals responsible. In one of the clearest demonstrations of this phenomenon, subjects who viewed stories about poverty that featured homeless or unemployed people (episodic framing) were much more likely to blame poverty on individual failings, such as laziness or low education, than were those who instead watched stories about high national rates of unemployment or poverty (thematic framing). Viewers of the thematic frames were more likely to attribute the causes and solutions to governmental policies and other factors beyond the victim's control."

Participants across all the groups also stated the need for balance and fairness in election reportage. Fairness in reporting has striking similarities with balance in news analysis and reportage. Fairness simply means that all sides of a conflict situation are carried along and included in stories related to the conflict. On the other hand, balance and fairness are critical words to consider when reporting conflicts; they are interrelated both ethically and conceptually. Whereas balance is concerned with how sides in a conflict are treated relative to one another, fairness is necessary but insufficient as a condition for balance in a particular single story. For instance, a fair story can be imbalanced if spaces given to opponents in a conflict seem to favour one against the other. However, individually unfair stories grouped together can still be fair if the domination of one story by one side is balanced by a story dominated by the opponent.

Participants across all the focus groups were also unanimous that one way through which they can foster peaceful and nonviolent polls is by educating the populace on the electoral process and on the need to remain peaceful and nonviolent throughout

the entire electoral process. Ogenga (2013:169) affirms that elections in Africa can be devoid of violence if the media consciously utilise its immense influence in fostering understandings between communities in such a way that issues and not personalities or groups are made the main focus of election reportage.

This point is collaborated by Kempf (2007) who states that it is the responsibility of journalists to consciously create opportunities for electorates and members of the society at large to always look out for ways to resolve conflict in a nonviolent manner. Kempf further states that journalists are under obligation to create these opportunities as it is one of the roles society expects them to play in democratic settings.

CHAPTER TEN

EVALUATING THE TRAINING

10.0 Introduction

This aspect of the analysis discusses the methods used by the researcher to evaluate the effectiveness of the intervention. The evaluation will be carried in two parts: the first part will focus on the post-training questionnaires administered to participants after the training. The second part of the evaluation will involve a content analysis of by-lines from participating journalists to ascertain the impact of the training on their reportage of social issues, specifically elections.

10.1 Process of evaluation

A total of fifteen statements were posed in the post training questionnaire (see appendix). The first seven statements and two questions sought to find out from the participants what they thought about the training. The remaining six concerned the perceived outcome. Participants were asked to tick their desired response from the options from strongly agree, through to strongly disagree.

Statement 1: The objectives of the training were clearly defined.

At the start of the training, the objectives of the training were clearly stated to the participants. The main objective was to instill a conscious sense of conflict-sensitive reportage in journalists, particularly journalists reporting elections. Out of the 40 participating journalists, 37 strongly agreed that the training objectives were clearly defined, while 3 agreed that it was clearly defined. Clearly defined training objectives are important because they help facilitators and training organizers note discernible and quantifiable behaviours that trainees are expected to exhibit as a result of attending the training. Harden (2002) affirms that training objectives are very vital because they create a sense of expectancy in participants and they also help in evaluating whether or not the participants believe the objectives were met.

Statement 2: Participation and interaction were encouraged

The follow-up question sort to determine from the participants whether or not they felt the training allowed for free participation and interaction, both essential ingredients to a successful training programme. All 40 participants strongly agreed that participation and interaction were encouraged and that it positively impacted on their perception of the trainings impact. One of the reasons the researcher made the session very interactive was to ensure that participants 'owned' the process; this ensures fuller participation and better interaction. Kenny and Wirth (2009:36) state that the purpose of interactive training sessions is to empower trainees or participants.

Statement 3: The topics covered were relevant

One of the major challenges of training interventions is that more often than not, topics covered are not relevant to the needs of trainees. To ensure that the training offered was relevant, the researcher administered a pre-training questionnaire to gauge the needs of participants. The responses obtained from the administered questionnaires went a long way in guiding the direction of the training and in the selection of the modules taught during the sessions. The three modules taught during the training session are: understanding conflicts, the peace journalism model and reporting elections. All forty participants strongly agreed that the topics covered were relevant to their present needs.

Statement 4: Insights obtained from the training will help me perform my duties better.

As mentioned earlier, the main aim of the study is to build the capacity of participating journalists to report elections in a conflict-sensitive manner. Thus, it is important to ascertain whether or not the participants believe the insights they obtained from the training would help them perform their duties better i.e. in a conflict-sensitive manner. 35 of the participants strongly agreed that the insights they obtained would help them perform their duties better, three said they agreed that it would help them perform their duties better; one participant was indifferent (neutral) in his response, while one other participant disagreed that the insights obtained would help him perform his duties better.

Statement 5: The trainers were knowledgeable about the training topics.

In training facilitation, it is very important that trainers have an in-depth knowledge of the subject area. In order to build participants' confidence on the researcher's ability and knowledge, the researcher had to inform them that he was enrolled for a doctorate in peace building with focus on peace journalism and that as part of preparation for the training, he had attended a peace journalism workshop organised by renowned peace journalists, Jake Lynch and Annabel McGoldrick. The researcher also ensured that his co-facilitators were experienced and seasoned lecturers in peace studies and journalism.

After the training sessions, the researcher sought to determine from the participants whether or not they thought the facilitators were knowledgeable about the modules they taught. Out of the 40 participants, 22 strongly agreed that the facilitators were knowledgeable, 12 agreed that they were knowledgeable, while 6 were neutral. This suggests that the participants were generally positive that the facilitators were knowledgeable about the subject matter. Determining facilitators' knowledge of the subject matter is important because it would determine to a large extent the level of receptivity of the participants.

According to Omoregie (2007), a facilitator's content knowledge and professional preparation is an essential component of training success. A facilitator that is desirous of impactful intervention must be vast and competent in his/her or subject area of specialisation. When a facilitator is not competent, it more often than not reflects in his/her delivery and will determine whether or not trainees will respond positively.

Statement 6: The time allotted for the training was sufficient.

23 of the participants strongly agreed that the time allotted for the training was sufficient, 3 agreed that the time allotted was sufficient, 6 were neutral, while 8 participants disagreed that the time allotted for the training was sufficient. When the researcher probed to find out why some participants felt the time allotted was not enough, some of them said they would have preferred a two-week intensive course,

given the sensitivity of the subject area and given that Nigeria's general elections were just around the corner.

Statement 7: The meeting room and facilities were adequate and comfortable

In a 2013 study conducted by Muhammad et al., they found that learners are more likely to be attentive, participative and cooperative if they perceive that great care is taken to ensure that they are comfortable. They state that satisfaction with the space and facilities provided for learning have a positive influence on students overall interest level. Their position is similar to that held by Philips (1997) who affirmed that classroom facilities have a significant impact on students' overall performance. He avers that appropriate classroom lighting for instance have been found to significantly improve test scores, reduce off-task behaviours and plays a significant roles in students' sense of academic achievement.

It is for the foregoing reasons that the researcher sought to find out from participants whether or they felt the training venue facilities were adequate and comfortable. All forty participants strongly agreed that the venue for the meetings were adequate and comfortable. Suffice to add that the training took place at the newly built press centre of the Nigerian Union of Journalists in Ilorin, Kwara State. The second part of the post-training questionnaire contained open-ended questions which seek to determine specific ways in which the training impacted on participants and the likely action steps they would take as a result of the skills they gained from the training.

Statement 8: What did you like most about this training?

Given that it was an open-ended question, participants gave varied answers to the question. However, some responses were common to all respondents. Most respondents affirmed that they liked the interactive and participatory nature of the training; some others stated that the content of the training was very relevant and timely, while a few others said the choice of co-facilitators endeared them to the training.

Statement 9: What new skills have you gained from this training?

The major skill the training sought to instill on journalists was the peace journalism model of reporting social issues. Imbedded in the main objectives were other equally important modules such as a clear understanding of conflicts, its causes, management and prevention and practical steps to reporting elections. The researcher hoped that journalists would understand and apply to these skills to their day-to-day journalistic duties.

28 of the 40 participating journalists stated that they had never heard of the peace journalism model before the training, they subsequently said they would apply the new skills and knowledge they have gleaned in the discharge of their duties, especially in reporting elections. One important topic covered during the module on reporting election is the process of announcing results. All the 40 participating journalists stated that they now understand better the process of reporting election result in such a way as to prevent violence in the society.

10.2 Outcome evaluation

The next six questions asked the respondents to reflect and how it impacts on their practice as journalists. Suffice to add that the post training questionnaire was administered a month after the first training. This was to allow the researcher ample time to observe the journalists at their work condition and also to provide sufficient time for the journalists to implement modules that were presented during the training sessions.

Question 1: In what ways will your practice change as a result of the training?

As earlier stated, the major aim of the study is to help journalists report social issues better by being more conflict-sensitive in their reportage. Even though the researcher planned to undertake a content analysis of the participants' reportage after the training, he still sought to find out from the journalists the specific ways in which they think their reportage would change as a result of the training. This exercise was

conducted a month after the training in order to provide a gap period that will allow the journalists put into practice what they had learnt.

The responses obtained were as varied as the participants; however, some points were common to all respondents. For instance, all forty journalists affirmed that they would shun ethnic and religious bias in their reportage. They said they would put the peace of the nation first ahead of ethnic and religious affiliations. This response is heartwarming when one considers that a large percentage of conflicts in Nigeria have their roots in ethnicity and religion. As Nwozor (2014:137) observes, the polarized nature of Nigeria's society is further heightened and energized by the tainted and skewed lens of ethnicity and religion as portrayed by media owners and practitioners.

Question 2: In what specific way(s) do you think your reportage will foster peaceful elections?

The researcher asked the participants to state specific ways they think their reportage will foster peaceful elections. Most of the respondents stated that they would apply Lynch and McGoldrick's 17-point plan for practical peace journalism in their reportage. About 6 points stood out from all the points raised by the participants, some of the points are:

- i. Most of the journalists stated that they would avoid the conflict-inducing attitude of portraying a conflict situation as a 'battle' between only two parties whose sole aim is to win over same goals. In this case, the two parties would be politicians or political parties seeking to attain the single goal of a political position. Journalists stated that they would focus more on issues and how these issues affect the generality of the population.
- ii. The participating journalists also said they would apply Lynch and McGoldrick's suggestion that journalists should endeavor to ask questions that may reveal areas of commonalities between conflicting parties instead of focusing on that which divides. According to Lynch and McGoldrick (2007:29), this helps the parties to realize that they actually have goals that are both compatible and shared.

- iii. Journalists also said they would desist from reporting violent acts and describing horrific scenes. They said they would change their approach by showing people's delay struggles with frustration and depravity.
- iv. One interesting area where journalists stated that they would make adjustments is in their choice of language and tones. They said they would avoid words such as 'devastated', 'defenseless', 'pathetic', 'tragedy' etc. Instead, they stated they would apply the skills garnered through the training. Journalists stated that they would instead report on what has been done and could be done by the people.
- v. Journalists also said they would avoid using demonising labels like 'terrorists', 'extremist', 'fanatic', 'fundamentalists' etc. Instead, they stated that they would henceforth call people by the names they give themselves. Lynch and McGoldrick (2007:30) advised that precision should be applied when describing subjects or objects in a story- e.g. 'bombers', 'suicide hijackers' etc. According to them, these words are less partisan and give more information.
- vi. **Please suggest topics you would like future training to look into**

The researcher asked participants to suggest topics they would like future trainings to look into. Most of the participants stated that they would like future trainings to look into issues of media ownership and societal peace, media and the management of terrorism, media and violent socio-cultural practices etc.

10.3 Evaluating training outcome through content analysis

Given that people generally get excited after training sessions and often make positive affirmations regarding positive change in behaviour (in this case reportage), it becomes important to conduct a content analysis of participants' reportage after the training in order to determine whether or not they actually implemented the trainings to their day to day reportage. As stated earlier, the analysis of data was done in two parts-analysis of the pre and post training questionnaires, as well as analysis of data

from content of media bylines of participating journalists. The stories will be analysed to see how many applied the 17-point plan for practical peace journalism put forward by Lynch and McGoldrick (2007). Suffice to add that the pseudonyms were used for the sampled journalists to protect their identities. Some of the selected newspaper stories and articles are discussed below

Sampled newspaper contents

S/N	Article title	Byline	Date
1.	NOA Director sues for peace among Nigerians	Zamani Mukhtar , Joke Kumuyi and Justina Adebisi	18 October, 2014.
2.	2015: Traditional rulers charged on peace, security.	Zamani Mukhtar , Joke Kumuyi and Justina Adebisi	24 October, 2014.
3.	2015: Politicians will be shocked by Nigerians verdict – Khadi	Bimpe Mohammed, Olaleye Kareem and Shehu Animashawun	9 November, 2014.
4.	Emir of Ilorin tasks politicians on nation building.	Betty Ige	12 November, 2014.
5.	2015: Governor Ahmed warns troublemakers ...Urges Kwarans to guard votes	Mohammed Olarenwaju	24 November, 2014
6.	Governor Ahmed is a peace practitioner – SSA Security Intelligence	Mohammed Olarenwaju	2 December, 2014
7.	Good day Kwarans: Let's reject violence	'Mahmud Seriki	14 December, 2014
8.	Expect no bloodshed in 2015 as democracy is not war – Adesina	Mashood Zarumi	30 December, 2014
9.	2015: Stop overheating the polity	Junadu Ismail	19 January, 2015
10.	Guber poll: Party chairmen, candidates to sign peace pact -INEC ...over 700,000 PVCs distributed in Kwara	Mohammed Olarenwaju	23, January, 2015
11.	Ilorin accord: Ahmed, Ajibola, others sign pact ...task supporters on peace	Mohammed Olarenwaju	25 January, 2015
12.	General elections: NOUN students hold peace walk	Zamani Mukhtar	7 February, 2015

Table 10.1: sampled newspaper contents

10.3.1 **NOA Director sues for peace among Nigerians**



Fig 10.1: NOA Director sues for peace

This story, written by Zamani Mukhtar, Joke Kumuyi and Justina Adebisi, all participants at the training, showed the application of some of Lynch and McGoldrick's 17-points. In points 16 and 17 of the guide, Lynch and McGoldrick remarked thus:

Point 16 Try to report on the issues which remain, and on the needs and interests of those affected. What has to happen in order to remove the incentives for further acts of violence? Ask what is being done to strengthen the means on ground to handle and resolve conflict non-violently, to address development or structural needs in the society and to create a culture of peace?

Point 17 Pickup and explore peace initiatives wherever they come from. As questions of politicians e.g. about ideas put forward by grassroots organisations. Assess peace perspectives against what you know about the issues the parties are really trying to address; do not simply ignore them because they don't coincide with established positions. Include images of a solution, however partial or fragmentary-they may help to stimulate dialogue.

The journalists appropriately applied the 17-point plan taught during the training session. They deliberately chose to explore peace initiatives (point 17) rather than focus on inciteful comments from some unruly politicians and members of the public. The journalists also ensured that the story got the needed prominence it deserved by making it front page story. According to McQuail and Windahl (1981), newspaper stories defer in importance due to a number of factors, chief among them being story placement. They aver that story placement gives the audience the impression the media places so much importance on the issue by the prominence it accords vis-à-vis placement.

In the paragraph 5 of the story, the journalists made an effort to quote the state Director of the National Orientation Agency. The director stated thus: *“As we gear up to the 2015 election, let all hands be on deck, let us work together to maintain the harmony and peace in our state and country at large”*. The journalists applied points 15 of the 17-point plan which states:

Point 15: Tell your readers or audience who said what. That way you will avoid implicitly signing up yourself and your news service to the allegations made by one party in the conflict against another.

Lynch and McGoldrick (2007:26) advise journalists to always be specific about who said what as it would greatly reduce the likelihood of them falling prey to politicians seeking to use them as tools for propaganda.

10.3.2

2015: Traditional rulers charged on peace, security

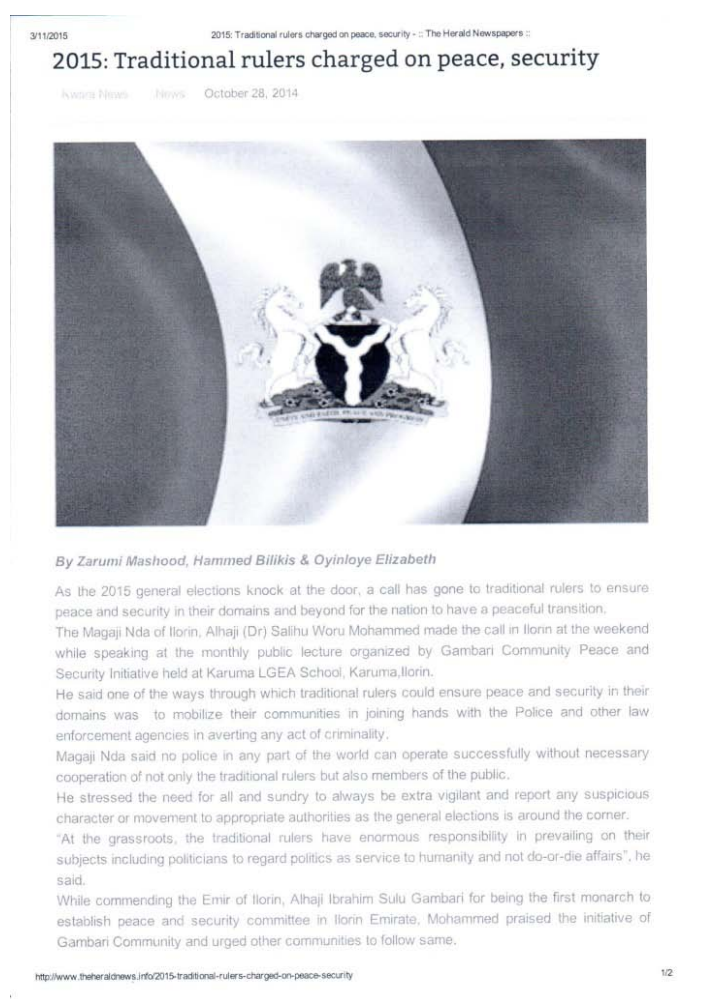


Fig 10.2: 2015: Traditional rulers charged on peace, security

The above story was also written by Zamani Mukhtar, Joke Kumuyi and Justina Adebiyi. Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:6) affirm that peace journalism differs from traditional or war journalism in that it is solution orientated, it focuses on creative means of promoting nonviolence as well highlighting peace initiatives aimed at preventing the outbreak violence. They further state that peace journalism focuses on entrenching the structure and culture of peace in society. From the content analysis of the story, it was clear that the journalists applied this point to their reportage of the story which sought to highlight efforts by the Kwara State Council of Traditional Rulers to promote peaceful nonviolent elections. The fact that they deliberately chose to give the news significance meant they wanted to consciously work for peaceful nonviolent elections.

10.3.3

2015: Politicians will be shocked by Nigerians verdict – Khadi

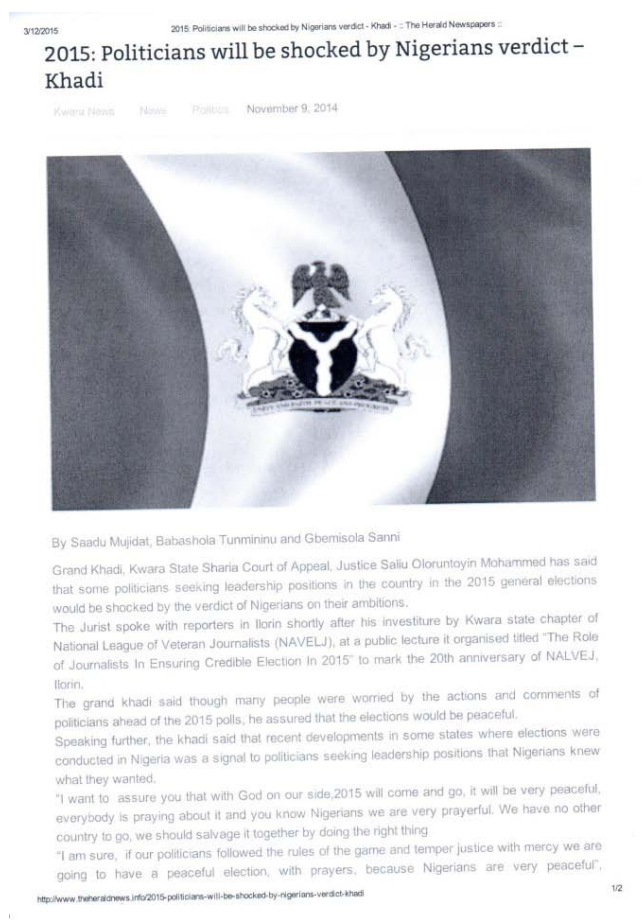


Fig 10.3: Politicians will be shocked by Nigerians verdict – Khadi

Politicking in Nigeria is always plagued by inciteful comments by politicians who seek to weep up ethnic and religious sentiments. These inciteful comments often instigate violence. In this report by Bimpe Mohammed, Olaleye Kareem and Shehu Animashawun, the Grand Khadi of Kwara State Shari'ah Court of Appeal, Justice Saliu Mohammed called on residents of the state to debunk fears across the state that the elections may turn violent.

According to the report, the Grand Khadi stated thus:

"I want to assure you that with God on our side, 2015 will come and go, it will be very peaceful, everybody is praying about it and you know Nigerians we are very prayerful. We have no other country to go; we should salvage it together by doing the right thing. I am sure, if our politicians followed the rules of the game and temper justice with mercy we are going to have a peaceful election, with prayers, because Nigerians are very peaceful".

Giving prominence and newsworthiness to actors of peace in the society was one of the major points raised during the training; it is one of the 17-point plans for peace journalism mentioned by Lynch and McGoldrick (2005). The journalists applied the tenth and fifteenth points which states that:

Point 10: Report on what has been done and could be done by the people. Don't just ask them how they feel; also ask them how they are coping and what they thin. Can they suggest any solutions?

Point 15: Tell your readers or audience who said what. That way you will avoid implicitly signing up yourself and your news service to the allegations made by one party in the conflict against another.

The journalists realized that they had a huge role to play in determining the outcome of the elections by focusing on people and actions that promote peace and not people and actions that promote divisions and rancor.

10.3.4 Emir of Ilorin tasks politicians on nation building.



Fig 10.4: Emir of Ilorin tasks politicians on nation building.

A related story written by Betty Ige highlighted calls by the Emir of Ilorin, Alhaji Sulu Gambari for the state's residents to maintain the peace and harmony the state is reputed for. The journalist chose her words carefully so as not to sound in an advocacy manner, a point must critics of peace journalism often accuse it of. Betty Ige applied points 10 and 15 of the 17-point plan for peace journalism.

Kertcher (2012:779) is of the opinion that journalists should be at the forefront of highlighting and promoting peace initiatives because the media not only provides society with information, it helps in providing interpretation that will be meaningful and applicable to real-life situations. As agents of social construction, the media can help construct peace messages in such a way as to build a critical mass of individuals who believe in and practice peace.

10.3.5 Guber poll: Party chairmen, candidates to sign peace pact-INEC

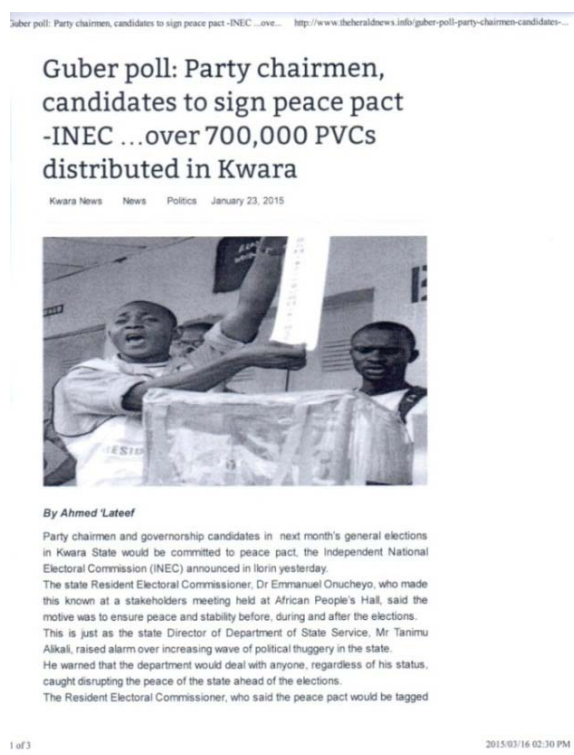


Fig 10.5: Party chairmen, candidates to sign peace pact -INEC

The 17-point plan includes the following:

Point 16: Avoid greeting the signing of documents by leaders which bring amount military victory or a ceasefire as necessarily creating peace. Instead, try to report on the issues which remain, and on the needs and interests of those affected. What has to happen in order to remove the incentives for further acts of violence? Ask what is being done to strengthen the means on ground to handle and resolve conflict non-violently, to address development or structural needs in the society and to create a culture of peace?

The above story, written by Mohammed Olarenwaju talks about the peace accord signed by party chairmen and governorship aspirants of the leading political parties in Kwara State to forestall violence before, during and after elections. The reporters went a step forward from just reporting the signing of the peace accord to proffering recommendations on how the elections can be peaceful and on how aggrieved party loyalties can be assuaged before the elections.

10.3.6 Expect no bloodshed in 2015 as democracy is not war – Adesina

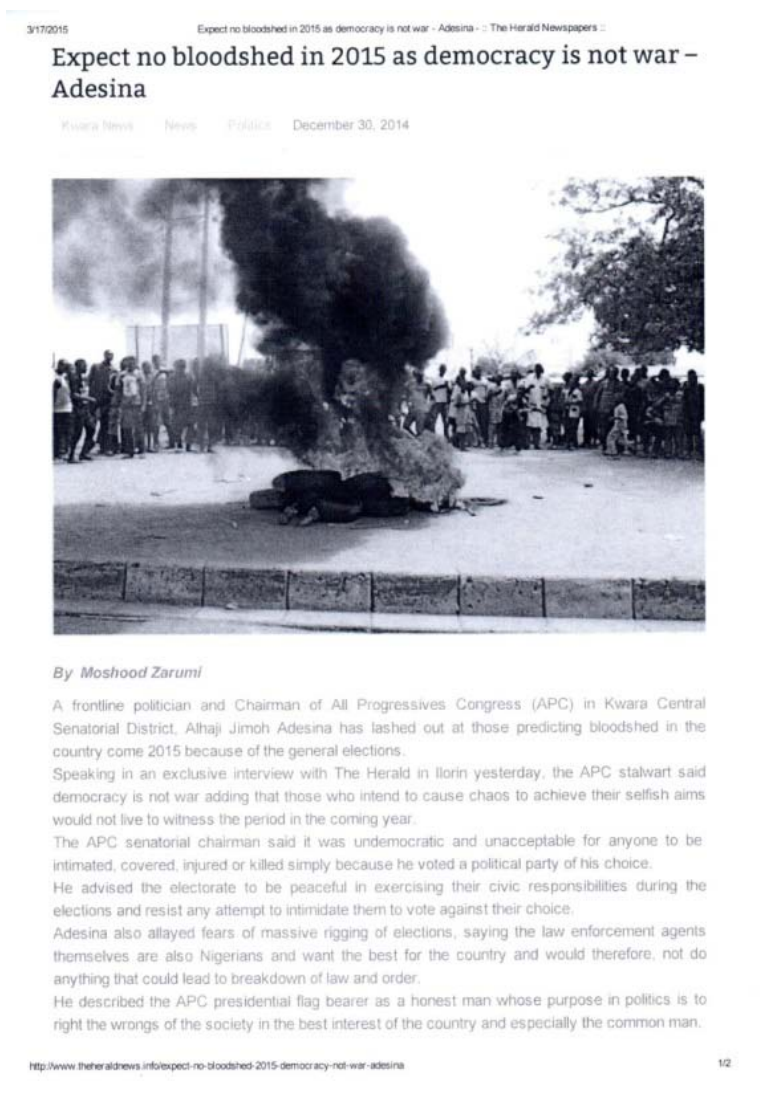


Fig 10.6: Expect no bloodshed in 2015 as democracy is not war – Adesina

The above article, written by Zamani Mukhtar appropriately applied one of the 17-point plans highlighted by Lynch and McGoldrick during the training. Lynch and McGoldrick advised journalists to be consciously on the look-out for individuals or groups actively working for peace and promote them by giving their activities prominence and newsworthiness. Tresch (2009) cautions that since the media plays an important role in connecting the electorates with politicians and in informing students about their political representatives, it becomes imperative for the media to actively applying their gate-keeping role in selecting politicians that are newsworthy. Politicians realize that being visible in the news media is essential to political success and influence, thus they court politicians in a bid to gain favorable news coverage.

The political situation in Nigeria in the run off to the general elections have been very tensed with politicians making hateful and inciteful comments capable of plunging the nation into crisis. Zamani Mukhtar 's approach to the news was such that shifted focus away from the drumbeats of war to the advocates of peace. Wolfsfeld and Sheafer, 2006:339) refer to this style of news writing as 'thematic relevance', i.e. the media makes a political actor's life a public issue. The reporter also quoted a leading member of the opposition party in a way that accorded prominence to the issue:

"The APC senatorial chairman said it was undemocratic and unacceptable for anyone to be intimidated, covered, injured or killed simply because he voted a political party of his choice. He advised the electorate to be peaceful in exercising their civic responsibilities during the elections and resist any attempt to intimidate them to vote against their choice".

10.4 Summarizing the main themes

Throughout the course of the training implementation and analysis of data, several themes emerged. First, journalists were unanimous in their position that they indeed have the 'power' to nurture a culture of peace in the society. However, they wholly assert that they often act as muffled drums because of the overbearing influence of media owners and draconian government policies. Thus, in order not to offend media owners and also in a bid to avoid government clampdown, journalists have fallen prey to a practice of journalism that is devoid of conflict sensitivity. One of the goals of the training was to hand 'power' back to the journalists; power to influence society, albeit positively by setting positive developmental agenda for public discourse.

Second, given that politicians are generally perceived to have money and because the political process often gulps a lot of money, journalists believe it will be Herculean for them to be objective and nonpartisan in their reportage. Journalists were of the opinion that the poor remuneration, which is a common problem among Nigerian journalists, makes them easy prey for politicians courting favourable coverage.

Third, adequate training and re-training of journalists greatly positively impacts on their reportage style, particularly their conflict-sensitive reportage of socio-cultural and socio-political issues. As can be clearly gleaned from section 8.42, the

journalists applied the tips they got from the training to their journalistic practice and determinedly sought ways through which they could advocate for peace through their reportage. It was also clear that journalists applied their gate-keeping skills in giving newsworthiness to stories that engendered peace, thereby setting an agenda for peace as a public discourse.

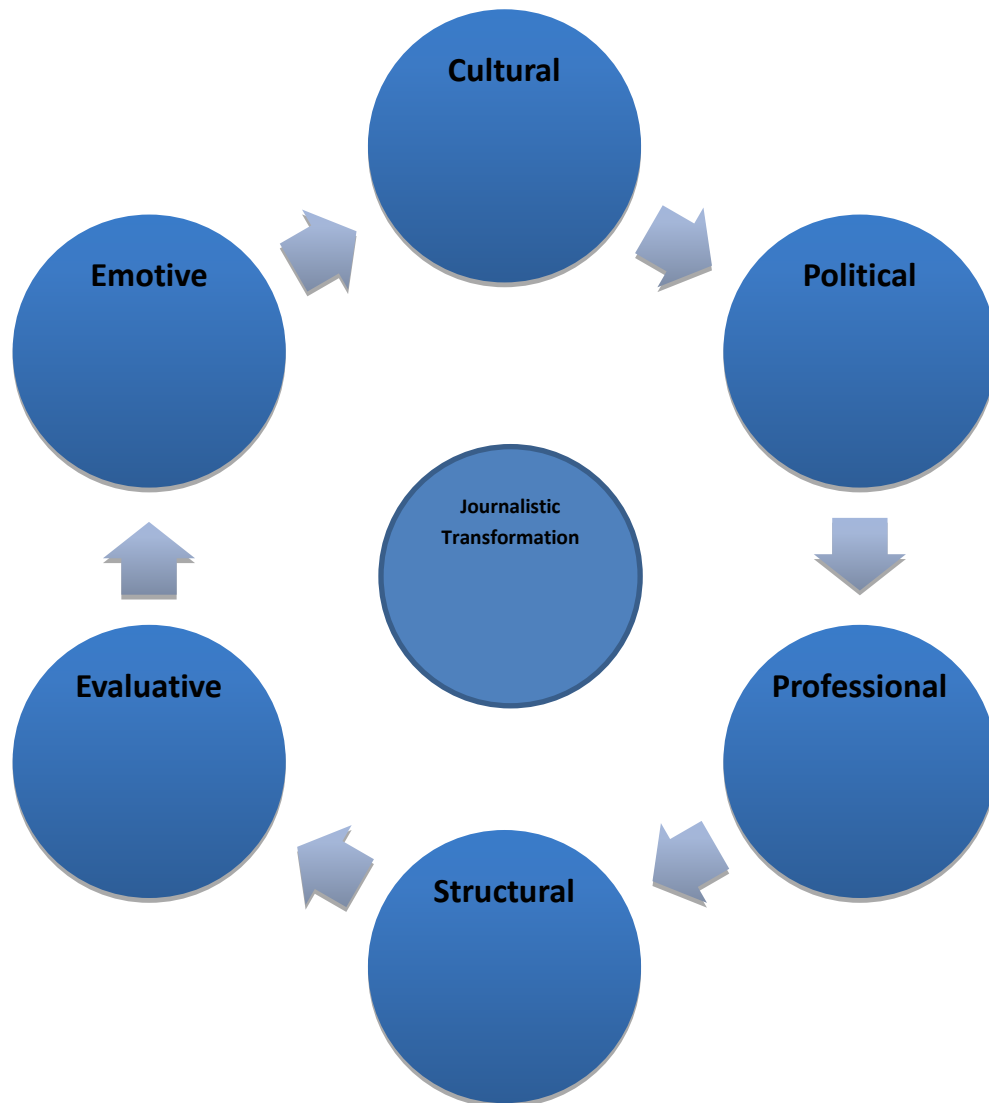


Figure 10.7: Types of intertextual journalistic transformation (adapted from Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al. (2014:4)

All through the training session and indeed all through the research, my major goal was to not only encourage the adoption of peace journalism practice by the sampled journalists, but to also achieve journalistic transformation. I strongly believe that journalistic transformation, if achieved, will help journalists instinctively own news stories in such a way as to determine its impact on society. One may argue that the power to determine how news is framed has the ability to be abused by journalists,

however, if such journalists have been fully grounded in the adoption of peace journalism, journalistic transformation would then be seamlessly applied in a way that makes the journalist more responsible to society.

Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al. (2014:4) aver that news stories are only raw materials; they do not have meanings until meaning is ascribed to them by the journalist, and then subsequently the public. The journalist, in attempting to transform raw materials into news adds or excludes discursive elements in the original text, the journalist also attempts to amend or replace, truncate or elaborate, foreground or downplay, fuse, juxtapose or separate the discursive elements in order to create reconstructed claims, interpretations and agendas in such a way as to ensure societal peace. They further assert that when the journalist eventually 'transforms' a story, the resultant stories could contain frames, agendas and claims that are contextualized in a selective and critical manner to serve different constructions. Although journalistic transformation was not a major component of the training manual, I however took out time to introduce it to journalists and their response was very encouraging. The process of journalistic transformation is discussed below (as can be seen from figure 9.7 above).

- **Cultural Transformation**

I am convinced that the 2001 riots in Kaduna, Northern Nigeria, would have been prevented if the journalist who had written the piece on Prophet Mohammed had been 'culturally transformed' in her reportage (see section 7.2). According to Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al. (2014), cultural transformation is the process of reconstructing interpretative frames and agendas in ways that connects to a culture's myths, values, symbols and beliefs. Cultural transformation of news involves the rendering of news by journalists in a way that relates to all audiences and appeals or re-affirms shared identity and community. The participating journalists unanimously affirmed that more of the conflicts that have occurred in Nigeria had been caused by a disregard for the cultural norms of Nigeria's diverse ethnicities.

- **Political-ideological transformation**

Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al. (2014) explain political-ideological transformation as the process whereby journalists restructure information in ways that advance certain political ideologies or perspectives through the reproduction of frames and agendas to fit a particular viewpoint. Political-ideological transformation helps journalists bestow the news with a capacity to provide political orientation to their audiences. Journalists were trained on how to report the political happenings in the country in the lead up to the 2015 general elections in a way that encourage nonviolence.

- **Professional-normative transformation**

When a journalist (re)formulates information and claims in accordance with professional standards, he/she is said to be professionally transformed. Halim and Mancini (2004) aver that the application of professional-normative transformations is instrumental for asserting and justifying the trustworthiness and relevance of news, distinguishing media content from partisan, uncorroborated, or otherwise doubtful information.

- **Evaluative-epistemic transformation**

Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al. (2014) explain evaluative transformation as the process whereby journalists amend or add to stories in a way that establishes the authority and credibility of the news presented and its significance to the public. The aim is to structure the public agenda and direct the attention of the public toward critical events that have impact on society. For a peace journalist, this portends an opportunity to deliberately direct the attention of the public to acts of peace instead of acts of violence.

- **Emotive transformation**

Human beings are emotional beings. When a message touches the emotional part of a people, it touches their soul, the core of their existence. The journalists were taught how to positively evoke the emotions of their audience through their reportage. The

researcher emphasised that journalists should aim at emotive by constantly and consciously 'tuning' the level of affect or appeal to audiences' emotions in news texts. This unwittingly involves the audience in the news as they can relate to the stories emotionally, thus contributing to motivating them (the public) to participate in affairs affecting the community. Froehlich (2005) states that journalists cannot deny the impact their emotions have on the process of news reportage; because peace journalism does not pretend or aim at being objective, it is based on the view that journalists cannot be objective in what, how and why they report social issues both for conventional and personal reasons.

- **Structural transformation**

Finally, structural transformation refers to the adjustment of news texts to conventional journalistic storytelling formats, as well as to spatial and temporal constraints. By transforming information structurally, journalists address the most basic function of news which is to unpack the enormous complexities of the world to a limited set of graspable, addressable issues and events. News stories constitute a storytelling genre with its own structural conventions (Bell, 1991), or what van Dijk (1986) described as a predictable plan consisting of a number of well-ordered categories which organise the production of news reports in a top-down manner. According to van Dijk, news stories are typically structured through general summaries, expositions on main events, providing adequate historical and contextual background, clearly stating consequences, verbal reactions and comments by journalists.

10.5 Unexpected outcomes/Limitations

There are uncertainties during research, they are almost inevitable. Participants may back out from the research, key interviewees may not show up, government policies and regulations may change thereby hampering the research process, from themes may emerge during discussions or training that may sway the direction of the research etc.

My original research plan was to conduct another set of trainings a few weeks before the 2015 general elections in Nigeria to serve as a refresher course for the participating journalists. I had to however cancel the training because of my inability to obtain extension for my student's visa on time. The unexpected situation meant I had to communicate with the participants online and I also had to track their by-lines online. This was very difficult considering that most newspaper outfits in Nigeria do not have active archives.

One other major unexpected twist was the shift from the discourse which was primarily election, to other social concerns. During the training period, journalists wanted to know how peace journalism could be applied to stem the scourge of terrorism which was at its peak in North-central Nigeria at that time. The timeliness of the issue meant that the training was adjusted a bit to accommodate ideas and techniques of conflict-sensitive reportage that would aid in ending terrorism as perpetrated by Boko Haram.

10.6 Reliability and validity

Nigeria is a big country, both geographically and population wise. With a population of 175 million people (National Population Census, 2006) spread over 36 states, conducting a research that is representative of the entire nation is Herculean and near impossible. Thus, it would be inappropriate to generalize the findings of this study which focused only on journalists working in Kwara State, North Central Nigeria.

Suffice to add however that the findings of the study could serve as a valuable template for journalists across the country on how to report social issues in a conflict-

sensitive manner, this is because the sociocultural and sociopolitical milieu of most of Nigeria's 36 states is similar and journalists' response in one state could be a pointer to what is to be expected in another. Also, the Kwara State chapter of the Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) serves as regional headquarters for the NUJ in the North-Central region of the country comprising Benue, Plateau, Nasarawa, Kogi and Kwara States. This means that the influence of the trained journalists would go beyond only Kwara State; it would have a positive ripple effect on the states that make up the North Central region and the nation in general. Thus, one can safely state that to the degree that the results of this exploration support previous understandings, confidence in these findings can be stronger.

Creswell and Miller (2000) state that validity is a major quality of qualitative research and its main aim is to determine whether or not the findings of the study are accurate from the stance of the researcher, the participants and the general public. This study was conducted with attention to detail in order to ensure that it was valid in all respects. Thus, in order to ensure validity of the research findings, the researcher employed data triangulation technique. Data triangulation is an important part of validating a study because it involves the use of multiple sources of data/information. Olsen (2004:23) defines triangulation the process of mixing data in a way that ensures diverse perspectives shed more light on the study.

Data from this study was obtained through interviews, observations, questionnaire administration and content analysis. By comparing the data obtained for similarity and dissimilarities, the researcher was able to discover 'melting points' in the responses and how they relate to the study. The fact that there were obvious correlations between the various responses given and the findings of the study suggests validity.

In addition, the researcher also applied theoretical triangulation by using multiple theories (see chapter 2.1) which provide support to findings or refute them. According to Thurmond (2001), when researchers use multiple theories, it helps them to see problems from multiple lenses, thereby providing clarity.

10.7 Reflections on the 2015 general elections in Nigeria

The build-up leading to the 2015 general elections in Nigeria was fear-provoking to say the least. Baiyewu (2014) recalls that previous elections had plunged the nation into crisis with about 800 people reported to have been killed in electoral related violence in the 2011 elections. 2015 election was one of the stiffest in the history of the country with observers deeming it a two-horse race between the ruling People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the All Progressives Congress (APC).

There were concerns that the election would turn out violent and confirm the doomsday prophecy credited to the American government that Nigeria would split along ethnic and religious lines in 2015. The reasons for the fears were not farfetched; there was growing tension in between the north and south owing to claims that the incumbent president, Goodluck Jonathan discounted power-sharing agreement between the north and south, and that it was the turn of the north to produce the president.

Adibe (2015:3) states that the advent of a viable opposition from the merger of the then Action Congress of Nigeria (ACN) and the Congress for Progressive Change (CPC) to form the All Progressives Congress (APC) put pressure on President Jonathan, a southern Christian against a northern Muslim, General Muhammadu Buhari. This pressure played out in political campaigns and media messages that unwittingly divided an already polarised nation along ethnic and religious lines. The election was also crucial in that Internally Displaced People (IDPs) who fled their homes as a result of attacks by Boko Haram were increasing on a daily basis. As at August 2014, the IDPs figures had risen to a staggering 650,000 people (The Guardian, 2014). It thus became expedient that the election turned out right because a faulty election would have triggered a refugee crisis too big for the region to handle.

The phone call that saved Nigeria

As results started trickling in at the National Collation Centre set up by the Independent National Electoral Commission (INEC), it gradually became clear that an upset was in the offing, the incumbent was about to lose. Going by antecedents from previous elections in Nigeria, people expected the worst; many feared the

election might be annulled like the infamous June 12 1993 election or that the incumbent, Goodluck Jonathan would refuse to concede defeat and that would lead to an outbreak of violence across the country.

Then the most unlikely (at least by Nigerian standards) happened, President Goodluck Jonathan put a call across to his rival General Muhammadu Buhari, congratulating him on his victory with results from one state still left to be counted. That singular act, many believed saved Nigeria. Though many ascribe the 'success' of the 2015 General Elections in Nigeria to that infamous call, the fact remains that there were many other factors responsible for how the election turned out, some unnoticed.

For instance, the media played a huge role in sensitising the public on the need to eschew violence and embrace peace. Across the 36 states of Nigeria, messages were aired in local dialects calling on people to vote in a nonviolent manner. Civil Society Organisations, religious bodies, international NGOs and traditional rulers all called on the people to work for peace. It is thus imprudent to conclude that a single individual or group was responsible for the peaceful outcome of the election, not even the media can make such claims.

PART V CONCLUSION

The main thrust of this final part of the study is the presentation of the findings reports with reference to the study's aim and objectives. Recommendations arising from the findings are put forward to help in the quest to instill a sense of conflict-sensitivity in journalists' reportage of social issues.

CHAPTER ELEVEN

CONCLUSION

11.0 Introduction

The main aim of this study is to build capacity of journalists to report elections in such a way that would foster nonviolent elections. Suffice to state that the study's main aim was the main aim of the study is to evaluate the potential of conflict-sensitive reportage as a way of encouraging nonviolent elections in Nigeria. The specific objectives were:

- i. Determine the media's current mode of operation as regards election reportage in Nigeria.
- ii. Examine the extent to which media may be responsible for electoral related violence in Nigeria.
- iii. Determine the training needs of media personnel particularly as regards conflict-sensitive reportage.
- iv. Implement training needs and enhance, through training of media personnel, the media's capacity to operate in a way that discourages violence.
- v. Carry out a preliminary evaluation of the outcome of the training.

11.1 Discussion of results

Objective 1: Determine the media's current mode of operation as regards election reportage in Nigeria.

From the findings obtained through the pre-training questionnaire administered to participants and content analysis undertaken, it was discovered that the dominant writing style of the participating journalists was traditional (war) journalism which often subtly instigates violence. The journalists averred that they would report any news story as long as the sources were 'verifiable'; this clearly showed a lack of conflict-sensitive reportage knowledge. McGoldrick (2006) believes reporting issues simply because they are 'verifiable' could be risky for societal peace because politicians and government sources often skew stories in their favour and unwary traditional journalists often do not take the time to delve into the 'why' of issues. The problem with this lack of focus on the why of conflicts is that without some exploration of the underlying causes of conflicts, they can appear, by default, as the only sensible response to disagreements.

Findings from the study also showed that journalists often hinge their practice of traditional (war) journalism on the need to be 'objective'. The most used word all through the training was objectivity; journalists regard it as the most important tenet in the journalism profession. However, majority of them changed their views after the training as they now understand that objectivity, which is evident in the presentation by journalists of the views of both sides to a conflict. According to McGoldrick (2006), this traditional news brand of objectivity inadvertently makes the media the battlefield for opposing politicians who struggle to make their points clear in a tug-of-war style, thereby further heating the polity rather than ameliorating the situation.

This position is in consonance with that held by Francis (2002) who states that the deliberate reduction of conflicts into a dualistic event often shields the public away from the true or full story; he contends that there are always a third (or more) parties involved in the conflict, but whose involvement may be hidden or not noticeable.

Objective II: Examine the extent to which media may be responsible for electoral related violence, with particular reference to Nigeria.

The second objective of the study was to examine the extent to which the myriads of electoral-related violence in Nigeria have been instigated by the media. Since the return to democratic rule in 1999, Nigeria has witnessed electoral-related violence in 2003, 2007 and 2011. While factors such as ethnicity, socio-economic imbalance, alleged rigging etc. have been adduced for the violence, it became imperative to examine the extent to which the violence was caused by the media.

Iruonagbe et al. (2013:14) recount that elections in Nigeria have been a recurrent source of violence since the late 1940s. For instance, the 1940 elections turned violent when members of the opposition party accused the central government of biased and attempted disenfranchisement. Though the magnitude of the violence could be said to be manageable, the elections of the 1960s were worst because they snowballed into the unfortunate Nigerian Civil War that led to the death of over 2 million people. The Western Region for instance witnessed great political conflict between 1964 and 1965 following the regional and federal elections that pitched Obafemi Awolowo against Akintola Williams.

Most of the participating journalists agreed that the electoral violence that the nation experienced could have been prevented with better reportage. They unanimously cited the Kaduna crisis of 2001 that led to the death of over 2000 Christians and Muslims which stemmed from an inciteful newspaper article.

The journalists also stated that the “brown envelope syndrome”, a term commonly used to describe financial inducement of journalists for favorable reportage, especially during elections, has led to electoral violence in most parts of Nigeria. Macebuh (1987:71), affirms that across the globe, journalists who have fallen prey to the ‘brown envelope syndrome’ have slid to a state he describes as ‘martyrdom syndrome’, a state in which news messages are deliberately skewed or altered by an otherwise neutral and responsible journalists in such a way that the messages become inciteful, offensive and generally seek the praise and attention of the government in power. The journalists averred that one of the major reasons

politicians view them as easy prey is because of their poor remuneration. They stated that they are one of the least paid professionals in the society and as such are easy prey to politicians. They stated that with improve remuneration, the issue of irresponsible reportage and brown envelope syndrome will be well managed.

Objective III: Determine the training needs of media personnel particularly as regards conflict-sensitive reportage.

As a precursor to the main objective which is to build journalists capacity for conflict-sensitive reportage of elections, a pre-training questionnaire was drawn up to ascertain amongst other things, the training needs of the participating journalists. The findings from the data obtained from the pre-training questionnaire played a significant role in the final design of the training manual that was implemented during the training. The important findings from the pre-training questionnaire and interviews include:

- i. It was discovered that journalists needed adequate training on how to detach from their religious and ethnic affiliations when reporting. Most of the journalists averred that they found it difficult to separate their beliefs from their reportage. This was well discussed during the training implementation.
- ii. Journalists generally believed that being objective meant they had to tell the 'whole story' irrespective of the impact on society. While it is a generally agreed notion that objectivity is a major tenet of the journalism profession, it however needs to be applied in a conflict-sensitive manner and journalists were trained on how to be conflict-sensitive in their reportage without necessarily compromising objectivity. McGoldrick's (2006) points on *war journalism and objectivity* were subsequently adopted for the training (*see attached training manual*).
- iii. Another training need discovered was in the area of conflict reporting. 29 of the 40 participating journalists averred that they would make it clear which side in a conflict had a better position. They also claim it was there way of staying objective. This position meant that the training manual had to be adjusted to include emphasis on the difference between peace and

traditional journalism, particularly as it concerns the reportage of elections and the need to not just present the position of candidates in a contest, but also the position of third parties, vis-à-vis their role in the eventual turn out of the elections.

- iv. Most of the participating journalists stated that it was their responsibility to present graphic images of injured and killed people during violent political campaigns and elections. It gave great insight into the need to train journalists on the need to understand that present graphic images often result in reprisal attacks, particularly considering Nigeria's peculiar socio-political and socio-cultural mix. The researcher took this into cognizance during the training as journalists were trained journalism ethics which cautions against undue manipulation of tragedies through visual framing as it elicits strong emotional responses (Brantner, et al, 2011).

Objective IV: Implement the training of media personnel in order to build media's capacity to operate in a way that encourages nonviolence.

As a result of data obtained from the pre-training questionnaire, interviews and focus group discussions, the training manual was adjusted to reflect the training needs of the journalists.



Pic 11.1: Participants at the conflict-sensitive journalism training

The modules

Participants were taught three modules; the first module, was titled understanding conflicts. The first module sought to give participants a clear understanding of the term conflict, its causes, the relationship between journalists' reportage and societal peace or conflict and the qualities of a journalist with respect to impartiality, accuracy and responsibility.

The second module, facilitated provided clear understanding of the term peace journalism, the difference between traditional (war) journalism and peace journalism

and an exposition of the 17-point plan for peace journalism put forward by Lynch and McGoldrick.

The last module helped participants to clearly identify the important issues that need attention of the media during the electoral process and the professional way of covering them. The module hinged on the need to be fair, impartial and objective in their reportage and ways to sensitize the public on the need to be peaceful and nonviolent throughout the electoral process.

Syndicate sessions

For each of the modules, participants were broken into syndicate groups. Each group was presented with a flip chart or board where they wrote down ways through which they can foster nonviolent elections through their reportage. The facilitators then used the methods that emerge from the groups to prepare a code of conduct for journalists.

11.2 Recommendations

The results from the study clearly show the efficacy of training as a tool for building journalists capacity to report social issues in a conflict-sensitive manner. Training is an integral part of an organisation's growth and development strategy. Truitt (2011: 2) advocates for continuous and sustained training of journalists because well trained journalists are better able to adapt to rapid changes in their external environment and pursue sustained development in the ever-changing global business environment. One sure way to ensure that an organisation's employees remain competitive enough in the ever changing business environment in by strengthening and expanding their knowledge base, skills and abilities through capacity building.

According to Lynch and McGoldrick (2005), few journalists have been trained in the area of conflict analysis and theory; thus, they are not well equipped to report issues that have consequences on societal peace. Training of journalists in conflict sensitive reportage is imperative because journalists covering conflict are inescapably involved in the events and processes they are reporting on-whether they like it or not.

The current state of media reportage in most African countries is manifest in reportage mainly motivated by factors such as ownership, geopolitical location and religious/ethnic inclination.

Some salient points can be gleaned from the result of the study:

- i. Peace journalism training does work as demonstrated by the marked improvement in the conflict-sensitive reportage of sampled journalists.
- ii. The media can impact society, and this impact can be channeled for societal good by consciously building capacity for conflict-sensitive reportage.
- iii. Journalists do not have an excuse to justify war journalism. There can never be justification for instigating violence.
- iv. There is an urgent need to inculcate peace journalism as a major module in journalism and media training from diploma level of tertiary education so as to 'catch' journalists young.
- v. The journalism regulatory bodies also need to inculcate the tenets of peace journalism when fashioning out ethics of journalism profession for journalists.

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Appendix I: Training Manual

**Building capacity for conflict-sensitive
reportage of elections.**



A training manual for journalists

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SEPTEMBER, 2014.

Why this manual?

The world has witnessed some gruesome wars. The First and Second World Wars wrecked havoc to humanity leading to the death of millions across the globe. In recent years, the world has experienced some equally horrendous wars-the US invasion of Iraq, the massacre of minority Muslims in former Yugoslavia and the horrific genocide meted against minority Tutsis by majority Hutus in Rwanda led to unimaginable loss of human lives.

One major standout in the aforementioned wars is the role played by the media in instigating and fuelling them. The role played by the media via propaganda during the Hitler-led Second World War and the Hutu-perpetrated attempt at annihilating minority Tutsis proved the extent to which the media can be manipulated and used as a tool to fuel violent conflict.

Often, journalists are oblivious of the impact their reportage or lack of it has on societal peace. Due to inadequate and to a large extent nonexistent training on conflict-sensitive reportage of sensitive social issues like elections, journalists in conflict-prone states particularly those in Africa have fallen prey to the common ills that characterise reportage of elections such as partisanship, bigotry and a general lack of objectivity. The resultant effects are often preventable chaos and needless violence.

The aim of the manual is therefore to equip journalists with the necessary conflict-sensitive reportage skills that will foster nonviolent elections. The training focuses on encouraging journalists to apply the concept of peace journalism in their reportage by deliberately selecting and reporting stories in ways that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value nonviolent responses to conflict by using the insights of conflict analysis and transformation to update the concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy in their reportage. The training also seeks to provide journalists with a new route map by tracing the connections between their sources, the stories they cover and the consequences of their journalism. The training also aims at building an awareness of nonviolence and creativity into the practical job of everyday editing and reporting.

This manual serves as material support for the entrenchment and preservation of democracy through responsible peace-oriented reportage. I hope that it will be useful, and

contribute significantly both to the continued development of the free media, and to open, transparent, free, fair and nonviolent elections.

Objectives of the training

The training seeks to equip journalists with the basic professional skills that will empower them to cover election processes in a fair, balanced and non-partisan way and through them encourage the culture of nonviolence and enable citizens to get the opportunity to become well-informed, interested and active participants in the country's political decision processes.

Methodology

The methodology to be adopted for the training is the participatory action method which involves interactions between the facilitator and participants. This method enables participants to discuss issues to be raised from their own experiences and also learn from one another from focus group plenary discussions.

Training format

The training is expected to last for a full day. It will start at 09:30 a.m. and end at 16:30 p.m., there will be 30 minutes tea break at 11:30 a.m. and an hour lunch break at 13:30 p.m. There will be two plenary sessions; the first will be shortly after the tea break and the second will be after the lunch break.

Target audience

The audience for this training is primarily journalists working in both the print and broadcast media. As a guide, journalists identified for the training should:

- Have at least two to three years work experience;
- Hold a diploma or first degree in journalism or a related field;
- Be currently employed within a media institution.

Training rules

The rules (Dos and Don'ts) governing the training will be generated from participants. Participants will be asked to suggest rules that will be binding on everyone. The facilitator guides and motivates participants to value the rules they generate so as to make them active participants in the entire process.

Getting started

Before delving into the modules, the facilitator uses some ice-breakers to start the training sessions. The facilitator should ensure that the following steps are taken before the commencement of the training:

- i. The facilitator should introduce himself and the organisation or school he/she is representing. The facilitator should also provide background on the motivation behind the training.
- ii. The facilitator should ask the participants to introduce themselves by giving their names and the media organisation they work for.
- iii. The facilitator should give each participant a card and a marker. He should ask each participant to write his/her expectation from the training. The facilitator should afterwards gather the expectations and place them on a wall, or a flip chart for everyone to see.
- iv. At the end of this, the facilitator should put up pointers from the detailed outline of material covered in the manuals modules, and match these pointers to the expectations
- v. The facilitator should note the expectations which may not be met during the training, and suggest ways that the participants may meet these.

Module I

Understanding Conflicts

Training objective

The objective of the issues to be discussed under this topic is to enlighten participants on the concept of conflicts, its causes, and effects and how they can manage or avoid it through their reportage.

Expected outcomes

After covering the training topics under module one, participants are expected to comprehend the following:

- A clear understanding of the term conflict
- The causes of conflicts
- The relationship between their reportage and societal peace or conflict
- Qualities of a journalist with respect to impartiality, accuracy and responsibility, and

Understanding conflict

Icebreaker: The facilitator breaks participants into 5 groups. Each group is presented with a flip chart or board where they are expected to write down their understanding of the term conflict. The facilitator gives each group 10 minutes to report back. The facilitator writes on the flip chart the various definitions given. The facilitator then uses the definitions that emerge from the groups to move into the section on understanding conflict.

Most practicing journalists will tell you they deal with conflicts all the time. Disagreement with their superiors, difficulty in getting reliable sources for news and litigations arising from aggrieved members of the public who may have felt disparaged or misrepresented are some of the challenges plaguing journalists. While some of the aforementioned challenges can be regarded as forms of conflicts, there is a generally held notion that many journalists know little about the idea of conflict. They do not know the root causes of conflict, or how conflicts end. They also do not know the different kinds of conflict.

What is conflict?

Renowned peace practitioner and a trainer of journalists, Ross Howard defines conflict as a situation where two or more individuals or groups try to pursue goals or ambitions which they believe they cannot share. Not all conflict is violent. Conflict often results from the desire for change. Some people want change, but others disagree. If their disagreement or conflict is managed peacefully, it can be a positive process. But when conflict is not managed properly, it becomes violent. In violent conflict, people fear for their safety and survival. When we say conflict, we are usually referring to violent conflict.

What causes conflict?

Almost world-wide, it is predictable that conflict will arise where:

- Resources are scarce and not shared fairly, as in food, housing, jobs or land.
- There is little or no communication between groups.
- The groups have incorrect ideas and beliefs about each other.
- Unresolved grievances exist from the past.
- Power is unevenly distributed.

Ice breaker: The facilitator asks participants to list other possible causes of conflicts not listed above.

Understanding violence

Violent physical conflict is easily identified and described by journalists. Individuals or groups in conflict try to hurt or kill each other and there are victims. But there are other kinds of violence which do great harm in a society and these are more difficult for reporters to see and explain.

Cultural violence can be the way a group has been thinking about another group for many years. It can include talk, images or beliefs which glorify physical violence. These include:

- **Hate speech:** Different ethnic or cultural groups openly speak badly of each other. One group blames the other for difficulties or problems it is suffering. Violence is encouraged to eliminate the blamed group.
- **Xenophobia:** A people's or a country's hatred or fear of another country creates misperceptions and encourages policies which promote conflict with that country.
- **Myths and legends of war heroes:** A society whose popular songs and history books glorify one side's ancient victories can build hatred for the other side.
- **Religious justifications for war:** Extreme intolerance of other beliefs promotes conflict.
- **Gender discrimination:** To allow practices and laws against women that are not accepted against men is a form of violence.

Structural violence is harm which is built into the laws and traditional behaviour of a group or society. Harm is permitted or ignored. It can include:

- **Institutionalized racism or sexism:** Laws and practices which allow unequal treatment based on race or sex.
- **Colonialism:** A country's lack of self-determination. A foreign authority forcibly assumes control over all important decision-making processes.
- **Extreme exploitation:** Such as slavery.
- **Poverty:** The world's leading cause of violent conflict.
- **Corruption and nepotism:** Governmental decisions are influenced or decided by bribery, favoritism and family or tribal connections.

- **Structural segregation:** Laws which force people to live in separate groups or places against their will.

These kinds of violence are extremely important to identify when reporting and analyzing conflict. Often they are the real cause of direct physical violence. Ending the physical violence will not be enough. It will happen again if the cultural and structural violence is ignored.

Ice breaker: The facilitator asks the journalists whether or not they think some of the conflicts experienced in the country are instigated by the media.

Module II

The Peace Journalism Model.

Training objective

The objective of the issues to be discussed under this topic is to enlighten participants on the concept of conflicts, its causes, and effects and how they can manage or avoid it through their reportage.

Expected outcomes

After covering the training topics under module two, participants are expected to understand the following:

- A clear understanding of the term peace journalism
- The difference between traditional (war) journalism and peace journalism.
- Jake Lynch's 17 point plan for peace journalism

What is peace journalism?

Peace Journalism (PJ) is the deliberate selection and reportage of stories in ways that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value nonviolent responses to conflict. PJ uses the insights of conflict analysis and transformation to update the concepts of balance, fairness and accuracy in reporting, provides a new route map tracing the connections between journalists', their sources, the stories they cover and the consequences of their journalism and builds an awareness of nonviolence and creativity into the practical job of everyday editing and reporting (Lynch and McGoldrick, 2005:5).

Ice breaker: The facilitator should ask participants what they think should constitute peace journalism.

Difference between traditional journalism and peace journalism

Table 1: Peace journalism model.

Peace/conflict journalism	War/violence journalism
1. Peace/conflict-orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Explore conflict formation x parties, y goals, z issues, general win-win orientation.• Open space, open time, causes and outcomes anywhere also in history/culture.• Making conflicts transparent• Giving voice to all parties, empathy, understanding• Humanization of all sides, more so the worse the weapon.• Proactive: prevention before any conflict occurs.	2. War/violence orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on conflict arena-2 parties, 1 goal (win), war, general zero-sum orientation.• Closed space, closed time, causes and exits in arena who threw the first stone.• Making wars opaque/secret• 'Us-them' journalism, propaganda, voice, for 'us'. See them as the problem; focus on who prevails in war, dehumanization of 'them' more so worse the weapon.• Reactive: waiting for violence before reporting.• Focus only on visible effects of violence (killed, wounded and material damage).
2. Truth orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expose untruths on all sides/uncover all cover-ups	2. Propaganda orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expose 'their' untruths/help 'our' cover-ups/lies.
3. People orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on suffering all over, on women, aged, children, giving voice to voiceless.• Give name to all evildoers	3. Elite orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on 'our' suffering, on able-bodied elite males, being their mouth-piece• Give name of evil-doers

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on peace makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus on elite peace makers
4. Solution orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace = nonviolence + creativity • Highlight peace initiatives, also prevents more war • Focus on structure, culture, the peaceful society. • Aftermath: resolution, reconstruction, reconciliation. 	4. Victory orientated <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Peace=victory + ceasefire • Conceal peace initiatives, before victory is at hand, focus on treaty, institutions and controlled society. • Leaving another for war, return of the old flares up again.

Source: Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:6).

Ice breaker: The facilitator should ask participants to recount situations where they practiced war or peace journalism and the impact it had.

Jake Lynch's 17-point plan for practical peace journalism

Table 2: A 17-point plan for practical peace journalism

S/N	War Journalism (what to avoid)	Peace Journalism (what to do)
1.	Avoid protracting a conflict as consisting of only two parties contesting the same goal(s). The logical outcome is for one to win and the other lose.	Disintegrate the two parties into smaller groups, with many needs and interests, pursuing many goals, opening up more creative potential for a range of outcomes.
2.	Avoid accepting stark distinctions between 'self' and 'other'. These can be used to build the sense that another party is a 'threat' or 'beyond the pale' of civilized behaviour. Both are key justifications for violence.	Seek the 'other' in the 'self' and vice versa. If a party is presenting itself as 'the goodies' as the questions about how different its behaviour really is to that it ascribes to the other-isn't it ashamed of itself?
3.	Avoid treating a conflict as if it is only going on in the place and at the time that violence is occurring.	Try to trace the links and consequence for people in other places now and in the future. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who are all the people with a stake in the outcome? • How does these stakeholders relate to each other? • Who gains from the conflict? • What are they doing to influence the conflict? • What will happen if...?
4.	Avoid assessing the merits of a violent action or policy of violence in terms of its visible effects only.	Try to find ways of reporting on the invisible effects, e.g. the long term consequences of psychological damage

		and trauma, perhaps increasing the likelihood that those affected will be violent in future, either against other people or, as a group, against other groups or other countries.
5.	Avoid letting parties define themselves by simply quoting their leaders' restatements of familiar demands or positions.	<p>Enquire for yourself into goals, needs and interests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are people on the ground affected by the conflict in everyday life? • What do they want changed? • Who else is speaking up for them besides their political leaders? • Is the position stated by their leaders the only way or the best way to achieve the changes they want? • This may help to empower parties to clarify their needs and interest and articulate their goals, making creative outcomes more likely.
6.	Avoid concentrating always on what divides the parties, on the differences between what each say they want.	Try asking questions which may reveal areas of common ground, and leading your report with answers which suggests that at least some goals, needs and interests may be compatible or shared.
7.	Avoid only reporting the violent acts and describing the horror. If you exclude everything else, you suggest that the only explanation for violence is previous violence (revenge); the only remedy, more violence (coercion/punishment).	Show how people have been blocked and frustrated or deprived in everyday life as a way of explaining how the conditions for violence are being produced.
8.	Avoid blaming someone for 'starting it'.	Try looking at how shared problems and issues are leading to consequences which all the parties say they never intended.
9.	Avoid focusing exclusively on the suffering, fears and grievances of only one party. This divides the parties into 'villains' and 'victims' and suggests that coercing or punishing the villains represents a solution.	Treat as equally newsworthy the suffering, fears and grievance of all parties.
10.	Avoid 'victimising' languages like 'devastated' 'defenceless', 'pathetic',	Report on what has been done and could be done by the people. Don't just ask them

	<p>'tragedy' which only tells what has been done and could be done for a group of people by others. This is disempowering and limits the options for change.</p>	<p>how they feel; also ask them how they are coping and what they think. Can they suggest any solutions?</p>
11.	<p>Avoid the imprecise use of emotive words to describe what has happened to people, such as the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tragedy is a form of drama, originally in Greek, in which someone's fault or weakness ultimately proves his or her undoing? • Assassination is the murder of a head of state. • Massacre is the deliberate killing of people known to be unarmed and defenseless. Are we sure? Or do we not know? Might these people have died in battle? • Systematic e.g. raping or forcing people from their homes. Has it really been organized in a deliberate pattern, or have there been a number of unrelated albeit extremely nasty incidents? 	<p>Always be precise about what we know. Do not minimise suffering but reserve the strongest language for the gravest situations or you will beggar the language and help to justify disproportionate responses which escalates the violence.</p>
12.	<p>Avoid demonising adjectives like 'vicious', 'cruel', 'brutal', 'barbaric'. These always describe one party's view of what another party has done. To use them puts the journalists on that side and helps to justify an escalation of violence.</p>	<p>Report what you know about the wrongdoing and give as much information as you can about the reliability of other people's report or descriptions of it. If it is still being investigated, say so, as a caution that the truth may not yet be known.</p>
13.	<p>Avoid demonising labels like 'terrorist', 'extremist', 'fanatic', 'fundamentalist'. These are always given by 'us' to 'them'. No one ever uses them to describe himself or herself. And they are difficult, if not impossible, to apply impartially in every instance where they would be warranted.</p>	<p>Try calling people by the name they give themselves. Or be more precise in your descriptions e.g. 'bombers', and for the attacks of September 11th, 'suicide hijackers' are both less partisan and give more information than 'terrorists'.</p>
14.	<p>Avoid focusing exclusively on the human rights abuses, misdemeanours</p>	<p>Try to name all wrongdoers and treat allegations made by all parties in a conflict</p>

	and wrongdoings of only one side	equally seriously. This means, not taking at face value, but instead making equal efforts to establish whether any evidence exists to back them up, treating the victims with equal respect and the finding and punishing all wrongdoers as being of equal importance.
15.	Avoid making an opinion or claim seem like established fact. This is how propaganda works-e.g. the campaign, primarily aimed at US and UK media, to link Saddam Hussein to 'international terrorism' in early 2002. Under a headline linking Iraq to the Taliban and al-Qaeda, came the claim that Iraqi military intelligence officers are said to be assisting extreme Palestinian groups in attacks on Israel.	Tell your readers or audience who said what. That way to avoid implicitly signing up yourself and your news service to the allegations made by one party in the conflict against another.
16.	Avoid greeting the signing of documents by leaders which bring about military victory or a ceasefire as necessarily creating peace.	Try to report on the issues which remain, and on the needs and interests of those affected. What has to happen in order to remove the incentives for further acts of violence? Ask what is being done to strengthen the means on ground to handle and resolve conflict non-violently, to address development or structural needs in the society and to create a culture of peace?
17.	Avoid waiting for leaders on 'our' side to suggest or offer solutions.	Pick up and explore peace initiatives wherever they come from. As questions of politicians e.g. about ideas put forward by grassroots organisations. Assess peace perspectives against what you know about the issues the parties are really trying to address; do not simply ignore them because they don't coincide with established positions. Include images of a solution, however partial or fragmentary-they may help to stimulate dialogue.

Adapted from Lynch and McGoldrick (2005:28-31).

Module III

Reporting Elections

Training objective

The objective of this module is to equip journalists with the basic knowledge and skills of election reporting. The goal is to train journalists on how to apply the peace journalism model in their reportage of elections so as to ensure free, fair and nonviolent elections.

Expected outcomes

After covering the training topics under module two, participants are expected to understand the following:

- Clearly identify the important issues that need attention of the media during the electoral process and the professional way of covering it.
- Recognize the need to be fair, impartial and objective in their reportage
- Sensitize the public on the need to be peace and nonviolent throughout the electoral process.

Reporting the electoral process

A lot goes into elections; campaigns, the voting process, vote counts and recounts, declaration of winners and/or losers etc. The journalists, as society's watchdog is expected to be part of the entire process as a social responsibility to society. Politicians, recognizing the immense influence the media wields in shaping public opinion often attempt to use the media as their mouthpiece and campaign platforms. The implication is that journalists become biased in their reportage.

Journalists are expected to be fair and detached neutral observers when reporting the electoral process, they should not just repeat all the words of the political candidate. They should also report details of the 5 Ws and H-the what, where, who, why, when and how. This will help the citizens make informed decisions on candidates.

The voting process

Journalists are expected to educate the electorates on the requirements of the voting process. Information about the election rules and processes are necessary to assist people in participating. This information includes defining how voters can register; the length of the campaign; who will count the votes; rules on advertising and media coverage; and who will impose penalties on parties or the media who violate the rules. The media must watch the process to see how well or if the rules are followed without corruption or favoritism to any one, or abuse of any group of voters.

Focus on issues not individuals or groups

Each political party will have its own views about what is most important, what the party promises to do and why voters should elect that party. These views are called the party policies or party platform or party manifesto. There may also be issues that the people believe are important but that some politicians do not want to talk about. Or there could be statements some political candidates make that create controversy. A professional journalist should report these issues and ask the political parties to respond. It is however important for journalists to ensure that they do not focus on individuals or groups in such a way as to disparage them in the eyes of the public.

Election Day

All functioning voting systems include a mechanism aimed at ensuring that people vote only once. However none of them are absolutely fool-proof. There have been frequent cases of individuals finding ways of recording multiple votes. Journalists should look closely at voters' rolls at polling stations to look out for repeats of names, addresses or occupations which could suggest multiple voting. One system used in several countries is to mark voters' fingers with indelible ink which stays visible for up to a week.

Transparency

One way through which journalists can ensure that elections do not turn violent is by being transparent in their reportage of the electoral process. For instance, during election, journalists hold the public the responsibility of ensuring that they let them know (possibly through photographs) that the ballot boxes sealed, that the voting booths are screened and that the Electoral Management Body and security organisations are fair and unbiased.

Post-election

Most violence breaks out after the declaration of results. Thus, journalists can help foster through their reportage by not unconsciously becoming cheerleaders of the winning candidate, but ensuring that the 'loser or losers' are given ample opportunity to air their grievances if any. Journalists should ensure that they give prominence to instances where the candidate who lost accepted the result with magnanimity. Journalists should also encourage politicians to grant interviews encouraging their supporters to eschew violence.

Icebreaker: The facilitator breaks participants into 5 groups. Each group is presented with a flip chart or board where they are expected to write down ways through which they can foster nonviolent elections through their reportage. The facilitator gives each group 10 minutes to report back. The facilitator writes on the flip chart the various methods given. The facilitator then uses the methods that emerge from the groups to prepare a code of conduct for journalists.

Appendix II: Pre-Training Questionnaire



Building capacity for conflict-sensitive media reportage of elections in Nigeria.

Pre-training questionnaire

Presented by

Joseph Olusegun ADEBAYO

Supervised by: Prof. Geoff Thomas Harris

August, 2014.

Introduction

I would like to humbly request your assistance in filling this questionnaire. I am currently undertaking a research aimed at ***building the capacity for conflict-sensitive reportage of elections in Nigeria*** and would request that you fill the attached questionnaire as sincerely as possible.

Please note that participation in this study is voluntary and information provided will be treated with the anonymity it deserves.

Thank you for your anticipated cooperation.

Yours sincerely,

ADEBAYO, O.J.

Interviewer Name	
Interviewee Name (optional)	
Interviewee Organisation	
Interview Date & Time	
Interview Location	

Please tick (v) as appropriate

1.	What is the title of your job at your organisation																																				
2.	What are the terms of your employment?	Full-time employee Part-time employee Freelancer Other																																			
3.	Please tell me in your own words, what is the most important role of journalists in Nigeria?																																			
	The following list describes some of the things the news media do or try to do. Please tell me on a scale of 1 to 5 how important each of these things are in your work. 1 means you find them extremely important, 2 very important, 3 somewhat Important, 4 little importance and 5 not important at all.																																				
		<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Extremely important 1</th> <th>Very important 2</th> <th>Somewhat important 3</th> <th>little importance 4</th> <th>Not important at all 5</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> <tr> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Extremely important 1	Very important 2	Somewhat important 3	little importance 4	Not important at all 5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5	1	2	3	4	5
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4.	To be an absolutely detached observer.																																				
5.	To act as watchdog of the government.																																				
6.	To provide citizens with the information they need to make political decisions.																																				
7.	Support minority groups																																				
8.	To set the political agenda.																																				
9.	Inspire public participation in political discussion.																																				
The following statements describe different approaches to news coverage. For each of them, please tell me on a scale of 1 to 5 how strongly you agree or disagree. 1 means you strongly agree, 2 means somewhat agree, 3 means neither agree nor disagree, 4 means somewhat disagree, and 5 means strongly disagree.																																					

		Strongly Agree 1	Somewhat Agree 2	Indifferent 3	Somewhat Disagree 4	Strongly Disagree 5
10.	My beliefs and convictions do not influence my reporting.	1	2	3	4	5
11.	I make claims only if they are substantiated by hard evidence and reliable sources.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	I always make clear which side in a dispute has the better position.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Reporting and publishing a story that can potentially harm others is always wrong, irrespective of the benefits to be gained.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	There are situations in which harm is justifiable if it results in a story that produces a greater good.	1	2	3	4	5
15.	I adhere strictly to my organisation's house rules in my reportage.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	I ensure that politicians of my ethnic group get favorable coverage from me	1	2	3	4	5
17.	During violent political campaigns and elections, it is my responsibility to present graphic images of injured and killed people.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	I owe the society a responsibility to report violence during elections whether or not it elicits reprisal reactions.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	Whether or not elections turn out violent depends to a large extent on media reportage	1	2	3	4	5
20.	With proper training, journalists can help foster peaceful elections	1	2	3	4	5

Appendix III: Post-training questionnaire



Building capacity for conflict-sensitive media reportage of elections in Nigeria.

Post-training questionnaire

Presented by

Joseph Olusegun ADEBAYO

Supervised by: Prof. Geoff Thomas Harris

August, 2014.

Date: _____

Title and location of training:

Instructions: Please kindly indicate your level of agreement with the statements listed below:

		Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1.	The objectives of the training were clearly defined.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2.	The training objectives were met	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3.	Participation and interaction were encouraged.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4.	The topics covered were relevant.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
5.	Insights obtained from the training will help me perform my duties better.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6.	The trainer was knowledgeable about the training topics.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7.	The time allotted for the training was sufficient.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8.	The meeting room and facilities were adequate and comfortable	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9.	The content was organized and easy to follow	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

10. What did you like most about this training?

11. What new skills have you gained from this training?

12. What aspects of the training could be improved?

12. How do you hope to change your practice as a result of this training?

14. In what specific way(s) do you think your reportage will foster peaceful elections?

15. Please suggest topics you would like future trainings to look into
