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JOURNALISTIC STRATEGIES IN CONFLICT REPORTING AND THE REPRESENTATIONS OF ETHNIC AND RELIGIOUS IDENTITIES IN JOS, NIGERIA: TOWARDS SOLUTIONS-REVIEW JOURNALISM

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Journalistic Strategies in Conflict Reporting and the Representations of Ethnic and Religious Identities in Jos, Nigeria: Towards Solutions-Review Journalism

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Abstract

This study examines journalistic strategies in terms of the appropriation of media logics in the conflict frame building process. Relying on three models: objectivity, mediatisation and news framing; the research interrogates the role orientations and performance of journalists who reported the conflict involving the 'indigenous' Christians and Hausa Fulani Muslim 'settlers' of Jos - a city in North Central Nigeria inhabited by approximately one million people. It provides empirical evidence of the strategies and the representations of ethnic and religious identities in the conflict narratives focusing on the most cited and vicious conflict in Jos which occurred in 2001, 2008 and 2010.

Drawing on in-depth individual interviews with print and broadcast journalists resident in Jos (to understand their role orientations/conceptions), and the qualitative content analysis of two Nigerian newspapers of 'Christian South' and 'Muslim North' (to know their role performance in terms of linguistic choices), the study makes two major contributions that demonstrate the 'strategic' role of journalists in the conflict. First, it establishes that a number of strategies were used: their choice of words to 'moderate' or 'water down' conflict: the implanting, reinforcement, community-aided strategies, among others. Importantly, it discovers the Neutral-to-goal-focused/pyramid strategy which presents a systematic frame building process that alters the nuanced inverted pyramid news structure. This evolving strategy advances an understanding of journalists' framing of ethnic and religious identities. Second, it establishes that journalists share membership of their ethnic and/or religious community influenced by residential segregation of the city, internal and external pressure and exposure to violence. The study demonstrates large scale participation by journalists in the conflict resulting in the escalation of violence. Thus, mediatised conflict research is revisited – placing media logics at the heart of the conflict. The research proposes a Solutions-Review Journalism (SRJ) as a framework for conflict reporting and argues that a review process is necessary to measure impact.

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Chapter One

Introduction to the Thesis

1.1   Chapter Overview

This chapter provides a guide to the thesis highlighting the knowledge gap and the phenomenon being investigated. At a glance, it discusses the study's theoretical and methodological contexts; summarises the contributions of the research and defines some concepts used in the thesis.

1.2   Background

The study builds on existing efforts aimed at understanding journalists' framing of ethnic and religious identities which constitutes news, and how it escalates and/or de-escalates violence. Alubo (2009, p. 9) has defined identity as 'a combination of socio-cultural characteristics which individuals share, or are presumed to share, with others on the basis of which one group may be distinguished from others'. It is the perception of people about themselves and how they view others with whom they live and interact in their social environment. Whether it involves social groups within local communities or people living outside their home country – the diaspora community, the struggle for social identity remains a subject which draws the attention of many scholars across disciplines. Ogunyemi (2007, p. 17) argues that 'one of the dimensions of representation is identity. The efforts by minority groups to take ownership of their representation in the public sphere are a form of exercise in identity formation and production'. This assumption suggests that people want to be recognised by their social status (e.g., control of ancestry, political or religious association) which distinguishes them from others in a given community. Thus, it often leads to social inequality. The handling of social identities in the media has received considerable attention in scholarship because the journalists have the capacity to construct realities and shape

attitudes (Mano, 2015; Tenenboim-Weinblatt, Hanitzsch, & Nagar, 2016). Studies have revealed that many journalists in Nigeria often align with conflict actors within their ethnic and religious community by using enemy frames in their narratives (Gambo & Hassan, 2011; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Oso, 2011; Umechukwu, 2001).

This research examines the strategies of print and broadcast journalists who are behind the story of the protracted conflict in Jos. A number of factors (such as constant witness to violence, editorial policies, access to conflict areas, intimidation and trauma) accounts for this unprofessional conduct (L. Adamu, 2008). As such, literature on the coverage of the conflict suggests a robust journalistic reawakening that draws the attention of reporters, editors and news producers to the danger such action portends for co-habitation in the city (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012).

As a major step, the study highlights the antecedents of Jos which descended from a city of tranquillity to war (Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Lar & Embu, 2012; Mangvwat, 2013). Its people have turned violent – with journalists bearing witness to the 'extreme brutality' that has led to many deaths (Krause, 2011, p. 10). The study examines journalistic strategies under this circumstance given that conflict reporting portends danger for the journalists who engage in it (Allan, 2013; Behrman, Canonge, Purcell, & Schiffrin, 2012). Since the eruption of violence in the area, journalists have consistently reported it thereby attracting global attention. Recognising that previous studies have ignored the influence of journalists' exposure to violence on news reporting of the Jos conflict, and drawing from the Constructivist epistemology, the current research has focused on the most vicious conflict in Jos which occurred in 2001, 2008 and 2010 (Ishaku, 2012; Krause, 2011; Taft & Haken, 2015).

Ethnicity, religion, conflict

Ethnicity and religion are among the major causal factors of conflict across the globe; others being racism, cultural pluralism and xenophobia. These represent a diverse community in which social groups struggle for identity – a sense of being and belonging. Not only do these groups want to be recognised in their own rights; they often resort to conflict, or even violence, when their expectations are not met (Shorkey & Crocker, 1981; Young, 2009).

The debate on the multidimensionality of conflict has been sustained over the years. While ethnic-racial determinists (e.g., Mano, 2015; Neuberger, 2001) have identified ethnicity and racism as a major trigger to conflict, the multidimensional determinists (e.g., Kaigama, 2012; Hae S. Kim, 2009) argue that a number of factors account for this. But conflict in Nigeria revolves around ethnicity and religion because there exists an ethnic majority and minority consciousness and a seeming religious fundamentalism (Dowd, 2014; Gbilekaa, 2012; Pate, 2011). Studies reveal that ethnicity and religion are inseparable (Appleby, 2000; Fox, 2004). This is because 'religion is more than just a set of beliefs; it also encompasses community practices, socialisation functions, organisational structures, and a range of other features' (Neuberg et al., 2014, p. 199).

Nigeria is among the 55 conflict-stricken Third World countries where factors such as ethnicity and religion have influenced the behaviours of social groups leading to perpetual conflict (H. S. Galadima, 2011; Hae S. Kim, 2009). Its multi-ethnic groups are tied to various religious organisations with Muslims and Christians constituting the majority. Some Nigerians got converted to Islam since 1804 - most of them from the north, while Christianity was introduced in the southern part of the country in 1842 (Agbiboa, 2013b). Both religious groups have had a large following across the country although each still dominates the region of its birth. When people are engrossed in religiosity – the extent to which religion is engrained in their lives, as it is in Nigeria (Dowd, 2014), it can 'contribute substantially to

intergroup conflict' because there is 'incompatibility of values and competition over tangible resources' (Neuberg et al., 2014, pp. 198-199).

Over a century ago, the colonial administration of Lord Luggard formed Nigeria from two distinct constituents – southern and northern regions, which was a programme that failed to put the country on the path of progress. This arrangement, arguably, accounts for the country's ethnic and religious conflicts as the people had been, and still are, separated along these lines (Agbiboa, 2013a; Danfulani, 2006; Gbilekaa, 2012). The same is said of Nigeria's neighbours in sub Saharan Africa where conflicts of ethnicity, religion, racism and other social identities have ravaged many communities and destroyed their institutions (Mano, 2015; McCauley, 2014; Nyamnjob, 2015). Research indicates that 'people of Africa have known histories, geographies, ethnic groups, languages, gender, skin colours and continental identities' (Mano, 2015, p. 7) – which means that a variety of social groups exists on the continent. Hence, 'as long as people have different values and beliefs, they will see things differently' (Hamelink, 2011, p. 11).

Like many Nigerian cities with diverse inhabitants, Jos has a history of violent conflict. There was an outbreak of violence in the city on September 7, 2001 as a result of the clash between two rival groups – the 'indigenous' communities: Afizere, Anaguta and Berom, and the Hausa Fulani 'settlers'. The political space had been tense because the 'indigenes' resisted the purported subversion of their customary land by the Hausa Fulani who were said to have 'settled' in their land during the mining activities and trade (Ambe-Uva, 2010; Danfulani, 2006; Mangvwat, 2013). Both groups resorted to violence as an expression of their frustrations over the prolonged dispute leading to the death of over 1,000 people and the loss of huge material resources (HumanRightsWatch., 2001). Another round of violence occurred in 2008 killing 700 people. Between January and March, 2010, about 350 and 500 people had been killed (Ajaero & Phillips, 2010; Obayiuwana, 2010). Although

there was intermittent violence in the city which spread to its neighbouring communities claiming several lives, it was less vicious compared to the spates of attacks in 2001, 2008 and 2010 (Ishaku, 2012; Krause, 2011; Taft & Haken, 2015).

The 'indigenous' communities of Jos are predominantly Christians while the Hausa Fulani 'settlers' are mainly Muslims (Danfulani, 2006). Thus, whenever there was conflict between the 'indigenes' and 'settlers' it was perceived as a religious conflict. Both groups took advantage of their affiliations with religious communities to mobilise the adherents by implanting in them the notion that it was a religious war in which they were expected to participate in 'defence' of the faith. Orji (2011) explains that while the Jos conflict originated from the struggle for identity between the 'indigenes' and Hausa Fulani 'settlers', it assumed a religious dimension because both parties recognised the divide: the Christian 'indigenes' and the Muslim 'settlers'. He maintains that

> […] the principal actors are adherents of the two dominant or rival religions in Nigeria. The introduction of faith into the Jos conflict has widened the conflict, making it possible for the conflicting parties to attract sympathy from a wider community than if the crisis had solely played out as an ethnic conflict (Orji, 2011, p. 488).

Recent research has revealed that once an ethnic conflict has assumed a religious character, the parties involved become more violent and efforts to broker peace between them do not yield much results (Isaacs, 2017). The research argues that it is because there is 'an ethnically divided society in which religious boundaries overlap with ethnic boundaries. To be a member of one ethnic group, one must also profess a particular religious affiliation' (Isaacs, 2017, p. 204).

A body of research shows that journalists play a significant role in intrastate, interstate and global conflicts and the narratives they produce are inflated (Backholm & Björkqvist, 2010; Fahmy & Johnson, 2005; Gilboa, 2002; Novak & Davidson, 2013; Rodgers, 2012, 2013; Seib, 2013). Many conflicts in human history: the World War II, Yugoslavian conflict,

the Cold War (Saleem & Hanan, 2014), the Rwandan genocide (McNulty, 1999; Rasaq, 2012), the Bosnian conflicts (Banks & Murray, 1999), Ugandan war (Leopold, 1999) and the Russian-Georgian war of 2008 (Hummel, 2013; Nitsch & Lichtenstein, 2013) were either incited or aggravated by journalists.

For journalists to exert such influence on society, their strategies to 'put pictures in our heads' (Lippmann, 1922, p. 3) must be well thought out and implemented. Although D. Barker (2007, p. 2) recognises that 'the essence of good journalism is to […]'tell it as it is' without editorialising and sensationalising, in news columns […]', such strategies prevail due to pressures on the journalists, and because their 'habit of 'telling it as it is' has been compromised' (p.25). The journalists often 'devise a means' of reporting violence because they are 'required to communicate potentially distressing events in great detail to their audiences' (Novak & Davidson, 2013, p. 313). Therefore, to 'devise a means' suggests a strategy necessary for communicating distressing events.

1.3   Rationale for the Study

Shank, Brown, and Pringle (2014) have identified five types of rationales which describe the role of research in the context of a broader scholarship. In their view, a phenomenon that is worth studying should address any, or all of these conditions: **crisis** – the need to change the status quo for better results; **importance** – the essence of a given condition that cannot be ignored; **gap-filling** – to provide what was lacking; **depth** – giving a broader picture by way of analysis, and **commitment –** explaining the unique attribute of the enquiry and justifying its essence in the study. The current research has met all these criteria.

The researcher's experience of news reporting in Jos during the early years of conflict, and his subsequent engagement in journalism teaching at the University of Jos, where he conducted research and supervised undergraduate projects on media and conflict,

were the motivations that heralded the current study. He had once covered conflict/disaster beat from where he reported the killings of some residents and the destruction of property. At that time he realised that, for example, reports of one incident by many journalists did not reflect the actual violence; they were rarely reliable in terms of statistics of casualties and identification of victims and aggressors. This was a common practice among conflict journalists who soon came under attack by their critics, especially human rights groups. Like other intrastate, interstate and global conflicts, most of which have been blamed on the media (Cottle, 2006; Hamelink, 2011; Seethaler, Karmasin, Melischek, & Wohlert, 2013; Stauber, 2013), journalists have been accused of inciting and aggravating the Jos conflict (L. Adamu, 2008; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Plateau Indigenous Development Association Network, 2010).

These scholars have argued that journalists often take sides in conflict based on pre-existing ties to warring parties, among other unethical practices. In that sense, **crisis** had been established in conflict reporting which required an immediate remedy. There was the need for a journalistic rebirth or reorientation that would make journalists responsible and accountable. Drawing from the researcher's example that 'reports of one incident by many journalists did not reflect the actual violence'; it implied that some conflict journalists simply 'made-up' their narratives based on their imaginations rather than facts. Unlike the ritual of framing that looks at a story angle on which emphasis is laid without necessarily interfering with the facts (Phillips, 2015), journalistic strategies suggest that truth is distorted (Knoppers & Elling, 2004; Perrin, 2011). This practice portended danger for journalism as a whole, and it needed to be checked so that the 'crisis' of hit-or-miss reporting could be minimised. Prompted by this myriad of journalistic flaws, the researcher set out to examine the circumstances in which bias or sensational reporting is conceived and actualised, especially

in relation to 'indigenes' and 'settlers' as well as Muslims and Christians within a sustained conflict space.

The researcher also drew inspiration from the writings of former *Guardian* and BBC reporter Dennis Barker. For instance, his 200-page book, *Tricks journalists play: How the truth is massaged, distorted, glamorized and glossed over*, reveals the strategies employed by journalists in news framing. In it he admits that 'journalists have tricks of the trade' (Barker, p.1). But there is no research effort that examines these strategies by journalists reporting the Jos conflict. These journalistic practices aroused the interest of the researcher who sought to know the strategies conflict journalists had adopted in their work and the interests they served, aimed at **filling the gap** in literature. For D. Barker (2007), his experience in journalism has enabled him to understand the way news is produced – which may be likened to the culture of making up stories, or the journalists' framing of fictitious figures of victims of the Jos conflict as the researcher earlier observed. That journalists employ certain strategies in news production underscores the **importance** of the subject which cannot be ignored. An understanding of these strategies in the context of the Jos conflict was necessary.

The study also emerged to examine the media coverage of small-scale violence (Jos conflict - although it has been labelled as 'genocide', 'massacre', 'bloodbath') (see Danfulani, 2006; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Golwa, 2011; Krause, 2011) with the aim of controlling media instigation that prevailed in large–scale, well-known wars in places such as Syria, Afghanistan, Palestine/Israel, Sudan, Rwanda and Iraq. The focus on the coverage of the Jos conflict was not only borne out of the researcher's desire to investigate the process of reporting by journalists in the protracted conflict but to understand the nature of conflict that has been perceived 'out of the ordinary' (based on media accounts and literature), and to further establish its influence on the journalists. For example, Krause (2011, p.10) observes that Jos has experienced 'years of violent confrontations and extreme brutality [....] Despite

numerous peace efforts, tensions on the Plateau are at their worst today [....] The situation is so tense that residents fear that any minor incident could set the town ablaze again'. Given this scenario which implies that many journalists may have been caught up in this dilemma of reporting the conflict – witnessing the 'extreme brutality' and employing different strategies in the process - the research was worth undertaking. This **commitment** was appropriate in the prevailing circumstance.

Furthermore, like other small and large-scales conflicts on which volumes of literature abound, this study was initiated to support research efforts, in relation to media and conflicts. Having taught related courses at the undergraduate level the researcher's interest in this evolving discipline has spurred him to conduct this study in **greater depth,** aimed at mentoring younger scholars and developing a module for advancing media and conflict studies in Nigerian universities.

1.4   Statement of the Problem

Studies that point to the media's poor handling of the Jos conflict are numerous (e.g., L. Adamu, 2008; Ambe-Uva, 2010; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Golwa, 2011; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012; Zeng & Akinro, 2013), but all of them leave a great deal of the strategies employed by journalists in the conflict frame building process unexplained. The current study attempts to fill this gap in literature thereby providing empirical evidence on these strategies and the representations of ethnic and religious identities in the conflict narratives.

Research on journalistic strategies suggests that 'behind-the-scene' practices exist in journalism; that is, the unique approaches to the manufacture of news (Knoppers & Elling, 2004; Magen, 2015; Perrin, 2011; Rampazzo Gambarato & Tárcia, 2016; Robinson, 2015). Journalists use different strategies to manipulate the audiences at whom their news contents are targeted in order to achieve certain goals (Carvalho, 2008; R. Coleman, 2010). Former

Guardian and BBC reporter Dennis Barker argues that these journalistic strategies exist because the doctrine of ''telling it as it is' has gone out of fashion' (D. Barker, 2007, p. 87). He implies that many journalists have come to believe that the universal principle of reporting which suggested that they report events 'as they see them' without interpreting or ascribing meanings to them is unattainable. He claims that journalists want their audiences to understand the angles from which subjects are identified in their reports hence they devise different ways of communicating these.

While studies conducted by J. D. Galadima (2010), A. O. Musa and Ferguson (2013) and Rasaq (2012) deserve acknowledgement because they focus on identity politics and enemy framing of conflict in Nigeria (which include the Jos conflict), they have not produced any evidence on the strategies journalists adopted in reporting the conflict between the Christian 'indigenes' and Muslim 'settlers' in Jos. This research recognises that 'journalists utilise a number of tactics […] so as to minimise possible risks to their proclaimed reportorial integrity' (Allan, 2013, p. 14). Rather than investigate how these strategies of framing 'reality' of the Jos conflict evolved, scholars have ignored this important frame building process in which the 'strategists' (journalists) are participants. Exploring this phenomenon would go a long way in filling this gap and advancing conflict reporting research.

1.5   Research Questions

The following questions shall guide this study:

1. What factors influenced the practices of journalists who reported the violent conflict in Jos?

2. How have journalists' experiences of violence affected their framing of news on the conflict?

3. What strategies did journalists employ in reporting the Jos conflict?

1.6   Aim of the Study

The aim of this research is to understand the strategies journalists employed in news framing of the Jos conflict and the circumstances under which they made on-the-spot reporting decisions.

1.7   Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this research include:

- To examine the factors that influenced the practices of journalists who reported the violent conflict in Jos;

- To establish the extent to which journalists' exposure to violence influenced their framing of news on the conflict;

- To explore the strategies journalists employed in the framing of news on the conflict;

- To recommend ways by which journalists can contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Jos.

1.8   Theoretical Framework

1.8.1   The Frustration-Aggression and Peace Journalism theories

The Frustration-Aggression (FA) theory and the Peace Journalism (PJ) theory were examined to provide the foundation for understanding the nature of violent conflict involving rival social groups (the Christian 'indigenes' and the Hausa Fulani 'settlers') on the one hand, and the non-objective journalistic practice that offers alternative to war journalism as propounded by Johan Galtung (1973) on the other. Both the FA and PJ were used to establish the context of the research rather than frameworks for investigating journalistic strategies.

1.8.2   Objectivity, Mediatisation and News Framing theories

This study was, therefore, anchored on three journalistic models: objectivity, mediatisation and news framing, all of which examined the topic from the constructivist worldview situating conflict reporting in the realm of the making of meaning (see Chapter 4 for detailed discussion).

Although journalistic objectivity has long been criticised by constructivists because the act of reporting is patterned on subjectivity – selecting and interpreting codes (Crotty, 1998; Poerksen, 2008), it is revisited in this research to discover the extent of 'distance' journalists maintained from the Jos conflict which they reported, or what, otherwise, prevailed in the circumstances. The controversy that defined objectivity discourse in the last decades is unresolved: 'journalists position ourselves as being outside the news while also situating ourselves at its centre' (Kitch, 1999, p. 116). Thus, there is a seeming ambiguity in this two-phase scenario of 'being outside' the story being reported and 'at its centre' simultaneously. Previous research has probed this assumption: 'How do journalistic realities arise? Do journalists simply record events, or are they inevitably involved participants?' (Poerksen, 2008, p. 295).These questions were further probed in this research.

The mediatisation theory, which is still being debated because of the absence of a unified definition, is understood in this study in terms of journalistic strategies – the logics that define news frames (Deacon & Stanyer, 2014; Hepp, Hjarvard, & Lundby, 2015; Hepp & Krotz, 2014; Livingstone & Lunt, 2014; Lundby, 2014; Nie, Kee, & Ahmad, 2014). It holds that in every human endeavour, there is media involvement (Ekström, Fornäs, Jansson, & Jerslev, 2016). The logics employed in the reporting of the Jos conflict were examined.

News framing theory was also utilised in this research because it explains how journalists make reporting decisions (based on their strategies) to produce realities. The theory emerged from anthropology and sociology and it is 'a critical activity in the

construction of social reality because it helps shape the perspectives through which people see the world' (Hallahan, 1999, p. 207). The process involves an action to implant ideas in the audience, or put 'pictures in our heads' using a series of strategies (Lippmann, 1922, p. 3). Its adoption in this research was crucial as the journalists' strategies were identified in the frames that made up the conflict narratives. It was used to examine valence framing – the direction of news (positive or negative angles to conflict narratives), semantic framing – the choice of phrases or words to achieve a certain goal; and story framing – the central idea of the story (Hallahan, 1999).

The frameworks of these models have helped to explain the study from a constructivist point of view showing how journalists deployed a number of strategies in reporting the Jos conflict.

1.9 Methodology

The qualitative research method was adopted using two data collection tools: In-depth individual interviews (III), made up of 26 participants, and the qualitative content analysis (QCA) comprising 30 editions of newspapers. The choice of the research strategy and methods was to address the research problem appropriately given the nature of the investigation (Goldberg & Allen, 2015; Shin, Kim, & Chung, 2009). The first method probed the role conceptions of the journalists while the second examined their role performance in the conflict.

Two data sets emerged from this exercise and the analysis focused on the variety of strategies used in framing (including the types of frames) and the journalists' linguistic choices. The research design, process and methodology are explained in connected sequence in Chapter 5.

1.10 Research Philosophy

The study is a constructivist analysis of journalistic strategies. The social constructivist epistemology holds that human beings ascribe meanings to objects, or construct their reality as they experience their world (S. Coleman, Morrison, & Anthony, 2012; Crotty, 1998; Hutton, 2011; Kukla, 2000). It is described thus:

> Meaning and our perceptions of 'reality' are socially constructed; our ideas about the real, in turn, influence our behaviour, including how we communicate with others. Through this process we define objects, enabling them to exist in a social context (Keaton & Bodie, 2011, p. 195).

It means that individuals derive meanings from their everyday interactions with social groups which could produce a variety of truths – largely based on experiences, beliefs and situations (Creswell, 2014). The journalists whose strategies were investigated shared their experiences of conflict to which they attached meanings. Also, the reports which were analysed were a construction of the journalists.

Apart from the epistemology, this study also discussed other essential components of the research philosophy – ontology and axiology, the former being the idealist logic and the latter value-laden tradition (Johnson & Duberley, 2000; Pathirage, Amaratunga, & Haigh, 2008). The ontology describes knowledge while axiology refers to the values attached to knowledge. The philosophical stances underpinning this research have been discussed in Chapter 5 (see 5.3).

1.11 Contribution to Knowledge

The contributions of this study are summarised as follow:

- *First empirical work*

This thesis is a standalone resource material which provides evidence on the strategies of journalists in reporting the Jos conflict. Not only has the study made discoveries on the journalists' 'strategic' role in the conflict which had been in the realm of conjecture; it makes

comparison of frames emerging from journalists working for the media of both sides of the divide. Anchored on constructivist reasoning which would help potential readers to decipher the meanings derived from the findings, the study promises to aid teaching and learning among conflict journalism educators and students who, before this exploit, had to grapple with the non-existence of empirical work on the topic.

- ***Expansion of 'mediatised conflict' literature: Neutral-to-goal-focused/pyramid strategy***

The discovery of the Neutral-to-goal-focused/pyramid strategy by this research provides another dimension to understanding the utilisation of media logics in conflict reporting. It is a systematic approach to the framing of news in which the substance of the story is embedded in a pyramid structure (ascending order) (see Figure 9.3). The evolving strategy of framing provides evidence which supports the orientation of key thinkers in the ongoing debate on mediatisation that media logics are at the heart of its scholarship (Lunt & Livingstone, 2016, p. 466; Nie et al., 2014, p. 363).

- ***Towards a solutions-review journalism (SRJ)***

This research proposes the solutions-review journalism (SRJ) that would improve Johan Galtung's peace journalism and provide a roadmap for journalists who report violent conflict. This brand of journalism is emerging when the Solution Journalism Network (SJN) is exploring ways of strengthening solutions journalism through the introduction of solutions journalism courses in US universities (Thier, 2016).

The SRJ framework developed by this research (see 9.3.2.2), emphasises a review process to strengthen the SJ practice as the attention of conflict scholars has shifted towards research on sustainable global peace.

1.12 Definition of Key Concepts

Mass Media/ Journalism

The terms are used interchangeably to refer to media organisations that disseminate information to the public (mass media) and the art of reporting or writing for newspaper, magazine, radio and television – and online media – (journalism). In most intellectual discourses, both concepts are used synonymously.

Mass media concept is also understood in terms of mass communication but connotes the institution of mass communication which includes the new media platform. The underlying distinction - as adopted in this study and used by scholars as well as those engaged in this art – is that journalism is the practice which places responsibility on journalists (writers, reporters, editors, photographers, news presenters, producers etc.) to process and disseminate information in the right form and quality.

Indigenes/Settlers

'Indigenes' and 'settlers' are concepts that have been socially constructed (in many parts of Nigeria) to demonstrate the horizontal inequalities between two groups that have distinct ethnic cleavages - the former being the 'natives' with customary rights and privileges, while the latter are classified as 'foreign migrants' who are denied such rights (Aliyu, Kasim, Martin, Diah, & Ali, 2012; Alubo, 2009; Ambe-Uva, 2010; Egwu, 2001, 2015; Esman, 2004). In this study, the 'indigenes' of Jos comprise of the ethnic groups of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom (AAB), while the 'settlers' are the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group (in the context of the contestations over the ownership of Jos).

Ethno-religious Conflict

In Nigeria (and Jos in particular), the adoption of 'ethno-religious' conflict emerged from the experience of conflict across the country which establishes the relationship between ethnicity and religion. The conflict is interpreted as dynamic and sensitive because the actors are divided on ethnic and religious lines. In typically diverse communities, 'people can be grouped according to many characteristics, and most people are members of multiple groups or have multiple identities' (Stewart, 2014, p. 47). This convergence of distinctiveness is also recognised as 'hyphenated, conglomerate and hybrid' identity (Ogunyemi, 2012, p. 15). For ease of presentation, scholars often hyphenate both elements of conflict (ethnicity and religion) and merge them into a compound noun which describes the scenario of Jos (S. G. Best & Hoomlong, 2011; Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011).

It is not a mere experience of arguments between two opposing groups – Christian 'indigenes' and Muslim 'settlers' - but that of the use of small arms and weapons which has degenerated into crisis. What was regarded as conflict is today described by the media as the 'Jos Crisis'. In this sense, both concepts are used interchangeably in this study to situate it in context.

Aggressors/Victims

Aggressors are conflict actors who instigate others while victims refer to people of innocent disposition who suffer from the attacks of aggressors. In this study, the 'indigenes' and 'settlers', who are predominantly Christians and Muslims have been labelled as the aggressors and victims of the Jos conflict. Journalists are also believed to have instigated conflict actors against each other through inflammatory reports (H. S. Galadima, 2011; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Golwa, 2011; Pate, 2011). Some of them have become victims of the conflict they cover (E. Ojo, 2003; Pate, 2011). These terms are used in many contexts throughout the study.

Peace Building

This study situates peace building in the context of media role in the peace process. It emphasises journalists' social responsibility which confers on them the sacred duty of reporting 'freely' but 'responsibly' to attain the peace being yearned for. In conflict of identity and religion which this represents, peace journalism (Johan Galtung's concept) is adopted to prevent or manage conflict and restore the structures that guarantee peace and stability (Golwa, 2011; Hamelink, 2011; Okidu, 2011; Shinar, 2009).

Fundamentalists/Extremists/Fanatics

These terms are frequently used to describe people who are strong-willed and whose profession of faith demonstrates outward religiosity that is capable of inciting others of opposing faith. They are used by Nigerian Christians and Muslims to express their frustrations in the conflict in which they are actors. Its usage creates an impression that the action of the aggressor is intense and brutal.

1.13 Thesis Overview

This thesis is organised in nine connected chapters as follow:

Chapter One: Introduction to the Thesis

The first chapter is a lead-in chapter which highlights the motivation for the research; establishes the gap in literature and the current effort to advance knowledge in journalistic strategies research. It also summarises the contributions of the study to show its relevance at the outset.

Chapter Two: The Challenging Perspectives of Conflict and Journalism

This chapter explains the dynamics of conflict and journalism; their relationships and the role journalists performed in conflicts, drawing examples from European conflicts, the US and the 'Third World' Africa.

Chapter Three: Nigeria and the Dimensions of the Jos Conflict

Chapter 3 discusses the complexity of the Nigerian state which has given rise to ethnic and religious conflicts in many communities (including Jos). It explains these social identities and media interventions in the Jos conflict thereby providing the context of the research.

Chapter Four: Objectivity, Mediatisation and News Framing: Theoretical Framework

In Chapter 4, three theories which underpin the research have been examined as a framework for understanding the strategies of journalists in reporting the Jos conflict. They include objectivity, mediatisation and news framing.

Chapter Five: Research Design, Process and Methodology

Chapter 5 outlines the research process propounded by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2012) in which the methodology, the research philosophy, approach and strategy as well as the methods of data collection and analysis have been discussed.

Chapter Six: Presentation and Analysis of Interview Data

The interview data set is presented and analysed in Chapter 6. The Nivo Word Cloud and Word Tree have been used for illustration.

Chapter Seven: Qualitative Content Analysis: The 2001 Conflict

This chapter examines the contents of the newspapers selected for the study. It focuses on the 2001 conflict.

Chapter Eight: Qualitative Content Analysis: The 2008 and 2010 Conflicts

Chapter 8 concludes the newspaper content analysis focusing on the 2008 and 2010 conflicts

Chapter Nine: Discussion of the Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

This is the final chapter of the thesis. It correlates the findings from the interviews and qualitative content analysis data sets; draws conclusion on the thesis and proposes a roadmap for future research.

1.14 Conclusion

The first chapter has provided insights into the journalistic framing of conflict in Jos focussing on the 2001, 2008 and 2010 episodes – which have recorded the highest deaths and are regarded as the most violent in history (Ishaku, 2012; Krause, 2011; Taft & Haken, 2015). The chapter has demonstrated that ethnicity and religion are the major social identities upon which journalistic frames on the Jos conflict have been built (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012). Both identities have triggered most conflicts in Nigeria resulting from the 1914 amalgamation of the northern and southern protectorates (Agbiboa, 2013a; Danfulani, 2006; Gbilekaa, 2012).

Drawing on literature on journalists' role in the Jos conflict (e.g., L. Adamu, 2008; Ambe-Uva, 2010; Zeng & Akinro, 2013), this chapter has argued that the strategies used by the journalists to show how they inflated the conflict have been ignored. In order to examine these strategies in the frame building process, three questions have been posed in this chapter to guide the research: What factors influenced the practices of journalists who reported the violent conflict in Jos? How have journalists' experiences of violence affected their framing of news on the conflict? What strategies did journalists employ in reporting the conflict? These questions have focused on the strategies of print and broadcast journalists in Jos who 'manufactured' the news on the conflict. The questions have been introduced in this chapter to guide the process of data collection and analysis as shown in chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8.

This chapter has also discussed the motivation for the research which includes the researcher's experience as a journalist and teacher of journalism. In all this, the research aimed to address a crisis (the exaggeration of conflict narratives emerging from journalistic strategies); demonstrate the importance of the research (journalistic strategies in the Jos conflict which had been ignored); fill the gap in literature (due to the lack of empirical work on journalistic strategies in relation to the Jos conflict); explore the topic with greater depth

(through a qualitative process) and show some commitment that the current effort at exploring journalistic strategies in the Jos conflict is of essence. This rationale for conducting research as explained by Shank et al. (2014), was discussed in detail in this chapter.

The chapter has summarised the theories upon which the research is anchored, and the contributions of the study to demonstrate how the current research has advanced knowledge.

This introductory chapter has established the foundation on which the research is built. It has problematized journalistic strategies in conflict reporting and shown how the component chapters of the thesis are structured in connected sequence.

In the next chapter (chapter 2), a review of the relationship between violent conflict and journalism – which is key to understanding the role of journalists in global conflicts – is undertaken. The transition from Chapter 1 (the introduction to the thesis) to Chapter 2 was to, first, define the research problem and, second, explain the nature of conflict in which the journalists are participants.

Chapter Two

The Changing Perspectives of Conflict and Journalism

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines an array of literature on journalism and violent conflict to articulate the outcomes of related studies as a framework upon which the empirical research emerged. A literature review is an important component of the research process. It is 'a written document that presents a logically argued case founded on a comprehensive understanding of the current state of knowledge about a topic of study. This case establishes a convincing thesis to answer the study's question' (Machi & McEvoy, 2016, p. 5). It is aimed at exploring the influence of exposure to conflict on the reporting decisions of Journalists in Jos. In this chapter, the concept of violent conflict in the context of this research is explained drawing on previous studies (e.g., Allen, 1999; Allen & Seaton, 1999; Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011; Esman, 2004; Hamelink, 2011; Ikpah, 2008). The study therefore equates 'violent conflict' to war characterised by bloodshed.

2.2 When Conflict turns Violent

Conflict is a phenomenon of many contradictions because its impact on people is both positive and negative. Attempts have been made to demystify the concept in this study. Some explanations cast light on how it has helped in transforming the society; others describe it as evil (Weisel, 2015). Central to the discourse on conflict is that it is inevitable and emanates from the disparity of views, values and interests among individuals or social groups (Bashir, 2008; Esman, 2004; Galtung, 1973; Gilboa, 2002; Hamelink, 2011; Seethaler et al., 2013;

Shinar, 2009; Wilke, 2013). It involves human actors who are engaged in 'productive' and/or 'non-productive' dispute over a cause that is relevant to them. It is productive and desirable when it serves as an agent of transformation. It generates ideas that lead to positive change. It gives birth to new life. It is a platform on which a community thrives in every human activity. Hamelink (2011) argues that 'without conflict, there are no innovations in arts and technology [....] The basis for scientific investigation is that scientists disagree on almost everything [....] If there had been no innovations about the validity of theoretical constructs, science would have never moved beyond Aristotelian insights' (p.12).

Scholars have also argued that conflict could turn violent thereby creating suspicion among the actors and making people of shared identity warriors within or outside the territory of their habitation (e.g., Allen, 1999; Allen & Seaton, 1999; Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011; Esman, 2004; Francis, 2006; Hamelink, 2011; Ikpah, 2008). This description of conflict captures the thrust of this study as it upholds the position of these scholars and articulates the logic that violence in a conflict is unhealthy because it leads to destruction of human lives and material resources. In contrast to 'healthy conflict', as earlier discussed, which connotes a competition among individuals and groups through a peaceful process, violent conflict threatens domestic and global peace. It destroys human lives and structures. In this sense, violent conflict is conceptualised in terms of crisis and it is equated to war because it substitutes peace with violence. As Olsson and Nord (2015) explain that the definition of conflict depends on the research interest, the violence inherent in a crisis or war situation is implicative of 'violent conflict' conceived in this thesis. This apparent absence of peace in a social environment – a departure from a tranquil, stable society to a hostile one where the actors are bent on 'winning' a battle – has now received global attention. The Carnegie Corporation of New York, in 1994, inaugurated the Carnegie Commission on Preventing *Deadly Conflict* (italics researcher's emphasis) to intervene in violent conflicts

that were widespread. Provoked by these hostilities meted out to people by fellow humans, Oppenheimer (2005), in a twenty-eight paragraph prologue to his *The Hate Handbook*, wonders why such horrifying things occur. He writes that the human society is characterised by hate, bigotry, prejudice, racism, mass murder and other atrocities, the premise upon which many people say the world is at war.

Having examined the nature of war and how it has consumed many nations, Lawrence Freedman, a professor of War Studies at Kings College, London, predicted that 'stability is no more than a fond hope. Things will never settle down, and that is why we are unlikely to be able to stop worrying about war' (Freeman, 1994, cited in Allen, 1999, p. 5). He saw the world as a theatre of war because conflict which was a mere expression of opposing views that often led to peaceful resolution thereby stimulating development, became a violent social action. People resorted to organised violence over territorial borders, political and religious interests and other factors. Some accounts of global wars suggest that bloodshed became the norm among social groups during the colonialism and nationalism struggles of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries (S. G. Best & Hoomlong, 2011; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Lazzarich, 2013; Seaton, 1999; Seethaler et al., 2013; Strong, 2017). War was no longer feared by those who engaged in it. It permeated into the social life of people. They had a favourable perception of war as they were always 'exalting its mortiferous nature and heroic dimension' (Lazzarich, 2013, p. 39). Lazzarich maintains that it 'was transformed into a hymn of life [....] Thus the way was paved for war to be transformed from being a feared and fearful event to becoming a welcome, sought-after and desired event' (2013, p.43). At that time, a radical ideology was in vogue; that a society had to undergo 'radical transformation' before it could gain its worth. According to Papini, cited in Lazzarich (2013, p. 42), 'only when every faith will have been destroyed, a new culture will be born; only when chaos will be perfect, then the new order will be formed, and, with it, a new balance'. This account indicates that many

people nurtured the culture of war as a phase in the renewal process as there were agitations for autonomy, power and resources which were characterised by physical violence that had become an accepted social reality. It claims that even the sound of war was the people's delight – because they loved war and celebrated it. This suggests that war provided relief and glamour. For instance, Marinetti demonstrates a cheering war scenario: 'We shall go to the war dancing and singing' (cited in Lazzarich, 2013, p. 42).

On the basis of these accounts (see also, Hausken, 2016; King, 2001), this study argues that the emerging perception of war as event of entertainment, notwithstanding its horror and casualty narratives, soon became the attraction of global media, thus accounts for news framing on contemporary conflicts. Conscious of media role of surveillance (Chambers, 2016), and granted that 'organised violence attracts attention from mass media...because it threatens the lives, the security, and the livelihoods of large numbers of innocent people [...]' (Esman, 2004, p. 7), journalists have assumed this role paying attention to conflicts no matter the intensity. They have coined various terms to describe violent conflict such as 'genocide', 'ethnic cleansing', 'bloodbath' which people now adopt in their day-to-day interactions on violence. Some headlines of newspapers on conflict (See, for example, figures 2.1 & 2.2) reflect these metaphors which are not only sensational but tend to radicalise the audience who sees violence as a normal human engagement.

2.3 Journalism in the World of Conflict

The critical discourse on the world's conflicts in which social scientists – psychologists, anthropologists, sociologists – are engaged, is increasingly becoming complex as the dimensions of such conflicts and the strategies of engagement by the actors are changing by the day. As it has been observed in this study, there is a shift from the once perceived peaceful world to a world of wars causing colossal damage to humanity. In the mass media, the society was, and still is, bombarded with tales of war. For example, much was reported

about the European conflicts –the Seven Years' War, Crimean War, Franco-Prussian War; the war in the Middle East – Arab/Israeli conflict, Afghanistan, Sri Lanka, Iraq and Africa's multidimensional wars – Sudan, Liberia, Uganda, Rwanda, Nigeria, Central African Republic, etc. These wars that occur in varying degrees in many countries are relayed to the audience through the mainstream and social media.

According to Webster (2003, p. 58), 'war is dramatic, attention-grabbing [...] as such, it is a top priority for news makers'. He maintains that 'during conflict, combatants desire to have the media on board, so that what happens in the war is presented in ways that are acceptable to the wider public' (2003,p.64). The mass media, therefore, beam their searchlights on communities where these acts of terror prevail. People are now aware of the recurring violence in the world because reporters give account of them. The mass media make the production of news their business (Putnam, 2002); as such, they 'have become so concerned about the presumed delicacy of their audience that one must turn to contemporary motion pictures' (Seib, 2013, p. 11). The social, political and economic life of people has been transformed by Johannes Gothenburg's letter press of the nineteenth century (and other mass media that emerged thereafter) (Wikström, 2014). One of the favourite subjects of the mass media is war (Seethaler et al., 2013), because 'news during wartime can be described as hyper-news, where the conflict is infinitely larger than any day-to-day discord the audience might encounter' (Ruigrok, 2008, p. 295). People are interested in the intensity of human violence. They want to know the actors of the conflict – those who oppress and the ones who suffer loss (aggressors and victims). They are curious about the circumstances in which the actors have been involved. They want to know the strategic implications of the war on their lives. Seib (2013) argues that if the mass media were absent war would be less attractive because people would not take cognizance of it.
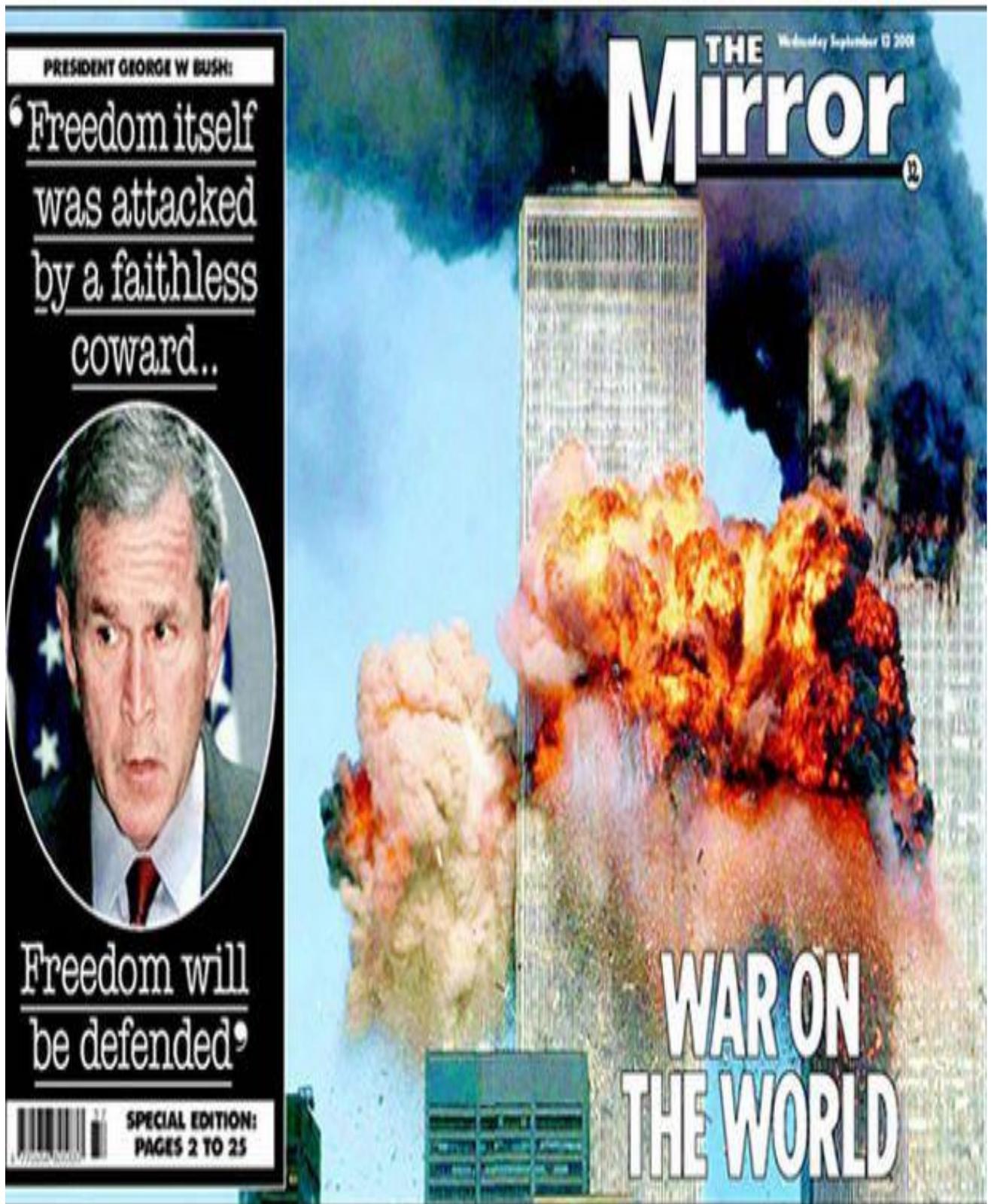
Figure 2: 1 Front page of The Mirror on the intriguing news about 'war on the world'. Source: https://www.mirror.co.uk

Inside
Special Report

Arkansas Democrat ❦ Gazette
ARKANSAS' NEWSPAPER

Printed at Little Rock • Wednesday, Sept. 12, 2001   arkansas *Online* www.ardemgaz.com   78 Pages 12 Sections   ★ ★   50¢

How many dead?

Terrorist acts stun America

In parallel attacks on the symbols of American financial and military power, terrorists crashed passenger jets into the World Trade Center in New York and the Pentagon outside Washington on Tuesday.

Two planes hit the Trade Center, the first at 8:45 a.m. EDT, the other 18 minutes later, leaving huge holes in the twin, 110-story glass and steel towers. An hour later, with ominous rumbles and colossal showers of debris, the towers collapsed. Witnesses described people on fire jumping in terror, including a man and a woman holding hands.

The plane that hit the Pentagon struck with tremendous force, driving through the huge outer rings of the five-sided building and into the parklike central courtyard at 9:40 a.m.

Barbara Olson, the wife of U.S. Solicitor General Theodore Olson, was among the passengers on that plane. She used a cell phone to tell her husband that the plane had been hijacked by attackers using knives and sharp instruments.

Another passenger jet crashed 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh at 10 a.m. A Virginia congressman, Rep. James Moran, said the intended target of that plane was apparently Camp David, the presidential retreat in Maryland, 85 miles away.

Casualties are sure to be in the thousands, but no one had a count Tuesday. The airliners carried 266 people, and there were no known survivors. That alone would surpass the death toll of the April 19, 1995, Oklahoma City bombing, which claimed 168 lives in what was the deadliest act of terrorism on U.S. soil.

Fifty thousand people work at the Trade Center, 20,000 at the Pentagon.

Federal authorities identified Saudi exile Osama bin Laden as the prime suspect.

President Bush was in Florida when the attacks occurred. With the White House under threat of attack, he was taken
See **ATTACK**, Page 8A

On the inside

ARKANSAN KILLED in crash; nation's flights grounded. Page 6A.

FEAR OF GASOLINE shortage sends prices soaring. Page 7A.

FALL OF TOWERS brings U.S. markets to halt. Page 10A.

SCENE IN NEW YORK carnage, crying, screaming. Page 15A.

AUTHORITIES scramble in LR, shut down, close buildings. Page 1B.

SATURDAY'S Arkansas-North Texas game on hold. Page 1C.

Because the stock markets were closed Tuesday after the World Trade Center attacks in New York, there is no business section in today's edition. Business news is on pages 10-11A.

The New York Times

Figure 2: 2 Arkansas Democrat Gazette. Source: https//www.wgal.com/national/911

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The above rhetoric headline of *Arkansas Democrat Gazette'*s story on 9/11 in Figure 2.2 is designed to call attention to the imaginative population of the world that perished in the terror attack on America. Of all the studies examined, media role in conflict is said to be crucial. If the media do not 'celebrate' violent conflict, as Seib (2013) has noted, the mind of the audience would not be tailored towards violence. Celebration, in this context, entails the emphasis on events of conflict rather than issues that promote common good which may not have attracted media attention. However, when the media fail to provide information on conflict in order 'not to celebrate' violence, the audience whose right it is to know, may be denied.

In a conflict situation, media role is twofold: the mobilization of public support for negotiations and peace building, and the promotion of violence among social groups (Åkebo, 2015; Joseph, 2014). The media can engage communities in sustained dialogue on peace in that individuals within the social groups may embrace one another. When this is achieved, they are said to play a pivotal role of mediation thereby becoming peace building agents. In contrast, they also serve as agents of war when their machinery is manipulated to trigger social disorder (Edy & Meirick, 2007; H. S. Galadima, 2011; Seaton, 1999), or when the journalists become 'manipulative servants of their owners' (Slavtcheva-Petkova, 2016, p. 68) by using their media to incite individuals or communities against others – which means that propaganda as a media technique is employed to promote violence.

Research on the role of media in social conflict has described the media institution as vibrant in controlling conflict which makes it an influential actor in warfare (Putnam, 2002). The parties in conflict use this instrument to advance their cause and as a consequence, the media are subjected to the powers-that be; who, in turn, determine the news narratives that are framed for the audience to consume (Terzis, 2008). These become the 'reality' of war. The 'reality' they portray is translated in the selection of items and the relevance attached to

them which are further constructed in specific ways to suit certain interests (Frame, 2013; Kuypers, 2010). Arguably, when the media report conflict, they tend to instigate one party against the other because of factors such as social, religious and political affiliations (Hummel, 2013; Stauber, 2013). In the prevailing circumstances, journalists would report the news their organisations will publish or broadcast. That is why when acts of terror are inflicted on people and the journalists report them, doing so requires some tact (Seaton, 1999). The nature of journalism under these conditions is critical. Interestingly, not all journalists embellish war stories to serve the interests of particular actors. Webster (2003) agrees that some journalists reporting conflict show ethical commitment and have a reputation for upholding the 'truth'. They are not ready to satisfy powerful interests.

Between these arguments lies the assumption that the audience is fed with narratives of social constructs rather than reality of war. Thus, there are both 'sensitive' and 'insensitive' media that attempt to 'construct' and 'deconstruct' the social environment in which conflict occurs between actors, implying that media framing in conflict, whether aimed at mediating between warring groups or inciting them against each other, is dictated by reporters' prejudices that distort reality (Siraj, 2010). Reality, therefore, becomes a journalistic interpretation of conflict which, in turn, is the perception of the audience about such conflict.

2.4 The Journalist Reporting Conflict

Reporting of conflict is another subject that constitutes ambiguity in scholarly debates, essentially because the circumstances under which journalists perform their duty are difficult. It is a challenging terrain in journalism. The journalists on this beat are aware that in the era of sophisticated wars and information technology as well as multi-channels, 'news dies faster now than ever before' (Gowing, 1995, cited in Seaton, 1999, p. 58). The traditional deadlines which they try to beat for their catchy headlines and breaking news on war to sell, sometimes,

make them disregard ethical standards because such pressure would make them receive news ingredients from easily accessible sources.

A reasonable amount of literature is available on conflict reporting across the world. What is evident in the accounts is that journalists' experiences of conflict influence their reporting decisions (Backholm & Björkqvist, 2010; Fahmy & Johnson, 2005; Novak & Davidson, 2013; Seib, 2013). H. Tumber and Prentoulis (2003) claim that while all journalists experience physical and psychological challenges, those who report conflict face the most severe conditions as their assignment, which demands diligence and the ability to withstand social isolation, stress and other conditions, poses greater risks. When they survive the physical attacks which could result from organised violence by the actors, they may be infected with diseases or, in many cases, they are traumatized. Research also reveals that people who witness acute violence are likely to experience trauma (Declercq, Vanheule, Markey, & Willemsen, 2007; Obilom & Thacher, 2008), as a result of 'exposure to an event that provokes fear, helplessness, or terror in response to the threat of injury or death' (Obilom & Thacher, 2008, p. 1108; see also American Psychiatric Association, 1994). In their study, Keats and Buchanan (2013, p. 221), (see also B. Zelizer & Allan, 2011), assert that since their work exposes them to risk and are often physically close to victims and survivors of conflict, ' the cumulative effects of witnessing the trauma of others can potentially put the observer at risk for developing traumatic stress symptoms'. The effect of this exposure to violence on the traumatised journalists is a possible adoption of a series of strategies in reporting the conflict as a way of overcoming the trauma. This implies that the way and manner in which the violence may be reported could be influenced by that exposure. Also, their sentiments – based on the traumatic conditions (for example, seeing how their 'fellow' Muslims or Christians are killed) – can make them come up with new ways of reporting the violence.

For journalists reporting conflict, theirs is to communicate the distressing details to their audience (Novak & Davidson, 2013); as such, they make observation a yardstick for framing the news in the right form and quality. This is crucial if they must succeed on the job; yet it contradicts the principle that being distant from those gory scenes is a defence mechanism against distress (Rose et al., 2004, cited in Novak & Davidson, 2013). The news on war is heart-piercing and once it occurs, journalism demands that the public should know. Advocates of 'ideal' journalistic principle argue that reporting the war about what you see without putting it in context to aid understanding of the audience constitutes bad journalism (Novak & Davidson, 2013; Seib, 2013). They believe that both the ***what*** (observed at warfare) and ***why*** (an insight into the war or personal interpretation of the scene of war) would make much meaning.

Further studies support the incorporation of ideas into war stories by the journalists. They admit that 'objectivity' is a good principle but it is unattainable in the journalistic process (Mothes, 2016; Post, 2014). While objectivity demands some degree of detachment from the subject being reported, the practice itself is influenced by personal bias which means that it is difficult to be objective (H. Tumber & Prentoulis, 2003). The implication is that the process of selecting and constructing the news is subjective. There is no single pathway to explaining journalistic objectivity as scholars vary in their evaluation of the concept. Some scholars have argued that embedding journalism, a practice in which journalists were integrated in the events they covered in order to provide perspectives about their subjects, followed the criticisms that trailed objectivity theory (Russ-Mohl, 2013; Seib, 2013; Wilke, 2013). They believe that the bias of the journalists must prevail in the framing process.

Embedded reporting pertained to inclusion of journalists in the invasion of Iraq in 2003 by the United States military troops (Ganey, 2004; Hun Shik Kim, 2012). They worked and travelled with the military and were embedded in combat units for a long time. As

'embeds' emerged during the war, there existed unilateral or non-embedded reporters who covered the war independently and never sought the protection of the military (Hun Shik Kim, 2012; Pfau et al., 2004) . Embedding journalism was a new strategy by the US at winning the war which required the coverage of war by the journalists and reporting it as the military would like the audience to receive it. Journalists relied on the military for news as a result of which they refrained from carrying stories on the war that were 'injurious' to their emerging military masters. It allowed first-hand information on the war which meant quality news for the audience (Fahmy & Johnson, 2005; Howard Tumber, 2006). Studies have not clearly revealed the reason for embedding journalists in the military operations of the US. However, it was believed to be a strategy that enabled journalists to report the war from the point of view of the US troops so that the misleading information purportedly peddled about the US action could be dispelled (Pfau et al., 2004). A statement credited to Bryan Whitman, deputy assistant secretary of defence for media operations, cited in Pfau et al. (2004), said: 'We recognised early on that we needed to make truth an issue should there be a military campaign because Saddam Hussein was a practiced liar, a master of deception', and in order that people may know about the US operation, there was the need for 'objective third-party accounts from professional observers' (p.75).

Ironically, media critics have been engaged in debate on the performance of embedded journalists, some of whom insist that the practice undermined the integrity and autonomy of journalists reporting war (Brandenburg, 2007; Hun Shik Kim, 2012; Howard Tumber, 2006). According to them, during the embedding regime, censorship of news by the military prevailed and only a portion of the occurrences was reported while other perspectives were ignored thereby denying the public the information it deserved. Some journalists observed that it was dangerous for reporters to be close to the subjects they were covering because truth about the war for which embedding was initiated would be

economised (Pfau et al., 2004). Seib (2013) expresses concern that if the news media become an arm of the military then the public would not have an alternative viewpoint. The embedded system meant that the media were hijacked by the military as they took sides and remained 'patriotic' to the American state against the much acclaimed journalistic principle. They could no longer report the real war in Iraq because the military determined what they covered. For example, there were rules that governed media coverage of the war which were revised at reasonable intervals. The embedded journalists were barred from identifying fallen US military soldiers by their names and other labels until permission was granted by the families of the deceased soldiers. The rule also forbade embedded journalists from using videos, photographs and images of wounded soldiers at war (Brandenburg, 2007; Hun Shik Kim, 2012; H. Tumber, 2004). In the circumstance where they violated the media ground rules, they faced sanctions from the troops that integrated them (Kamber & Arango, 2008, cited in Hun Shik Kim, 2012). In a comparative study on journalists' perceptions of embedded and unilateral reporting in Iraq warfare, Hun Shik Kim (2012) reveals that while personal judgment of reporters prevailed during the war, both reporting approaches – embedded and unilateral – should compensate each other because of their capacity to offer the audience different perspectives of reality.

B. Zelizer and Allan (2011) argue that journalists who report conflict – whether embedded or unilateral – experience trauma which necessarily influences their framing of news. Once they observe human's cruelty, the trauma inherent in it hardly varnishes because it 'does not disappear lightly. It lingers, seems to fade, and then re-emerges when least expected' (2011, p.2). When these war observers construct the news that depicts violence and the audience consumes this reality, it is said to traumatise the consumer who, in devastation, may switch over to another medium or turn off the medium that produced such violence. If the consuming audience is traumatised by listening, viewing or reading, what would become

of the journalists whose experience of the war is translated into reality of the consumer? Some journalists who were traumatised by the attacks on the World Trade Centre in America soon became patriotic by framing media contents that expressed nationalistic sentiments which implied that the terrorist attacks they witnessed were horrifying (Waisbord, 2011). They saw America as 'their' nation and as a part of the cultural community, they used their media to 'sing a unity song' in their editorial columns and on the airwaves.

In the aftermath of the 9/11 attacks, some articles in the newspapers articulated the journalists' sentiments: 'One nation indivisible', 'God bless America', 'We gather together' (Waisbord, 2011, p. 278). This emerging journalistic patriotism was necessitated by the attacks. The journalists did not report the attacks 'objectively' but immersed themselves 'subjectively' to chart an American nationalistic cause – 'we', and condemn the evil done to America. Waisbord (2011) maintains that 'journalists who eschewed professional rules and acted like any other citizen, full of patriotism and emotion, showed allegiance to the values of the community at large' (p.280).

It is commonplace to say that in reporting conflict, truth is framed as a result of reporters' selection, representation and translation of reality which in turn influence the perceptions of the audience (Silverstone, 2011). In many countries of the world where violent conflicts have erupted, the reporters have displayed this act in a variety of ways. The more they frame the conflicts, the more people perceive this reality. People know about conflicts and experience them through the media and their perceptions are determined by the nature of coverage of such conflicts (Joseph, 2014). The strategies of framing make a difference in the way and manner a particular conflict is understood – its intensity, for instance, could be horrific to an audience or mild and tolerable to another, yet the same conflict. During the war, reporters are generally concerned with balancing freedom with social responsibility because of consciousness of the ideology of national security (G. G. Barker, 2012). But since news

itself is a product of choice and determined by an array of interests, most reports about conflicts are flawed by certain elements that stir up violence (Joseph, 2014; Rolston, 2007). The authors argue that throughout world history the media have helped in the spread of violence and paid less attention to issues that unite social groups, prevent and/or manage conflict. Reporters who work for established media organisations – whether privately owned or state controlled – have allowed the ideologies of their owners to influence their coverage of conflict (Gilboa, 2002; Hummel, 2013). A few examples in which social, political and other factors have manifested in conflict reporting across the world suffice.

2.5 **The Four European Wars**

Journalists who covered the early European conflicts – especially what was later known as the four European wars (Seven years' war, Crimean war, Franco–Prussian war and World War I) - engaged, to a large extent, in propaganda reporting (Barber, 2014; Ciupei, 2012; Richardson, 2008; Roshwald, 2012; Stauber, 2013). During the seven years' war, newspapers depended on field journals and war diaries to frame the news about Austria, France and conjuring up images of Prussia as the enemy. Strangely, however, a new style of reporting emerged during the Crimean war because the journalists reported the war from the battlefield (Stauber, 2013). This on-the-spot witnessing popularised *The Times'* William Russell as the first war correspondent (Seethaler et al., 2013). In the era of Franco-Prussian war, journalists threw their weights behind the war against France and, in principle, disregarded the policy of national unification. The World War I witnessed the involvement of war reporters in the patriotic mission serving as 'additional weapon in the generals' hands' (Stauber, 2013, p. 28; see also Roshwald, 2012). They acted the script of the military and only the 'facts' from the point of view of the soldiers became news, as a result of which 'neutrality, objectivity and detachment are suspended [....]' (H. Tumber & Prentoulis, 2003, p. 225).

British journalists were embedded in the war between Britain and Argentina over the Falklands islands in the South Atlantic (Joseph, 2014; Pfau et al., 2004). The reporters were selected and attached to the British armed forces; took instructions from the military on 'newsworthy' items and reported them as they were handed down. Again, the news was spiced with military narratives which in turn became the audience perception of the war.

2.6.   The Northern Ireland Conflict

Northern Ireland is one of Europe's war-torn societies because of the sustained struggle between its 'settler' Protestant population that preferred the region to remain in the United Kingdom and the 'native' Catholic population that desired to leave the UK and be reunited with the Republic of Ireland. As a result, the two factions raised strong military groups to achieve their respective goals through the use of force. For several decades, the Protestants used the Ulster Volunteer Force (UVF) while the Catholics were defended by the Irish Republican Army (IRA) leading to large scale violence with devastating consequences (Cairns & Darby, 1988; Coakley & Todd, 2014; Ruane, 1996; Trew, Muldoon, McKeown, & McLaughlin, 2009). Previous research has claimed that 'in this 'war' over 3,000 people have died out of a population of 1.5 million in a part of Ireland about the same size as Wales. The conflict costs in excess of £2 billion a year and has dragged on for over a quarter of a century. Millions of words have been spoken and written about it. Yet Northern Ireland has been very low on the political agenda' (Miller, 1994, p. 3). The Northern Ireland 'Troubles' have been linked to the occupation of the Northern Irish territory by the English during the Protestant Reformation in Western Europe in the 16th Century. Northern Ireland suddenly witnessed the influx of 'foreigners […] who spoke a different language and most of whom were Protestant in contrast to the native Irish who were Catholics'(Cairns & Darby, 1988, p. 755). The authors above used two concepts: 'foreigners' and 'native' to distinguish between the English

Protestants who had invaded the North of Ireland, on the one hand and the Irish Catholics who had occupied the island before the 16th century on the other. Both the 'foreigners' and 'natives' had been differentiated by their religious identities: Protestanism and Catholism. In some iteration, the foreigners and natives are described as 'Protestant settlers and the Irish' (Szczecinska-Musielak, 2016, p. 124). The foreigners took possessions of the Northern Irish territory as they occupied '95% of the land, which they had confiscated from the natives' (Cairns & Darby, 1988, p. 755) thereby forming a majority in the region. This oppression was resisted by the native Irish Catholics resulting in the separation of the North and South – the former being dominated by Protestants and recognised as a region of the United Kingdom, and the latter a Catholic-dominated territory which became the Republic of Ireland (Cairns & Darby, 1988; Coakley & Todd, 2014; McVea, 2012). With this demarcation, the native Irish Catholics formed the minority in Northern Ireland constituting 38% compared to the Protestant population of 50% (Cairns & Darby, 1988). As a consequence, the natives lost grip of the region and became victims of injustice and social isolation which were perpetrated by the Protestant 'foreigners' (Trew et al., 2009). In terms of unemployment, housing and education in particular, Cairns and Darby (1988, p. 755) make this comparison:

> 23% of Catholic men are unemployed versus 9% of Protestant men […] more than twice as many Catholic households are dependent on social security, and there are fewer Catholic home owners. More Catholic children (12%) than Protestant (8%) leave school lacking any formal education, and fewer Catholic children (35%) attend grammar schools (the most likely route to a university education) than Protestant children (42%).

This statistics shows a slant in the distribution of resources and the provision of social security as a result of which Catholic revolutionists challenged the existent order in the 1920s, 1940s and 1950s. The campaign for liberation continued until the 1960s when violence broke out in the region between the Protestants and Catholics which lasted for

several decades. Szczecinska-Musielak (2016, p. 122) explains that during this period, 'the Catholic community was pushed to the margins of social life' hence the protests.

Journalists were on hand to report the violence in Northern Ireland. Some of them performed their role as mediators by reporting 'both sides' while highlighting issues that bordered on their general wellbeing rather than their differences – a strategy which helped in achieving the Belfast peace agreement (Gadi Wolfsfeld, 2004). But Rolston (2007) argues that journalists who reported the conflict failed to explain the facts emerging from the violence as their reports 'served less to enlighten or encourage dialogue which might lead to political resolution' (p.347). Another angle to this argument is that a considerable number of the journalists shared community membership with the conflicting parties and helped in articulating the ideologies of the Protestant unionism on the one hand and Catholic reunification on the other (Ruane, 1996). For example, Armoudian (2016), in a recent study on the Northern Ireland conflict, discovered that journalists who worked for the *Belfast Telegraph* and the *Ulster/Belfast News Letter* chose to align with the Protestants who believed in unionism (Northern Ireland under Great Britain) while journalists who reported for the *Irish News* showed solidarity with the Irish Catholics (who preferred the reunification of Northern Ireland). Even the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC) and the Independent Television (ITV) were accused of bias during the conflict (Rolston, 2007). The journalists of these broadcast organisations occasionally became 'anti- republican and anti-loyalist' (2007, p.347), as a result of which their credibility was challenged. In that sense, media audiences perceived the conflict in Northern Ireland as violent – a 'war' that seemed unresolved – which means that the media provided 'an arena in which such battles are fought' (Miller, 1994, p. 12). Furthermore, L. Curtis (1998, pp. 1-2) explains how the media covered the Northern Ireland conflict:

Media coverage of the conflict reaches the people of the North and people of Britain very differently. The population of the North is daily inundated with news. Local papers, hourly radio bulletins, regular local TV news broadcasts supplemented by the early evening magazine programmes all put out a stream of information about bombings and shootings, arrests and trials, the manoeuvrings of political groups [....] People in Britain, by contrast, receive only a dribble of news from the North, except when the crisis hijacks the headlines. They have no direct experience of the conflict.

There are two dimensions to understanding the relationship between the Northern Ireland conflict and the Jos conflict. First, the controversies revolve around ethnic and religious identities - 'foreigners/settlers' or 'natives/indigenes' and Protestants/ Catholics or Christians/Muslims (see, for example, Ambe-Uva, 2010; Cairns & Darby, 1988; Coakley & Todd, 2014; Danfulani, 2006) - which culminated in large scale violence. The territory which the natives were believed to have occupied for many centuries or decades, were being controlled by the foreigners whose religious orientations and cultures were different from theirs. Second, some journalists performed a divisive role in both conflicts by using frames that dehumanised 'the other' while others attempted to contribute to the peace process (Armoudian, 2016; J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Gadi Wolfsfeld, 2004). Although the contexts of both conflicts are different, the struggle for social identity is the underlying factor.

2.7 Covering the Kashmir Conflict

An array of revelations has consistently emerged on the news framing of the conflict –ridden Kashmir. The conflict is widely portrayed by the media, especially Indian-based newspapers, radio and television, as a mild territorial dispute between India and Pakistan. The invasion of Kashmir by over 700,000 Indian troops which was a reaction to an internal security rife and contributed to its escalation was underreported (Ahmed, 2010; Mathur, 2014).

The Indian media helped to popularise the country's political ideology on Kashmir and ignored the dehumanized conditions of the Kashmiri community resulting from the

nefarious activities of the Indian troops (Nazakat, 2012). In the pursuit of the so-called 'national interest', the reporters failed to pinpoint the troops' human rights abuses. Worse still, whenever civil society groups and the civilian population protested these, they were either not reported or given less prominence. The journalists relied on government sources for their reports on conflict thereby reinforcing the belief that Pakistan was the aggressor. Although Nazakat (2012) acknowledges Pakistan's role in 'arming the insurgents and promoting a separatist movement in the Kashmir valley, the situation was not entirely created by Pakistan. India has its share of the blame [....] Indian press is painting a rosy picture of normalcy, which is absolutely false' (p.69).

Based on these, it is pertinent that the hazardous nature of violent conflict and journalists' participation in it determine news frames. The journalists are not likely to be objective in reporting the conflict in which they have been imbedded. They would not report the 'other side' for fear of sanctions that may be meted out to them by intersecting social forces such as the troops that embedded them and the owners of their media.

2.8 American Journalists in International Conflicts

The US as a world power has been concerned with international conflicts portraying itself as a mediator that initiates and promotes global peace. Arguably this position is perceived by some nations and critics as a strategy for sustained global reckoning rather than peace promotion. The US is involved in propaganda activities to which it commits huge resources (Al-Rawi, 2013; Gorman & Seguin, 2015; Gura, 2015). It thrives on this because it integrates its journalists into the national agenda programme which places the America 'us' above 'them' thereby translating the ideology of a united America (G. G. Barker, 2012). Baker cites an anonymous journalist as admitting that: 'When we're at war, we're Americans first and journalists second' (2012, p.6). This profound patriotic spirit is passed unto generations in that journalists, as Americans, set agenda anchored on the philosophy of the government.

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American journalists hardly ask questions about official 'facts' because of allegiance to the state (Leavy, 2007). They sacrifice conscience and journalistic integrity for patriotic ideology; even the leading media in the country – the *New York Times* and *Washington Post* – are not without blame (Seib, 2013). Particularly, 'some of the New York Times coverage was credulous and much of it was inappropriately italicised by lavish front page display and heavy-breathing headlines' (Okrent, 2004, cited in Seib, 2013, p. 5).

A study on the cultural influences on the portrayal of Iraq war in the American and Swedish media, reveals that American media interpreted the war from the perspective of the military, which was a make-belief that US invasion of Iraq was a justifiable mission while Swedish media exposed the suffering of Iraqi citizens as a consequence of the invasion (G. G. Barker, 2012; Joseph, 2014). The Pentagon decision to embed journalists into the US armed forces suggests, in one part the provision of access to 'truth' (as claimed by the defence for media operations) (Pfau et al., 2004; Seib, 2013), and in part, a ploy to frame the news in its favour (Joseph, 2014). Research reveals that the embedded journalists established personal relationships with the soldiers with whom they worked and whose operations the journalists covered. Pfau et al. (2004) assert that some embeds often used the pronoun 'we' in their narratives to refer to the soldiers and journalists, implying that they were part of the troops. As such, the tendency for the journalists to be self-censored is evident because, as an embedded reporter puts it: 'You are sleeping next to the people you are covering; your survival is based on them' (2004, p.79). Thus, Cortell, Eisinger, and Althaus (2009) frown at the military-media relationship which the embedding programme upholds. They argue that both institutions are hostile to each other. The media serve as a check on government – including its military institution – which suggests that if the relationship between them is strengthened on any platform, the public would not derive benefit from it. They maintain that the idea of embedding journalists in warfare as George Bush's government launched on Iraq

is inappropriate because new technologies which provide journalists with sophisticated devices – mobile phones, remote-area network data systems, etc., would make them independent of military control. They may not be physically alert on the battlefield to capture the scenes of war.

Within the Southwest Asia, the US journalists also covered the Persian Gulf War in 1991 and America's invasion of Afghanistan in 2001. Particularly, when the government of George Bush hijacked Afghanistan airlines, the media portrayed it as a mere disaster rather than a deliberate military action waged by America (Griffin, 2004). In all this, the fundamental social condition which guides journalistic practice, whether at wartime or when society is enjoying relative peace is truth - the presentation of facts to an audience yearning for undiluted information. In mainstream journalism, facts are separated from opinions because the former are sacred and cannot be altered by the latter (Schulz, Hartung, & Fiordelli, 2012). The dilemma of reporters in conflict zones often emanates from their craft of news framing in which choices are made on reality. This process is complex given that the sacredness of facts may be compromised when reporters' personal interests prevail, or when they are involved with the subjects about whom they are reporting. A number of factors also accounts for this – allegiance to political and conflict actors, media owners, among other pressures (Kovach & Rosenstiel, 2003; Pintak, 2014). In his view, Pintak (2014) maintains that many journalists desire to translate this 'sacredness of facts' in their work but are, sometimes, distracted by the prevailing socio-political environment. For example, he argues, if journalists working for different news media report on an event, their framing of truth will vary; as such, '[....] you can share the same information , but not the same truth'(2014, p.489).

However, this analysis demonstrates that the hazardous nature of violent conflict and journalists' engrossment in it determine news frames. The embedded journalists are not likely

to be objective in reporting conflict in which their subjects become their masters. They would not report the 'other side' of conflict involving those who embedded them – dictators of the tone of news – for fear of sanctions that may be meted out to them.

2.9 Mirroring Conflicts of the 'Third World' Africa

Africa as a 'Third World' community – somewhat derogatory classification for 'developing' or 'less developed' world – has been a victim of Western colonialism and imperialism in which the ideology of the West influences its social, economic and political life. This order has been problematic as there are a variety of 'ineffective development paradigms designed in the West and inappropriately translated to Africa' (Mano, 2011, p. 203). Apparently, there are two dimensions to understanding Western imperialism – the international media framing and domestic media involvement.

In the first scenario, the Western media portrayal of Africa and the rest of the Third World is dehumanizing and an absolute disregard for social justice which the West is purportedly championing (Mbeki, 2010). It tells the African story negatively and reports about the continent all that borders on its interest while paying little or no attention to the cultures and values of the people (Adade, 1993; Hawkins, 2015; Joseph, 2014). During the colonial era, it became a strategy of power and the international media have not departed from it. One of the measures deployed to neutralise this Western-centric media regime is the adoption of the Black popular press by the ethnic minority, especially the diaspora communities that have claimed that the mainstream media have failed to represent their interests (Ogunyemi, 2007; Poindexter, Smith, & Heider, 2003). These communities have maintained that 'the mainstream press is not committed to content diversity in its pandering to a homogenised populist taste and set of preferences' (Ogunyemi, 2007, p. 19). Now there is a wide range of ethnic press in White-dominated communities across the world. The

second condition is the indoctrination of the 'Third World' Africa on the assimilation of Western culture and shaping audience perception through local media.

As powerful infrastructure for mobilization, cultural and social integration, the media of Africa provide the platform for translating this ideology, thus are dependent on the West. This study follows the argument by Shepperson and Tomaselli (2009) that ' the Third World cannot hope to develop a media system that is somehow detached from the West until such time as Third World people can independently build, maintain, extend, innovate within and sustainably operate these structures' (pp. 483-484). They conclude that if this part of the world is to attain media independence, it must develop its human resources and infrastructure suitable for it and which can translate its ideology in the right form and quality. In a sense, the picture painted here is that the media of the Third World are a shadow of the West and, though 'controlled' by the powerful indigenous agents, have contributed to impoverished conditions of such communities. Shepperson and Tomaselli (2009) maintain that 'for media to make their non-western mark outside the powers of the West, non-western nations must develop their social realms' (2009, p.485). They imply that the media should not celebrate the misery of people impoverished by disease, hunger and conflict and isolate their cultures and values. For instance, in Africa, they maintain that the media have become praise singers creating a divide between the West and the rest of the world, and reinforcing the belief that the all-powerful West is 'mightier' and 'wiser' than the Third World that is prone to anarchy and war. Furthermore, as Mano (2012, p. 3) argues, 'wars, acts of violence and deadly conflicts in Africa seem to get covered by the mass media especially when global powers' interests are at stake'. He maintains that the acts of violence meted out to Africans by external forces have been given scant attention by most global media brands. A famous African author, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, writes that imperialism, which these media propagate,

has turned reality upside down: the abnormal is viewed as normal and the normal is viewed as abnormal. Africa actually enriches Europe; but Africa is made to believe that it needs Europe to rescue it from poverty. Africa's natural and human resources continue to develop Europe and America; but Africa is made to feel grateful for aid from the same quarters that still sit on the back of the continent. Africa even produces intellectuals who now rationalise this upside-down way of looking at Africa [....] Unfortunately, some African intellectuals have fallen victims – a few incurably so – to that scheme and they are unable to see the divide-and-rule [....] (Ngugi wa Thiang' o, cited in Francis, 2006, p. 15).

Ngugi wa Thiong'o is faced with disappointment about how Africans, including the elites, are persuaded to think that their endowments are low-grade hence they have resorted to Western alternatives. He implores fellow Africans to urgently restore their dignity realising that their poverty profile is not a curse but should spur them towards development. African diaspora media scholar Ola Ogunyemi (2012) concurs that there is a greater commitment by the diaspora media to 'change the dominant 'mind-set' that Africa is a lost continent beleaguered by intractable problems of Aids, development and conflict' (p.21). He maintains that the Black African Diasporas' quest for information which focuses on their cultures and values has considerably increased. Although Ngugi wa Thiong'o is critical of Western influence on Africa resulting from the former's strategy of imperialism (Francis, 2006), as evident in media framing of the conflict on the continent (Adade, 1993; Joseph, 2014), this study argues that Africa's prevailing conflicts – ethnic, political, religious – constitute news hence should be reported. The violence involves human lives, and its devastation is, sadly, 'hot' for the audience. News is a narrative of any occurrence in a given society and its positive and/or negative colorations suit all shades of the audience.

In contrast, Shaw (2009) criticises studies that presuppose that African media are patterned on Western ideology. He faults the assumption that 'African journalism lacks both the power of self-determination and the power to shape the universal concepts that are 'deaf-and-dump' to the peculiarities of journalism in and on Africa' (2009, p.492). He argues that

although there were a handful of post-colonial African journalists who inherited the culture of propaganda journalism of the West, they developed a unique African journalism – the oral discourse style that tells the African story. According to Shaw, 'most African journalists...quickly reverted to their watchdog role in calling for national conferences to determine their collective political destiny. Thus, their use of the typical African journalism model of oral discourse in engaging their subjects and audience in their reports and editorials...was very much evident' (2009, p.500).

In comparison, the logic in the studies by Shepperson and Tomaselli (2009), and Shaw (2009) reveal a Western influenced African media system for the former and an African culture-media for the latter. Shepperson's and Tomaselli's argument is of essence in this research. The current study ascribes to their findings, primarily, because some scholars follow the argument in relation to international media bias against Africa which reflects the African media contents; that is, issues of conflict and disease rather than development form media agenda (H. S. Galadima, 2011; Golwa & Ochogwu, 2011; Mbeki, 2010; Skjerdal, 2012). This has prompted Skjerdal (2012) to propose three models – journalism for social change, communal journalism and journalism inspired by oral discourse to serve as normative African journalism framework. He acknowledges that studies on African media history have not documented models which define African journalism that distinguishes it from Western practice. These three models share basic characteristics which, invariably, may constitute a single paradigm. He proposes journalism for social change which identifies the journalist as an agent of transformation – change that is desired to develop the continent and its people. Its philosophy reflects the revolutionary standpoint of one of Africa's leaders, Kwame Nkrumah and other veteran journalists on the continent that the approach to journalism is one that the journalist gives honour to Africa by highlighting its potentials and promoting its values. It means that the journalist should have the African mind of change

utilising the media to promote human dignity and social conditions of the people who have endured human suffering. It does not agree with the Western 'rule of objectivity' that bluntly identifies right from wrong.

This model demands that African journalists should champion the cause of emancipation in their newsrooms given their acrimonious experience of slavery resulting from colonialism. Despite this new thinking, a recent study has revealed that China, like the West, is massively investing in the media of Africa to a level that it would be 'mutually beneficial, rather than asymmetrical [….] It has aligned with African countries not only for economic reasons, but also to gain Africa's support for its domestic and foreign agendas' (Zhang, Wasserman, & Mano, 2016, pp. 17-18) . The research argues that the establishment of China's media channels in many parts of Africa and its provision of infrastructure and human capital development in the sector would increase the country's influence in Africa.

The second level of African journalism – communal journalism – according to Skjerdal, points to the fact that the journalist's advocacy should translate the values of solidarity, respect for human life, unity and hospitality for which Africa is known. He concludes his theory of African journalism with emphasis on oral discourse; that is, human communication emanating from African culture and tradition. It upholds the system of oral discourse that solidifies relationships typical of the pre-colonial Africa – story telling, town crying, community rallies, poetry, music etc., which showcased the continent to the rest of the world and preserved its identity. In like manner, Shaw (2009) lends support to the oral discourse journalism in his critique of Nyamnjoh's study. These postulations, if integrated into an African journalism paradigm, Skjerdal argues, can redefine the practice without recourse to the Western journalism.

Conflicts involving ethnic, political and religious groups in Africa occupy significant local and international media space (Ankomah, 2001; Hae S. Kim, 2009). As dramatic and tragic as they may be, the audience sees in them horror, amusement and some bit of relief. Media narratives of the conflicts determine the audience's perception of reality. Thus, the media are in competition to appeal to the audience by their news contents. In his study on the relationship between media, conflict and development, H. S. Galadima (2011, p. 18) claims that, to date, the media have portrayed Africans as people who prefer violence to peace. The same could be said of other Third World communities such as the Middle East where a seeming crisis is prevalent (Seaton, 1999). The media coverage of Africa should focus on development issues including how to prevent and/or manage conflict ravaging the continent as a contribution to peace. As Hamelink (2011) explains, when the media instigate people to take up arms against one another; that is, 'collective conflict', it would lead to 'collective evil'. The Rwandan and Bosnian conflicts were two of many kinds in which radio and television stirred up hostilities that led to many deaths (Bloch & Lehman-Wilzig, 2002; H. S. Galadima, 2011; Kellow & Steeves, 2006; Rolston, 2007).

Unarguably, many countries of Africa have witnessed one form of conflict or the other – ethnic, political, religious – which accounts for the massive destruction of their national infrastructures (Ajakaiye & Ncube, 2010; Collier & Cust, 2015). For many war torn countries, among which are the world's poor, huge resources have been committed to reconstruction programmes, especially the maintenance of internal security, thereby denying the population good education, health care and improved standard of living (Adetula, 2006). The standard of life of the people has continued to dwindle while many have fled their homes and sought refuge in neighbouring countries where the inhabitants are yet to feel a taste of war.

Given that events of war attract the media (H. S. Galadima, 2011; Seib, 2013; Webster, 2003), the continent of Africa, part of which is ravaged by violence, has become a subject of media framing locally and internationally (Mano, 2012). Adetula (2006) explains that studies on civil wars in the world since the 1960s have identified poverty and low economic growth as the main causes, all of which are inherent in Africa. Some of these include political strife in Liberia and Somalia, ethnic conflict in Sudan, Rwanda and Cote d'Ivoire, religious and identity violence in Nigeria and some parts of the continent. Adetula names Angola, Congo, Burundi, Congo-Brazzaville, Central African Republic, Cote d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Liberia, Sierra Leone, Somalia, Sudan and Uganda as having experienced major conflicts in Africa in which many lives have been lost (2006, pp. 390-391).

2.10 Africa: Drawing Example from the Rwandan Conflict

Journalists reported one of Africa's deadliest conflicts in history – the 1994 Rwandan Genocide in which two ethnic groups: the Hutu majority and Tutsi minority were participants. The journalists' narrative focused on 'Hutus killing Tutsis and Tutsis killing Hutus' (Karnik, 1998, p. 614) which portrayed both factions as rebellious. The country's political environment had been tense and was characterised by horizontal inequalities. Karnik (1998) argues that such narrative lacked depth as 'journalists unaware of the history or politics of the region, who dropped into Rwanda for the few months of the conflict, were unlikely to uncover any deeper stories' (p. 614). He explains that a number of factors – such as the Belgian colonial system on which Rwanda had been structured – also triggered the conflict beyond ethnicity.

The post independent Rwandan conflict dates back to 1960s when the Hutus became the ruling elite displacing the Tutsis who – despite their minority status – had been prominent in the political realm. Tutsis constituted about 10 per cent of the country's population as a

result of which they endured social exclusion (Yanagizawa-Drott, 2014). This led to ethnic clashes between the Hutus and Tutsis. The latter feared that they would be overpowered hence many of them fled to neighbouring countries where they sought refuge and formed a rebel group – the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) that later conquered the Rwandan army and the Hutus militia groups (Abimbola & Dominic, 2013; Ingelaere, 2009).

The Rwandan Genocide, as it is generally known, was a media-induced conflict which led to about 1 million deaths and the displacement of 2.2 million people, most of whom were the Tutsis (D. E. A. Curtis, 2000; Yanagizawa-Drott, 2014). The Hutu-led government used the radio being the foremost news medium for the transmission of hate messages that encouraged the majority Hutu audiences to maim and kill the Tutsis wherever they were found. Both the state-owned Radio Rwanda and the Radio Television Libre des Mille Collines (RTLM) – a broadcast station established in 1993 by the Hutu Power (a government-aided group of powerful Hutu militias) helped in heightening the already tense political system and sustaining the campaign against the Tutsis. Although Radio Rwanda was not indicted by the International Criminal Tribunal for Rwanda for its role in the conflict compared to RTLM which engineered the genocide, the state-owned radio was neither on the side of the Tutsis (Ingelaere, 2009). Particularly, the RTLM

> […] led the propaganda efforts by broadcasting inflammatory messages calling for the extermination of the Tutsi minority [….] The broadcasts contained not only strong anti-Tutsi rhetoric that may have increased pro-violence preferences, but also information about relevant trade-offs: they made it clear that the government would not punish participation in the killing of Tutsi citizens or the appropriation of their property, but instead encouraged or even mandated such behaviour (Yanagizawa-Drott, 2014, pp. 2-3).

In RTLM broadcasts, journalists and some members of the Hutu Power used language and metaphors which described the Tutsis as mere cockroaches – the extent of abuse of their humanity. They said in the aftermath of the genocide that the new government – which

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emerged after the assassination of President Juvenal Habyarimana by the RPF – would not protect the Tutsis from attacks by the Hutus (Abimbola & Dominic, 2013; Yanagizawa-Drott, 2014). In this sense, the journalists were implicated as they 'prepared the Rwandan population for genocide and legitimised the final extermination' (D. E. A. Curtis, 2000, p. 156). This journalistic role in the Rwandan conflict confirms existing literature that the media can 'perform' and 're-enact' conflict (Cottle, 2006, p. 9). This role in the Jos conflict is understood in that context – how journalists used their media to portray the two rival groups.

2.11 The Journalist's Profession and Membership of a Conflict Community

There is a considerable amount of work that interrogates the professional role of the journalists in matters in which they have vested interests, especially when they are members of certain ethnic or religious groups in conflict (Berganza-Conde, Oller-Alonso, & Meier, 2010; T. Hanitzsch & Mellado, 2011; Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). This has also attracted much public interest because journalists have long imposed a self-image which suggests that their reports are objective even if they know that attaining this standard is almost impossible (Muñoz-Torres, 2012; Skovsgaard, Albæk, Bro, & de Vreese, 2013; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013; Weidmann, 2015). As previous research argues, a number of journalists believe that adopting the objectivity principle is a subtle way to earn public trust (Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). They see themselves as trusted members of the society who feed their audiences with undiluted news because their profession requires them to tell the story as it is. They try to detach themselves from the subjects they cover and claim to be acting in the public interest (Carey, 2002; Morton & Aroney, 2016).

But who defines public interest is a question that has generated wide criticisms (Chin, 2012; O'Flynn, 2010). In situations of violent conflict involving social groups of which journalists are a part, whose interests in the public sphere do these journalists serve? Does the

norm of objectivity prevail in such circumstances? Studies have shown that violent conflict attracts a large number of audience, as such, many journalists construct conflict narratives that tend to pitch warring groups against others (Staub, 2011; Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al., 2016; Weidmann, 2015; Gadi Wolfsfeld, Frosh, & Awabdy, 2008). It is further argued that the selection of news frames and the notion that what is reported may not be accurate, the audience tends to cast doubt on the integrity of the news media and the journalists (Weidmann, 2015). Amidst this uncertainty, journalism is still regarded by those who practice it as a profession that is noble, and remains relevant in shaping attitudes despite the ongoing digital transformations in the world (Areal, 2010). They believe that the interactive media platforms cannot replace the mainstream media for which the journalists work, because people have confidence in the latter in terms of the veracity of reporting.

The question posed at the outset on who determines public interest in the frame building process is manifesting. Bartholomé, Lecheler, and de Vreese (2015, p. 439) observe that journalists 'manufacture conflict frames' with a specific audience in mind – the process which involves coding of words in a particular way for the purpose of achieving a desired goal. These scholars argue that the news framing process occurs at three levels – the individual level, routines level and external level. They pertain to the role conceptions and values of the 'individual' journalists, their 'routines' of news production and pressure from 'external' news sources. Bartholomé et al. (2015) developed their framework from the 'hierarchy of influences model' propounded by Shoemaker and Reese (2013).

Like Hellmueller and Mellado (2015) who used this model to explain the professional roles of journalists, Bartholomé et al. (2015) recognise that what the journalists think they should do (their role conceptions), or 'role orientations', according to Thomas Hanitzsch and Vos (2017, p. 1); and where their interests lie can affect news production. Bartholomé et al. (2015) argue that conflict framing often emerges from journalists' role conceptions and their

attitudes and beliefs. Their framework also suggests that journalistic norms and practices such as objective reporting, storytelling styles and reliance on other media as sources of information for their news reports can influence the framing of conflict. In the third level, the authors identify external news sources such as conflict actors, pressure groups and communities as having some degree of influence on conflict reporting.

Where there are ethnic and religious communities with conflicting ideologies craving for media attention like Jos, Zandberg and Neiger (2005) explain that the journalists – being members of the respective communities – are faced with the challenge of upholding professional honour while being loyal to their communities. The scholars make this distinction:

> The professional community calls upon the journalists to tell a story that will be, or will appear to be, factual, objective and balanced […,] the national – cultural community calls upon the journalists to take part in the conflict, to be its representative and its weapon, in the battle of images and sound bites – to tell an unbalanced, un-objective story (2005, p. 131).

The above view suggests that the journalists are caught between their profession – which requires self-detachment from the conflict – and allegiance to ethnic/religious groups – a goal-centred reporting that supports 'ours' against 'theirs'. This demonstrates a journalistic role crisis, that is, the journalists' desire for balanced and fair reports (profession) and the one-sided reports tailored towards advancing a cause (community solidarity).

Typical of this practice is the assumption that journalists who reported the Jos conflict might have been confronted with this condition. Research shows that a number of them failed to report the conflict objectively because of their attempt to serve ethnic/religious groups interests (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012), or what Zandberg and Neiger (2005) call journalists' desire to 'privilege one of their identities' (p. 133). The effect of this solidarity is likely to be the reinforcement rather than de-escalation of

the conflict. Although peace journalism scholars (e.g., Bar-Tal, 2013; Cobb, 2013; Lynch, 2008, 2013b; Lynch & Galtung, 2010; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013) have consistently advocated for a non-objective, peace-oriented journalism to promote and sustain peacebuilding efforts, it is susceptible to abuse. That goal might inflate rather than reduce conflict.

2.12 Conclusion

This chapter has examined conflict, journalism and the character of the journalist reporting conflict. Although scholars have ascribed meanings to conflict, and argued that it cannot be avoided in the social environment, the concept in this research refers to the struggle for identity by individuals or groups through violent means. In it, peace is substituted with violence.

The relationship between violent conflict and journalism has been established in the sense that conflict – as a news value, attracts both the journalists (who construct reality) and their audiences (who think in terms of how society is affected by conflict) (Seib, 2013; Webster, 2003). As illustrated in Figures 2.1 and 2.2, the media and journalists do not only report violence as an incident but they try to influence their audiences by their linguistic choices.

The chapter sheds light on the debates on conflict reporting which draw attention to objective journalism, journalism of attachment, embedding journalism and propaganda journalism. Having examined the role of journalists in some of the most cited conflicts across Europe (especially the four European wars and the Northern Ireland conflict), Kashmir, America and Africa (drawing example from the Rwandan conflict), this chapter argues, like in previous studies (e.g., Silverstone, 2011; H. Tumber & Prentoulis, 2003), that objectivity is unattainable. For example, it demonstrates how the British and American journalists were

integrated into their national agendas through the embedding programme which attached them to the subjects they covered. The non-objective character of journalists has also been established in the reporting of the Third World Africa as those from the West disregarded objectivity by portraying Africa as a continent that is ravaged by violence, hunger and disease. Thus, the chapter recounts the efforts by African scholars (e.g., Shaw, 2009; Shepperson & Tomaselli, 2009; Skjerdal, 2012) to suggest alternative models for a journalistic rebranding of Africa.

The topics reviewed in this chapter transit from global conflict to the conflict of the Third World Africa, both of which have attracted the attention of journalists. In the next chapter of this thesis, the discussion focuses on Nigeria, one of Africa's countries with a history of ethnic and religious conflicts. It analyses the context in which these social identities have contributed to conflict in the country, and Jos in particular.

Chapter Three

Nigeria and the Dimensions of the Jos Conflict

3.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the emergence of the Nigerian state, its cultural, ethnic, religious and linguistic diversities; and relates these to the Jos conflict between rival social groups. The ethnic and religious conflicts in many parts of the country (which include Jos), are linked to these diversities. The Nigerian media and journalists are separated along these divides, and are believed to have contributed to the escalation of conflict.

3.2 Nigeria's Diversity: The Origin of Conflict

Nigeria is situated on the west coast of Africa occupying a land mass of 923,768.sq.km. It has a population of 168 million people comprising 250 ethnic groups (Okidu, 2011; The Centenary Diary, 2014, p. 131). With over 500 linguistic dialects (Danfulani, 2006; Harnischfeger, 2004), the country is comprised of 36 states and the Federal Capital Territory (Abuja). Its endowments include human and natural resources ranging from skilled workforce to mineral deposits such as crude oil, iron ore, limestone, tantalite and coal.

The country had been separated on regional lines of North, East and West with each region pursuing its policies and programmes until 1914 when the Lord Luggard-led British colonial government brought them together into one country (Udogu, 2009). The Hausa-Fulani occupied the North; the Igbo dominated the East while the Yoruba controlled the West. The eastern and western regions were generally recognised as southern Nigeria and the northern region was known as northern Nigeria. Both the southern and northern protectorates were merged to become a single state under the British amalgamation programme. This was described as a synthetic project that was conceived without recourse to the endemic ethnic,

regional and religious tensions that resulted from divergence between the social groups (Afinotan & Ojakorotu, 2014; Agbiboa, 2013a; Okidu, 2011).The Nigerian state comprised of many rival ethnic groups which suggested that the merger of the regions was not feasible (Sircar, 1968). The people pursued divergent interests, spoke different languages, had different regional agendas, political and cultural ideologies and yet they were fused into a single state (Albert, 2002; Pate, 2011).

The arrangement fell short of the criteria for establishing a country, one of which is to share a common language, culture and tradition (Carens,1988, cited in Afinotan & Ojakorotu, 2014). Apparently, since the various social groups that existed at regional levels neither shared these commonalities nor demonstrated mutual cooperation that bound them together, the amalgamation was perceived as hasty, ill-conceived, insensitive and illogical. It means that a merger of this sort was unnecessary as it 'laid the immediate foundation upon which the country's ethno-religious identity movement is built; more so that the situation had led to the emergence of a pronounced ethno-religious gulf between the Hausa-Fulani Muslim dominated north and Christian Ibo/Yoruba dominated south' (Okidu, 2011, p. 52).

Figure 3: 1 Map of Nigeria showing the 36 states, regions and borders.

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Nigeria_political.png.

A dominant feature of Nigeria is its plurality of ethnic, regional and religious identities which the colonial administration took for granted during the 1914 amalgamation of the country's northern and southern protectorates (Udogu, 2009). The colonial government paid scant attention to the complex issues bordering on ideology, such as the protracted rivalry among ethnic groups (Agbiboa, 2013a; Alabi, 2002; Albert, 2002; Alubo, 2009; Kukah, 1994; Okidu, 2011). As many social groups struggled for identity, each of which found expressions in the post amalgamation regime, conflict of varying dimensions – especially organised ethnic and religious violence - took the centre stage. The diverse ethnic groups that exist in Nigeria are almost evenly split between the adherents of Islam and Christianity (Agbiboa, 2013b; Dowd, 2014; Egwu, 2015; M. A. Ojo & Lateju, 2010).

Previous research has claimed that the three major ethnic groups of northern Hausa Fulani, the western Yoruba and eastern Igbo constitute 30%, 20% and 17% of the country's population in that order, apart from other minority groups (Jinadu, 1985; see also Agbiboa & Okem, 2011). Over the years the political elites have exploited these identities which later stirred up agitations for state power and control of resources by the social groups that were once silenced (Davis & Kalu-Nwiwu, 2001). The initial regional structure – North, East and West which served as the political organ for strengthening federal character (a national policy that aims to provide equal representation of all ethnic groups) – was further split into six geo-political zones (Osaghae, 1988). Although this arrangement was not backed by any legislation, it tended to douse the already heated social tension in the country.

However, these agitations continued in the last decades as minority ethnic groups in the regions (now geo-political regions) have decried the gross oppression by the ethnic majority and, sometimes, opted for sovereignty which separated them from the Nigerian state. For example, the Middle Belt Forum was formed by the Christian minorities in the north central geo-political zone because they claimed that the Arewa Consultative Forum (ACF) was only serving the interests of the core north or the Hausa Fulani Muslims (Barnes, 2007) . In the South South, the Movement for the Emancipation of the Niger Delta (MEND) emerged to chart the cause of the oil rich region for which it impressed on the Nigerian government to allocate a portion of the national oil revenues to oil producing states to enhance the development of the region (Omoyefa, 2010). In the South West, there exists the Oodua People's Congress that serves as a political organ of the Yoruba ethnic group (Guichaoua, 2009). In the South East, the Movement for the Sovereignty and Actualisation of Biafra (MASOB) is agitating for a state of Biafra alleging that the Igbos have been edged out of state power (Smith, 2014). This portends danger for the country, as Egwu (2015) argues, 'the tendency for state power to be controlled by one dominant ethnic fraction of the ruling

class or another provokes a sense of alienation on the part of groups that do not control power. The consequence is for such groups to arrange for their own security by withdrawing into ethno-religious networks and solidarities' (p.30).

Nigeria's ethnic identity crisis deepened over the years and the citizens have become more conscious of what they consider to be their heritage. There is a distinction between 'natives' and 'foreigners' or 'indigenes' and 'settlers' across the length and breadth of the country. This tradition empowers some citizens to take possessions of ancestral lands and assume the status of 'indigenes' while those who arrive at such locations afterwards are classified as 'settlers'. The latter are denied certain privileges for their 'late settlement', as such, they become 'guests' to their 'hosts'. Harnischfeger (2004, p. 436) also sheds light on this. He says:

> […] the call for autonomy and control over one's land can be heard all over the country. In a social environment pervaded by mutual fear, it has become important to possess some space from which potential enemies can be excluded. The wish to ban members of other ethnic groups from one's territory is intense among peasant communities fighting for access to arable land.

The irony of this exclusion is that the country is governed by the constitution which provides that it shall 'secure full residence rights for every citizen in all parts of the Federation' (The Constitution, 1999, Section 15 (3) (b)). The political institution and agencies of government have consistently flawed this provision of the law by adopting the 'indigeneship' template for appointments, awards of scholarships, schools and jobs placements as well as elections into public offices (Davis & Kalu-Nwiwu, 2001). In its 2002 report, the World Organisation Against Torture illustrates this tradition of ethnic distinction. It states:

> In terms of access to resources and opportunities in the day-to-day life, the distinction between 'indigenes' and 'non-indigenes' is critical. In practice, the two groups effectively have different rights, resulting in discrimination and inequalities of access in many fundamental areas of life and human wellbeing. The impact was and remains particularly felt in education and employment, where an informal two-tier system

operates. For example, 'non-indigenes' have to pay higher fees to enter good schools. While paying the same taxes as 'indigenes', 'non-indigenes' complain of discrimination and harassment in their search for employment especially in the civil service and federal institutions, where many senior positions are seen as effectively reserved for 'indigenes' (World Organisation Against Turture, 2002, cited inAlubo, 2009, pp. 144-145).

The report cited above summarises the polarisation of the entity called Nigeria – which suggests what conflict scholars have often regarded as 'horizontal inequalities' - HIs (Côté, 2015; Ostby, 2008; Stewart, 2014; Tesfay & Malmberg, 2014). The concept is used to describe social groups that feel a sense of alienation or discrimination on account of differentiated identity. Such identity could be ethnicity, religion, race or other indicators of social diversity. Horizontal inequalities occur in a social environment 'when power and resources are unequally distributed between groups that are also differentiated in other ways […] when one of them feels it is being discriminated against, or another enjoys privileges which it fears to lose' (Ostby, 2008, p. 143). Furthermore, 'horizontal inequalities may also have social dimensions, such as when governments and dominant ethnic groups use discriminatory educational policies to oppress minorities [….] Discriminatory barriers to minority recruitment restrict the economic opportunities and help perpetuate material disadvantages of certain groups' (p. 148). This demonstrates how 'settler' groups are silenced in territories believed to have been inhabited by 'indigenous' groups in Nigeria.

Going a step further, research evidence has indicated that most Nigerians are identified by their ethnic and religious communities rather than other considerations (Danfulani, 2006; Gbilekaa, 2012). In their view, Agbiboa and Okem (2011) also argue that these factors define the Nigerian national identity which suggests that they have devastating consequences on the nation and the citizenry. Thus, there is a relationship between ethnicity and religion from which the hyphenated 'ethno-religious' term evolved. While many conflicts in the Third World occur due to the oppression of the ethnic minorities or struggle for state

power among the majority ethnic groups, nearly all the members of each group uphold and practice one form of religion or the other, who share a common ethnic ideology (Hae S. Kim, 2009). For example, it is widely speculated, in the last decades, that the Nigerian northern Hausa Fulani ethnic group is advancing an Islamic cause whereas the ethnic groups in the South are pursuing the Christian agenda. This notion, however, is built on a simplified rather than systematic methodology because empirical evidence which demonstrates Muslim North and Christian South agendas is non-existent. But Egwu (2015, p. 17) remarks that, 'the congruence between ethnicity and religion and their mutually reinforcing relationships in the political process is recognised by the notion of ethno-religious identity. As the situation has been well captured, sometimes religious identity becomes part of an ethnic group's identity or vice versa, and presents a volatile social mixture coupled with the power of the ethnic group's myth of common descent'. This means that ethno-religious conflict has become a national dilemma in that the culture, which separates the Hausa Fulani Muslim 'us' from the Igbo/Yoruba Christian 'them', has beclouded the citizens' reasoning. It is worse in the present democratic dispensation. For example, if a political appointee is Hausa Fulani or Ijaw, it translates to a slot for the Muslim or Christian bloc. The logic is that if that appointment is 'favourable' to the Hausa Fulani or vice versa, the religious group to which the appointee is affiliated will count its gains because its interest will be protected even at the expense of national interest.

Religious issues are generally treated with caution. Some adherents of the world's religions tend to promote values that honour the supernatural being in whom they believe. For others, religion means 'defence of the faith' which undermines respect for religious freedom and the sanctity of human life (Maiangwa, 2013). They are often not tolerant of others with differing religious ideologies. Scholars have explained that some religions are more tolerant than others because their orientations vary (see Huntington, 1996; Kedourie,

1994). Research also reveals that the manner in which people interpret and apply religious teachings in everyday life can promote or impede religious freedom (Stepan, 2000).

In Nigeria, as discussed at the outset, Christians and Muslims are almost equal in number and each has claimed that its traditions encourage religious freedom. But the country has a history of religious violence involving mainly Christians and Muslims across the northern and Middle Belt regions (Dowd, 2014; Harnischfeger, 2004; Meagher, 2013). In these areas, ethnicity and religion are intertwined resulting in ethnic and religious violence. The actors are identified as 'natives' or 'settlers', on one level, and 'Muslims or 'Christians' on another level. Dowd has observed with profundity that 'where religious differences overlap with 'settler' and 'native' or 'indigene' distinctions [...], episodes of deadly violence have been particularly frequent [...]. Where religious identities do not overlap with ethnic identities and indigene-settler status, we find interreligious violence much less frequent and deadly' (2014, p.8). Some of the violent conflicts that resulted from 'settler-indigene' and 'Muslim-Christian' divide include the 1980 Maitatsine riots, Kano State Shite attacks of 1996 and 1987, Zagon Kataf riots, Bauchi riots and the Jos conflicts (Alabi, 2002; Meagher, 2013) Also, there is ongoing conflict between Fulani herdsmen and farmers over cattle grazing (Siollun, 2016). The violence left in its wake devastating consequences on the citizenry, as they now live in perpetual fear wherever it occurred. At present, there is intermittent violence in some communities where these social groups live.

Scholars such as Agbiboa (2013a), Alubo (2009), Alabi (2002) and Kukah (1994) have also blamed the incessant religious and ethnic conflicts in the country on the colonial construction that undermined the rival ethnic groups that have been engrossed in religion and politics. The majority ethnic groups of northern Hausa Fulani, the western Yoruba and eastern Igbo have been bound by the ideology of 'One Nigeria'. None of these groups has transcended primordial differences in relation to state affairs. The majority ethnic groups'

domineering posture has triggered minority agitations for recognition and representation in national politics and other key sectors (Arowosegbe, 2016). The diverse people of Nigeria soon realised that identity struggle had deepened group conflict among them because their interests were incompatible; as such, they pursued them through violent means. As Okidu (2011, p. 50) has pointed out, 'most Nigerians irrespective of their nationalist claims have the tendency to first identify with their ethnic roots before identifying themselves as Nigerians'. Furthermore, 'identity is defined by affiliation to religious and ethnic groups rather than the Nigerian state' (Agbiboa, 2013b).

Another factor that follows ethnicity is religion – which is believed to surpass the former given its misconstrued values among actors in the current political space. It is an institution that has wielded a great influence on Nigerians because it is used to mobilise people who uphold certain beliefs and practices (Agbiboa, 2013a). In that sense, the 'warring ethno-religious groups in Nigeria subscribe to a model of conduct that elevates ethnicity and religion over and above the broader interests of the nation' (Agbiboa, 2013a, p. 4). This view suggests that no matter the status of Nigerians and the circumstance within which they exercise their authority, they tend to express ethnic and religious sentiments in public life.

Figure 3: 2 Nigeria's former nationalists who represented the three major ethnic groups of Yoruba (Chief Obafemi Awolowo – South West), Igbo (Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe – South East) and Hausa (Sir Ahmadu Bello – North) Source: Naijavibe.net

The country's ethnic and religious pluralism has manifested in the conflict ravaging many communities today. It has given rise to the adoption of geo-political zoning system consisting of south-south, south-east, south-west, north-central, north-west and north-east for the purpose of achieving equity in national polity. Although no one openly raises questions about the ethnic and religious portfolios of citizens when appointments are made and/or during elections – for fear of being accused of usurping the national unity programme and acting on the basis of merit - these factors determine the pathway (Alubo, 2009). For example, if a northern Muslim picks the presidential ticket of a political party, that party would announce a southern Christian running mate to gain acceptance of the north and south as well as the Muslim and Christian electorate, and vice versa. This is where ethnicity and religion have established a confluence. It touches on the sensibilities of actors that dominate the political landscape of the Nigerian society.

Aware of this ethno-religious divide, each group that upholds common beliefs and interests has been instigated against the other to the extent that they claim citizenship status

that excludes 'them' from 'others' thereby becoming custodians of their religious doctrines. For most people, their homeland is any community in which their ancestors had settled, lived and died for several decades and centuries (Esman, 2004). These, among other criteria, distinguish the 'natives' from the 'foreigners' and the rivalry between both groups constitutes conflict with devastating consequences.

As it has been argued, studies (e.g. Adebanwi, 2004; Okidu, 2011; Sircar, 1968) have maintained that tensions arising from political, ethnic and religious conflicts in the country were created by the colonial administration. The colonial policy in part favoured some ethnic nationalities that identified with certain religions at the end of which they manipulated others believed to be out of favour. This oppression of the minority groups, or what Adebanwi (2004, p. 764) calls 'marginal voices' because 'they are defined by their subordination in political, social and economic power structures' has dominated national affairs. For example, Sircar (1968) writes that the north under the British administration gained special identity. He notes that the colonial administration had made a commitment to northern emirs on religious autonomy that it would 'sedulously refrain from any action which will interfere with the exercise of the Mohammedian religion by its adherents, or which will demand of them action that is opposed to its precepts' (1968, p.247). This pact with the colonial administration meant to the north a support for its Islamic religion, and that attempts at advancing the cause of other religions in the region – especially Christianity which had been introduced in the south with the British system of education - would be resisted. In some way, Boko Haram (a terror group which forbids western education) is a threat to religious freedom in the country, and it is linked to that resistance (Egiegba Agbiboa, 2013). Perhaps, the north (presumably backed by the colonial regime) is determined to achieve its goal of a mono-religious region through an Islamic jihad. As it has been analysed, the status which the north has assumed today resulting in its strategic programme of exclusion and the pursuit of an Islamic cause is

built upon the British colonialism. Alabi (2002) argues that the colonial government betrayed the later formed Nigerian state by conceding to northern agenda because of its parochial interests. Furthermore, Kukah (1994) explains the reason for the British action:

> The colonial administration denied missionaries access into the area of the caliphate, not because they love Islam, but because the ideological focus of the emirate coincided with the aspirations of an impoverished colonial state. The system of labour, slavery, taxation that was prevalent in the caliphate became a boost to the British. These policies gave Islam an added advantage and served to widen the gap between the Muslims and the non- Muslims in the region. The idea of the Muslim North was sworn in the minds of the people, with non- Muslims being seen and projected as outsiders and strangers (p.449).

In Kukah's view, the British gimmick sustained the northern ideology that separated the Muslims from non-Muslims, natives from foreigners and changed the orientations of the citizens from civility to hostility. Since then, ethnicity and religion have generated much controversy that often leads to organised violence between Muslims and Christians or northerners and southerners. This exclusive regime forced non-Muslims (especially Christians from the south) to relocate to *Sabon Gari*, a Hausa phrase which means new settlement for foreigners within the northern territories (Alabi, 2002; Kukah, 1994; Sircar, 1968). The *Sabon Gari* concept later evolved in almost all parts of the north where those classified as infidels or outcasts lived.

The North's outright rejection of western education which was necessitated by its disapproval of foreign religions in the region gave the southerners – Yoruba, Igbo and minority tribes – an advantage of exploring education with which they gained administrative and economic authority over the north. The south became an enlightened community consisting of people with skills and expertise who gained employment as teachers, nurses, and clerks, etc., many of whom were deployed to the north because that region lacked qualified personnel (Alabi, 2002; Sircar, 1968). As a result of this, the people of the south gained supremacy over their northern counterparts and most northern towns were infiltrated

by the southerners who occupied various professional positions (Alabi, 2002). But when the north realised that its regional civil service was dominated by the south, it introduced the Northernization policy in 1954 which allowed only the 'indigenes' of the north to occupy such positions. This led to the massive retrenchment of the people of the south who had become 'foreigners' in the north (Harnischfeger, 2004). This marked the beginning of the 'indigene' and 'settler' dichotomy in Nigeria. Beyond the withdrawal of the foreigners from the northern regional civil service, the policy also denied foreign artisans the patronage of northern clients. According to the Premier of the northern region, Sir Ahmadu Bello (cited in Harnischfeger, 2004, p. 443),

> The Northernization policy does not only apply to Clerks, Administrative Officers, Doctors and others. We do not want to go to [Lake] Chad and meet strangers [i.e. southern Nigerians] catching our fish in the water, and taking them away to leave us with nothing. We do not want to go to Sokoto and find a carpenter who is a stranger nailing our houses. I do not want to go to the Sabon-gari Kano and find strangers making the body of a lorry, or go to the market and see butchers who are not Northerners.

Currently, there is an increase in the migration of citizens in the last three decades due to economic recession and civil unrests. People have fled their homelands and sought refuge in surrounding 'safe' areas. They live in fear and the tense environment has remained unstable as many lose their lives in the seeming endless attacks.

3.3 The Jos Conflict

Jos is the administrative headquarter of Plateau State. It is a cosmopolitan city of ancient tin mines that occupied a niche as Nigeria's most peaceful city because its mining industry attracted a legion of ethnic groups and foreigners who also found its weather conducive, rock formations captivating and people receptive. It covers about 8,600 square kilometres of land, much of which is surrounded by hills that serve as resort destinations for tourists (Mangvwat, 2013; Milligan, 2013). It also serves as the political hub of the Middle Belt – a concept which

the colonial government had adapted to describe the southern segment of northern Nigeria (Crisis Group Africa Report, 2012), or what is also known as a region consisting of 'the states between northern and southern Nigeria' (Cline, 2011, p. 279). The region is often separated from the 'core' north, or Muslim Hausa-Fulani dominated north, because most of the minority ethnic groups of the Middle Belt had been converted to Christianity after their encounter with the British colonial administrators hence their quest for ethno-religious identity (Cline, 2011).

The scenic beauty of the city of Jos and its temperate climate are comparable to Europe thereby making tourism a viable sector of the Plateau State economy. It has attracted many foreign and local tourists as well as international and national events (Krause, 2011). Jos was founded in 1915 as a camp for tin mining and later grew into a cosmopolitan city with a population of about 1,000,000 people (Danfulani, 2006; Krause, 2011), but it was preceded by two settlements – Naraguta and Guash. The indigenous ethnic groups of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom (AAB) were joined by migrants from the south who found the city attractive for trade as it had become the most important tin mining centre in the world (Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011).

The name 'Jos' emerged from a mispronunciation of 'Guash' by the Hausa traders who also migrated to the area. Since the new migrants took to trade and commerce, and Hausa language dominated commercial interactions because other ethnic groups including the AAB engaged with the traders, the name of this settlement changed to 'Jos'. It replaced 'Guash', and the non-speakers of indigenous languages – the Igbo, Urhobo, Yoruba and the Hausa ethnic groups found it most convenient. Recent research has quoted a European document on this development as follows: '[….] A small hill village called Guash, occupied the present location of Jos. Hausa traders who arrived supposedly mispronounced Guash for Jos and the name stuck (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016, p. 364).

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Figure 3: 3 Map of Nigeria showing Jos, Plateau State Figure 3: 4 Rock formations of Jos

Source: www.slideshare.net   **Source: www.nytimes.com**

The notion that Jos is 'home for all' stemmed from the communality of its inhabitants – the indigenous groups coexisting with the migrant groups, which, until 2001 when the first armed conflict erupted, had earned the city (and the state) a national recognition of 'home of peace and tourism' (Danfulani, 2006, p. 2). Nyam and Ayuba (2016, p. 364) give an account of how the city recorded an unprecedented influx of people across diverse cultures:

> Since the imposition of the colonial rule and following the development of the tin industry, commerce and administration, Jos has continued to be populated by people of diverse cultural, linguistic, religious and other traditions, in a wave of endless migration from various parts of Nigeria and beyond.

Jos also became a 'safe haven' for victims of the Nigerian civil war who fled their homes for fear of further attacks. They joined other citizens from various parts of the country whose interest in tin mines, commerce and the railway industry had attracted them to the area. While the city of Jos remained peaceful under this arrangement, the struggle for group identity emerged, and the people began to pitch camps. There was contestation over the ownership of Jos between the AAB and the Hausa-Fulani 'settlers', a situation that further raised the issue about who a citizen or an indigene is among the diverse ethnic groups that had 'settled' in the area. It transited to the struggle for power as those who qualified as 'indigenes' had the right

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of governance while the 'settlers' were excluded (Ambe-Uva, 2010; Ojukwu & Onifade, 2010). Religion also became a big issue. The ethnic groups in conflict were also identified by their profound expression of faith, either as Muslims or Christians; and this identity had great influence on them. These factors manifested in the conflict for over two decades and have not changed.

Generally, the preoccupation of the people of Plateau State is farming and many of them are public servants who profess Christianity. Other ethnic groups that coexist with them include Hausa farmers and traders, Fulani herdsmen as well as traders from the south. Danfulani (2006, p. 3) explains this composition explicitly:

> Majority of Plateau State indigenes are Christians tied to the land as peasant farmers or workers in the civil service, while the Muslim minorities are Hausa dry-season farmers and cattle rearing Fulani, with the Igbo, Urhobo, Yoruba and Hausa dominating the business life of the metropolis.

The major conflict that occurred in Jos after the 1945 civil unrest was on April 12, 1994 (Matawal, 2012). Residents had lived in fear as there were signs of impending attacks on communities. The major trigger was the tension arising from the creation of Jos North Local Government Area by the military government. The creation was widely criticised by the Afizere, Anaguta and Berom ethnic groups which alleged that it was a grand plan by the Hausa-Fulani to edge them out by confining them to smaller settlements thereby paving way for the 'settlers' to claim their land (Ishaku, 2012; Plateau Indigenous Development Association Network, 2010). The AAB claimed that,

> they were not consulted in the exercise […] the local government boundaries were arbitrarily fixed to their disadvantage [….] The creation of wards favoured the Hausa/Jasawa dominated areas as those areas had more wards but which were small in population while the indigenes had fewer but larger populated wards (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016, p. 367).

The animosity between the two camps deepened over time. On September 7, 2001 the first violent conflict erupted in which many people were killed and churches and mosques were

burnt. In November 2008, the cancellation of Jos North Local Government election led to another armed conflict in the city. By 2010, the conflict had assumed another dimension – the bombing of Christian dominated areas (Kabong and Angwan Rukuba) and recreation centres on Christmas Eve, among others. While this conflict still occurs intermittently, the 2001, 2008 and 2010 episodes are considered to be the most violent in the history of the city (Krause, 2011; Taft & Haken, 2015).

3.3.1 The Years of Violent Conflict: 2001, 2008 and 2010

Although Jos has a history of conflict which dates back to 1945 and 1966 (Milligan, 2013), its 'major crises occurred in 2001, 2008 and 2010 giving the region a reputation of instability' (Taft & Haken, 2015, pp. 63-64). The three years were characterised by intense violence as ethnic and religious factions emerged to defend their beliefs.

Conflict	Causes	Areas most affected	Fatalities/IDPs	Value of property lost	Intensity
2001 September 7	Crossing of barricade during Juma'at prayer

Appointment of settler as NAPEP coordinator | Congo Russia, Alikazaure, Angwan Rogo and many locations in Jos | About 1,000 people were killed | N3, 369, 716, 404.95 | Major |
| **2008** November 28 | Controversy over Jos North LGA chairmanship election | Major locations in Jos | 700 people killed and 24,000 IDPs | N43, 247, 630, 642.00 | Major |
| **2010** January 17 | Reconstruction of building in Dutse Uku area

Attack on worshippers in Nassarawa Gwong area

Disagreement at a football match between rival youth groups. | Dutse Uku, Nassarawa Gwong area and many locations in Jos | 350 and 500 people killed | Billions of Naira | Major |

Table 3.1: Overview of major waves of conflict in Jos: 2001, 2008 and 2010 (Sources: Ajaero & Phillips, 2010; HumanRightsWatch., 2001; Krause, 2011; Milligan, 2013; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Obayiuwana, 2010; Orji, 2011; Taft & Haken, 2015)

2001 conflict

Violence erupted in Jos on September 7 after politics of identity reigned among the indigenous communities and those regarded as settlers. Both groups clashed during the Juma'at prayer along the Congo Rusia area. A Christian woman, an 'indigene', was said to have crossed over a barricade mounted by a throng of Muslim worshipers at the Congo Rusia

mosque demanding her right of way. But the underlying cause of the clash was the contention between the Christian 'indigenes' and Muslim 'settlers' over the political control of Jos. Before the September 7 Christian-Muslim clash, the 'indigenes' had protested the appointment of a 'settler', Mukhtar Mohammed as the coordinator of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) for Jos North Local Government Area (R. Ibrahim, 2001; Offi & Adeyi, 2001; Ogunwale, Ladigbolu, & Daniel, 2001; Owete & Madu-West, 2001). The Hausa Fulani community (to which Mukhtar belonged) threatened to resist any attempt by the Federal Government to reverse the appointment. This contention signalled an impending conflict between both groups. The residents envisaged that at the slightest provocation, the 'indigenes' and 'settlers' would express their frustrations by resorting to violence. Thus, it manifested in the purported crossing of the barricade where Muslim worshippers at the Juma'at prayer denied the Christian woman her right of way. A government statement after the September 2001 conflict which was credited to the former deputy governor, Chief Michael Botmang, said

> We started receiving threat letters from Hausa community and the local community. The Hausa people were saying, we belong to this place, we have no place else to go, this appointment has to be given to us. We said government is for everybody and if we have this and there is a problem we all sit down and resolve this. Then the local people were saying if you give this to the Hausa people, there would be no peace (Milligan, 2013, p. 325).

Given this background to the 2001 conflict, the contention over the control of Jos, or the indigene-settler dichotomy triggered the September 7 violence. It became the first organised armed conflict in the history of Jos which claimed the lives of an estimated 1000 people.

2008 conflict

Another conflict occurred on November 28 as two rival political parties: the Christian-dominated People's Democratic Party (PDP) and the Muslim-dominated All Nigeria People's

Party (ANPP) clashed over the contentious local government chairmanship elections in which they fielded candidates. The conflict showed 'a clear party affiliation along identity lines at the LGA (and state) level with Muslim support for ANPP and Christian support for the PDP' (Milligan, 2013, p. 326). The supporters of PDP's Timothy Gyang Buba (a Berom 'indigene') and ANPP's Aminu Baba (a Hausa Fulani 'settler') rose in defence of their candidates who were awaiting the announcement of the election results by the Plateau State Independent Electoral Commission (PLASIEC). The ANPP had alleged that the electoral process was characterised by massive rigging in favour of the PDP as a result of which it (ANPP) took to the streets in protest. The PDP supporters, on the other hand, claimed that their candidate was heading for victory and insisted that the process had been transparent and that they would not be intimidated by the action of their opponents (Ishaku, 2012). This dispute culminated into violence that killed between 500 and 700 people (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Obayiuwana, 2010). It was the second armed conflict in the city characterised by bloodshed.

2010 conflict

In 2010, conflict between the two ethno-religious factions occurred in three parts. The first was on January 17 which was linked to the reconstruction of a building in Dutse Uku area; the disagreement at the football match between rival youth groups, and the purported attack on worshippers at St. Michael's Catholic church, Nassarawa Gwong (Lalo, 2010; Lalo & Bashir, 2010; Owuamanam, 2010a; Owuamanam, Sobiye, & Ibrahym, 2010). Second, there were attacks on Dogon Nahawa, Zat and Ratsat communities (village areas of Jos) in March (Ishaku, 2012). Third, it was the bombing of Christian-dominated areas of Gada-biyu and Angwan Rukuba on Christmas Eve. During the first and second incidents (January 17- March 7), between 350 and 500 people were killed (Ajaero & Phillips, 2010) while the Christmas Eve explosions killed 80 people (Ishaku, 2012). This research focused on the first incident in

2010 (the January 17 violence) because of the spates of attacks on many communities and the fatalities that were recorded. It was a major incident compared to the ones that followed.

3.3.2 Contestation over the Political Control of Jos

Conflict ensued between the 'indigenes' and 'settlers' over the political control of Jos, and the city had been battled by storms of war. It is a struggle for identity. Alubo (2009) argues that in the whole of the Middle Belt, conflict of identity between ethnic groups is prevalent. He recalls that, recently, the region has witnessed the most violent ethnic conflict in the country because its people had long been dominated by the Hausa Fulani and needed to be liberated (see also, Gbilekaa, 2012). In Jos, being the hub of the Middle Belt region, contestations have emerged over who the 'indigenes' or the 'natives' and the 'settlers' or 'foreigners' are, given its antecedents. Studies have revealed that the indigenous groups of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom are the original inhabitants of the city (Ambe-Uva, 2010; Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011; Danfulani, 2006; Krause, 2011; Ostien, 2009). The Crisis Group Africa Report (2012, p. 1) recognises that ' the main indigenous ethnic groups – the Berom, Anaguta and Afizere (BAA) - are aggrieved that mining, as well as colonialism, disposed them of much of their customary land'. They were said to have embraced all who settled in their domains including tourists who visited the city. Putting it simply, their hospitality was uncommon. Ambe-Uva (2010, p. 43) has described the city as a,

> […] home to several ethnic groups, which fall into two broad categories: those who consider themselves 'indigenes' or original inhabitants of the area- among them the Berom, the Afizere and the Anaguta and those who are termed 'non-indigenes' or 'settlers', composed in large part of Hausa (the majority ethnic group in Northern Nigeria), but also of southern Igbo, Yoruba and other ethnic groups.

Nigeria's minority ethnic groups have, in the last decades, claimed that they have been marginalised by their majority counterparts who have taken over their possessions including

the lands and territories they inherited from their ancestors thereby denying them of their rights and privileges (Egwu, 2001, 2015; Scully, 1996). Consequently, a minority consciousness has emerged to stop the minority onslaught (Harnischfeger, 2004). It is often argued that if Jos is captured by the Hausa-Fulani ethnic group, the Middle Belt region would pull to pieces and Christians would become victims of religious attacks because the city plays a crucial role in the political, social and religious life of the region (Barnes, 2007). That is why the 'who owns Jos?' phenomenon is the concern of the region.

Krause (2011, p. 16) writes that the ownership of Jos is still in contention because 'the Berom and other indigene groups argue that the city was founded on land that belonged to them as the native people of the state. The Hausa-Fulani contest this claim and hold that the city was established on 'virgin land' that belonged to nobody'. The three indigenous ethnic groups have had a history of reception and solidarity with people of other extractions which could also be said of the entire citizens of the state. Unarguably, some 'indigenes' sold their lands (in some cases, gave out free) to the 'settlers' on which they built houses and expanded their businesses. Shedrack Gaya Best and Rakodi (2011) have noted that while the 'indigenes' still occupy most parts of the city, they have, nonetheless, sold significant portions to the 'settlers', especially the Hausa Fulani who now claim ownership of the land without recognising the place of the 'indigenes'. As such, they (Hausa Fulani) maintain that Jos was a virgin land on which their ancestors settled for several centuries. Despite the crisis of September 7, 2001 which signalled the emergence of war between rival 'indigenes' and 'settlers', the AAB continued the brisk business of sale of their ancestral lands. This action was largely condemned by other ethnic groups as they swiftly took over the battle in solidarity with fellow 'indigenes' in Jos (Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006). They also waged attacks on the Hausa-Fulani 'settlers' in their midst and turned them into refugees where they had long settled. Ostien (2009, pp. 2-3) explains how this has played out:

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The conflict situation in Jos arises primarily out of ethnic difference, pitting Hausa 'settlers' vs. the Plateau 'indigene' tribes of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom. Jos is the capital of Plateau State, and the local indigene tribes, backed by other indigene tribes elsewhere in the state, feel they have a right to control it; that is, its local government, by force if necessary. In other parts of Plateau State the other indigene tribes have been fighting back against other incursions as well.

This ethnic identity crisis is not only faced in Jos as a result of the seeming 'trouble' of the people but the entire country because the citizens have realised that ethnic identity is crucial in participating in national affairs. The Federal Character policy recognises citizens by their ethnic origins and seeks to satisfy ethnic interests in terms of employments/appointments, admission slots in public institutions etc. The process of ethnic identity begins with the issuance of 'indigene certificates' to the 'indigenes' by the 774 local government councils, through the traditional institutions, to identify and affirm the legitimacy of a person regarded as indigene who, on account of this, gains access to state resources (Arowosegbe, 2016) . That is why people struggle to obtain this document and those regarded as 'settlers' are denied certain privileges until they retrace their roots to communities believed to be theirs. Ostien (2009) notes that, 'other groups living there, even groups that settled there for scores or hundreds of years are excluded. They are told to 'go back where you come from' if they want the benefits of indigeneship' (p.3).

However, the 1999 Constitution of Nigeria (as amended) confers on every citizen the right of residency in all parts of the country in line with its policy on national integration. It states: '[...] it shall be the role of the State to secure full residence rights for every citizen in all parts of the Federation' (Section 15(3)(b), see also Crisis Group Africa Report, 2012, p. 3; Danfulani, 2006, p. 7).This provision is not complied with given the principle of indigeneship which the State (Nigeria) and its agencies, directly or indirectly, recognise. It is a national dilemma and the Jos conflict is linked to it.

3.3.3 Influence of Religion on 'indigenes' and 'settlers'

The cosmopolitan city of Jos presented itself unique as people of all races and faiths fraternised and worked for the common good. There were no barriers of religion and ethnicity and every citizen embraced good neighbourliness (Lar & Embu, 2012; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Ojukwu & Onifade, 2010). There were Igbo, Yoruba, Hausa-Fulani, Urhobo, Efik, Tiv, Idoma, Eggon ethnic groups and many others; as well as Indians, Americans, Irish, Britons and other foreign nationals, who either belonged to Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, African traditional religions or professed no faith. The scenario is further captured thus:

> Those familiar with Plateau State before its protracted crises began will recall the days when people of all ethnic extractions coexisted peacefully with their host communities, whose character of accommodation attracted Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists and non-believers to the land. Their desire was to remain united and chart a common cause. Unfortunately, violence erupted, resulting in renewed hostilities which lasted for a decade (Naanlang Godfrey Danaan, 2012, p. 1).

According to Human Rights Watch, 2001, cited in Shedrack Gaya Best and Rakodi (2011, p. 57), 'because of its geographical location and economic history, Jos became one of the most religiously plural cities in Nigeria, and a particularly significant meeting point for Christianity and Islam, although until the 1990s, its diverse communities lived together in peace'. These two religions are practiced by the greater population of Nigerians as it is the case with Jos. They observe their religious rights regularly and often express these in great proportion; to the extent that they turn aggressive or become confrontational to each other at the slightest provocation.

Some scholars (e.g., Alabi, 2002; Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011; Danfulani, 2006) ascribe to the claim that Islam spread in the country through trade but was linked to violence which many Christians regarded as a systematic Jihad. Attempts were made to capture Jos by the jihadists but the indigenous ethnic groups defended their territory. The

jihad failed because the indigenes resisted it and they ensured that their area was protected from further attacks (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Ostien, 2009). Based on this account, the indigenous ethnic groups of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom whose identity is anchored on Christianity have nurtured this suspicion that the Hausa-Fulani (regarded as the Muslim North) wanted to conquer them by all means (Danfulani, 2006; Ishaku, 2012). The implication is that the rivalry between the 'indigene Christians' and 'settler Muslims' assumed a dangerous dimension. The identity struggle became religious in which Christians and Muslims pitched camps fighting each other for many years. Each time a religious festivity (such as *Eidle-Fitri* or Christmas) is observed by Muslims or Christians, heavily armed security operatives are mobilised to protect lives and property in the event of the breach of the peace by either of the rival groups. Once violent conflict erupts, whether it is politically or ethnically motivated, Christians and Muslims are the major actors and often become victims. However, Kaigama (2012) argues that the Jos conflict is multidimensional. He maintains that a number of factors accounts for the unrest which implies that it is closely linked to ethnicity and religion but not limited to them.

Given that Muslims and Christians are perceived 'enemies' in the identity struggle, they often instigate each other, and use derogatory labels such as 'settler', 'native', 'non-indigene', 'host community', 'foreigner' to vent their anger and express their frustrations with each other (Danfulani, 2006, p. 1). In all this, the emerging complexity about the Jos conflict is its ethno-religious and socio-political coloration that has many pathways (Ambe-Uva, 2010; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Kaigama, 2012; Ostien, 2009). The 1952 census figures, cited in Danfulani (2006, p. 2) indicate that 'Christians formed 84.5 per cent of the population of Jos town, with Muslims making 12 per cent and adherents of traditional religions the remaining 3.5 per cent'. Furthermore, 'today, Plateau State enjoys a majority Christian population of about 95 per cent, while Jos town is overwhelmingly

Christian' (Danfulani, 2006, p. 2). In contrast, this position has been contested by the Muslims who also claim that their number outweighs the population of the Christians, as a result of which they recognise their political influence in Jos North Local Government Area and vow not to leave anything to chance (Krause, 2011). They believe that they have a stake in the politics of the land which is the ideology of the Hausa-Fulani or the 'core' North (Kukah, 1994).

A segment of the indigenous ethnic groups had claimed that the Muslim community had planned a jihad to attack Christians and take over their possessions as well as install the 'Sarkin Jos' (Emir of Jos) with the aim of reclaiming the city (Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Plateau Indigenous Development Association Network, 2010). For example, *Punch* reporter Jude Owuamanam had published a purported text message ascribed to the Jos North Muslim Ummah. It read:

> To all Muslims: we must reclaim Kaduna, install a Muslim governor in Taraba, plant a deputy governor in Benue, install a woman as governor (which is Haram but she's a necessary weapon of change) in Plateau. We must capture Central Nigeria, Council of Ulama, Northern Nigeria (Owuamanam, 2011, cited in Krause, 2011, p. 32).

The rivalry between Muslims and Christians deepened when, on September 7, 2001; three days before the attack on the Twin Towers in New York, they engaged in bloodshed that tore them apart. It was this hostility that turned into organised violence involving Muslims on the one hand and Christians on the other. The circumstances that led to this violence are still being contested. However, a report alleged that before the violence broke out, the Muslim community in Jos had circulated leaflets among its members instigating them against non-Muslims and asking them to 'defend' Islam at all cost (Asaju, 2001). Since then, rather than situate the Jos crisis within the realm of ethnicity which produced the seeming religious coloration, the latter is widely perceived as a major trigger. The September 7 scenario was an

upsurge of a longstanding rivalry between the Christian 'indigenes' and the Hausa-Fulani 'settlers' (Danfulani, 2006; Krause, 2011).

Today, those who read about Jos conflict on pages of newspapers, especially the reprisal attacks on communities dominated by Christians and/or Muslims, have formed the impression of a religious war. Krause (2011, p. 12) maintains that 'the struggle between predominantly Christian indigenes and the mostly Muslim Hausa-Fulani soon took a strong religious dimension, pitching Muslims against Christians'. The degree of impression is such that triggers international reckoning in which countries now identify with the rival religious groups and, to an extent, aid their war tactics on their perceived enemies. For example, when a person leaves the shores of Nigeria, a citizen of that visiting country may ask his/her Nigerian guest: 'How are 'our people' over there?', 'I heard 'they' are killing 'us'', 'Are 'we' not more than 'them'?', 'What are 'our people' doing about the massacre?', 'Do 'you' not own Nigeria?', 'Must you allow 'them' to wipe away 'our' people?'. These are some questions which the visiting Nigerian may be confronted with. The effects of this encounter may be manifested in the 'fight back' or *we- no- go-gree* (we won't agree) guerrilla war being experienced in the city.

The Afizere, Anaguta and Berom people and other ethnic groups as well as a fraction of the Middle Belt region believe that the Hausa-Fulani have an agenda that, if not checked with tact, will manifest in the take-over of Jos by the settlers (Ambe-Uva, 2010). For them, Jos is crucial to the Middle Belt cause, thus, it must be protected for the region and the entire country to survive. A survey conducted among the ethnic groups of the Middle Belt reveals that they believe that 'if the Muslims have Jos, they have Nigeria. And if they have Nigeria, they have Africa' (Krause, 2011, p. 31). This perspective is, therefore, linked to the September 7 conflict as reported by Offi and Adeyi (2001, p. 24):

> On Friday, September 7 at about 12.55pm, what has been described as a bottled anger exposed at a small mosque along Congo Russia area of Jos. And for the

next several days, it was killing, burning of houses, churches, mosques and vehicles. So far, two reasons have been given for the violence – one being a mere trigger to the other. It was not sudden as it appeared, but a fall-out of long intrigues and political rivalry over the ownership of the city. The intrigues are between the natives of Berom, Anaguta and the Afizere ethnic extraction and the Hausa-Fulani migrants into the city.

Another account presents the conflict in three folds: 'struggle over political appointments, blockage of street for purposes of praying and the expansion of Shari'ah law...in twelve northern states of Nigeria' (Danfulani, 2006, p. 5).The implication of this narrative is that; first, a settler appointee had been imposed on the indigenes as coordinator of a poverty alleviation programme by the Federal Government in 1994 which was protested and bottled up; second, the unauthorised blockage of streets for Jumma'at prayer which led to the harassment of a Christian woman; and third, the emerging campaign for the adoption of Shari'ah law in Plateau State by some Islamic extremists to destabilise the state, especially the citizens who had taken refuge in the state after the law was legalised in twelve northern states. The conflict, which appeared mild because the people of the state had neither witnessed any spate of violence nor anticipated a further breakdown of law and order, later metamorphosed into what is labelled today as 'the Jos crisis'. It has remained devastating and uncommonly inhuman as Okoro and Chukwuma (2012, p. 43) aptly capture: 'Jos crisis has continued to the present day and it has gone sophisticated'.

Various judicial commissions of enquiry and committees to broker peace between warring groups - about 10 from 2001-2004 (Danfulani, 2006; J. D. Galadima, 2010) were set up by the government but the culprits who are said to have masterminded the carnage have not been brought to justice. But most of these reports reveal that the three ethnic groups regarded as 'indigenes' own the city of Jos. The Crisis Group Africa Report (2012, p. 7) states: 'virtually all commissions of enquiry into the Jos crisis since April 1994 concluded that the city of Jos is 'owned' not by the Hausa-Fulani, but by the BAA – Berom, Afizere

and Anaguta [....] Only these communities were judged to have proof of ancestral land of Jos'.

Some of the attackers carrying weapons

Residents mourning their loss

Bodies of persons killed in one of the attacks

Women and children were the most affected

Figure 3: 5 Victims of Jos conflict   Source: www.nytimes.com

3.4 Handling Ethnic and Religious Conflict in Nigerian Media

While it is understood that Nigeria's ethnic and religious pluralism is, in part, a source of conflict – as previously discussed - further analysis of journalistic strategies of framing these narratives in the diverse environment is of essence. The Nigerian media, as expected, have contributed to nation building beginning with the 1859 press revolution which produced Henry Townsend's *Iwe Irohin,* Africa's first vernacular newspaper that helped to propagate the missionary vision and ideals of Christianity (Ralph Afolabi Akinfeleye, 1985; R.A.

Akinfeleye, 1987; Lai Oso, D. Odunlami, & T Adaja, 2011; Ukonu, 2005).This press regime transited from a single platform - that focused on doctrinal issues, religious news such as announcements about converts and the baptised - to a multiplatform that served the general interests including socio-political, cultural and economic dynamics, commerce and industry (Gambo & Hassan, 2011; J. Jimoh, 2011; Tejumaiye & Adelabu, 2011). Furthermore, the nationalists struggle which led to the nation's independence; enlightenment and mobilisation of the citizenry; support for development programme, especially the protection of the marginalized groups; the enthronement and stability of democracy, surveillance of the environment, among other programmes, are some of the positive influence of the media (Adebanwi, 2004; Tejumaiye & Adelabu, 2011).

A large volume of literature (e.g. Ralph Afolabi Akinfeleye, 2003; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Golwa, 2011; Tejumaiye & Adelabu, 2011) has described the media as the country's mirror which reflects the occurrences in the society, even though they serve the interests of their owners and the elites. As Tejumaiye and Adelabu (2011) have noted, the media are a 'mixed blessing' because they do not only perform their role of surveillance but also compromise journalistic integrity in many ways. Given that they operate under harsh economic, political and social conditions such as poor living wage, ownership pressure and threat to life, their observance of professional ethics cannot be said to be absolute. The complexity of the Nigerian environment – its multicultural, multi-ethnic and multi-religious orientations – makes journalists vulnerable as there are conflicting interests of actors to serve (Ojebode, 2009). From the pre-independence era to post-independent Nigeria, the media have been grappling with episodic sectarian conflict and other national threats.

Contemporary scholarship has reinforced the view that the media have failed to manage diversity in ethnic and/or religious conflict (Albert, 2002; Egwu, 2001; H. S.

Galadima, 2011; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Golwa, 2011; Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution, 2007; Tejumaiye & Adelabu, 2011). This argument is predicated on the empirical evidence that the media institution is closely linked to politics in the country (Golwa, 2011; Umechukwu, 2001); as such, ethnicity and religion have been polarised giving perception of reality a different meaning. The polarisation of the media started during the 1914 amalgamation regime because some of them believed in the merger and advanced its cause while others did not (Adebanwi, 2004). Furthermore, Tejumaiye and Adelabu (2011) have explained that the media have turned deaf ears to the yearnings of citizens that they should maintain professional honour especially in handling ethno-religious conflict. They argue that 'there exists now a feeling of distrust between the mass media and citizens. Rather than [to] mirror truth and national integration, Nigerian mass media have allowed ethnicity, colouring of facts, parochialism, ownership influence, incompetence, bribery and corruption, brotherhood, etc., influence their professional judgment' (p.70). Critics are agitated that the Nigerian media may be leading the country into another round of civil war as they predict an ethnocentric media regime that creates borders (Olukotun, 2002).

As political structures were erected and parties formed, the regional/ethnic divides surfaced. Every region was closely tied to a religion and the orientations of the people developed on this premise as a result of which the Nigerian national project was dismantled. The resistance by the north that its identity and religion should not be diluted by western culture and education led to underdevelopment of the region and paved way for the growth of the south (Kukah, 1994; Sircar, 1968).This was also the pathway for the media in Nigeria. There was the southern – northern media dichotomy that engaged the practitioners in 'pen shooting' as contents became delicacies of ethnic and religious ideologies. The media fed their audiences with tales of 'bad news' on the rival regions; as such, their analysis of issues was subjective. The regional and central governments as well as politicians (who later

became journalists) found the media useful in achieving their goals bearing in mind that journalists who worked for these media were incapable of biting the fingers that fed them (Aliagan, 2005; Duyile, 1987; Ukonu, 2005).

There was media concentration in the south compared to the north. Media consciousness was associated with the south that had been exposed to western literacy which the north had opposed. Although newspapers and other media later sprang up in the north – especially during the deregulation of broadcasting, the south still controls the industry having most of the media in its region. This mass media terrain in which 'the South towers over the North' (A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013, p. 9), provides another perspective to managing media contents on the diversity of the country and its ethnic and religious pluralism. Beginning with *Iwe Irohin,* the South has dominated the media landscape and the proprietors of these media reside within the Lagos –Ibadan south –western territory (Duyile, 1979; Kukah, 1994; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; E. Ojo, 2003; Okidu, 2011). The North has tried to level up by establishing its media network but this effort has not yielded any result compared to the South. This has created unhealthy competition between the southern and northern media serving as 'pliant, puppets' to achieve regional goals (Ekpu, 1990, cited in E. Ojo, 2003, p. 836). It is against this parochialism, especially in handling sensitive issues of diversity that Kurt Leudike writes about the mass media:

> You are the mechanisms of reward and punishment, the arbiter of right and wrong, the roving eye of daily judgment. You are capricious and unpredictable, you are fearsome and you are feared because there is never any way to know whether this time, you will be fair and accurate or whether you will not (Leudike, 1984, cited in Tejumaiye & Adelabu, 2011, p. 71).

In Leudike's view, the 'unpredictable media', especially in handling conflict, implies that what the media choose to report about conflict and how they are reported cannot be predicted by the audience. As third party in conflict, they may contribute to the escalation or de-

escalation of the conflict depending on which side they choose to align with. As a consequence, the Nigerian media, rather than contribute to peace building by being fair and accurate, do more harm in conflict situations (Albert, 2002; H. S. Galadima, 2011). While these scholars have acknowledged the contributions of the media to national cooperation and integration by highlighting the gains inherent in diversity, they seem to concur with the findings by Albert (2002) that the media emphasise citizens' ethnic and religious differences more than their similarities. Furthermore, Pate (2011) summarises some challenges which characterise conflict reporting research, and argues that many journalists present false information about conflict and the groups involved. Thus, there is a litany of journalistic flaws that can trigger resentment among social groups. It means that journalists' ethnic, political and religious orientations often influence their conduct as manifested in their choice of inflammatory language and the manipulation of facts. These form much of media contents on conflict in Jos.

Based on the Nigerian media's handling of conflict and diversity which suggests that they lay   emphasis on issues that divide rather than unite social groups (Albert, 2002), this study draws example from the works of J. D. Galadima (2010), A. O. Musa and Ferguson (2013) and Rasaq (2012). Apart from contributing significantly to contemporary scholarship on conflict reporting and Nigeria's diversity, their studies are a major effort that reinforces the southern and northern dichotomy reflecting the complexity of ethnic and religious pluralism in the north, and Jos in particular.

3.5 Jos Conflict in the Media

There is no clear distinction between the coverage of the Jos conflict and the rest of the north or the entire country where the media purportedly demonstrated professional incompetence and have become insensitive to the collective cause of a united Nigeria. The media beamed their searchlights on the city in 1994 when violence that consumed several lives and property

erupted; and in 2001 when Jos became a troubled spot as it recorded its first organised armed conflict (Krause, 2011; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Zeng & Akinro, 2013). This coverage has continued to the present day, and is influenced by group/individual interests – largely based on primordial sentiments. The coverage is, therefore, adequate and intensive but polarised (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012).

Figure 3: 6 Advocates of peace in the aftermath of the Jos conflict

Journalists were partisan in reporting the Jos conflict. Their reports and analyses on the conflict have reflected parochial ideology that served ethnic and religious interests – the Christian south and the Muslim north agendas. This prevailing media bias which has resulted from Nigeria's diversity and the quest for group identity has made the citizens to lose faith in the media. As such, the audience shops for news that suits his/her interest since 'truth' is defined based on that choice.

3.6 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the dynamics and complexities of conflict in the diverse Nigerian society which have been linked to ethnicity and religion. Both identities are among the causal factors of conflict in Africa (Francis, 2006). The chapter revisits Nigeria's amalgamation programme by the British colonial administration which ignited conflict in the country because the merger of the northern and southern protectorates into a single entity was arguably faulty.

The chapter also provides insights into the Jos conflict involving the 'indigenous' ethnic groups of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom (AAB) and the Hausa Fulani 'settler' community. While the Christian-dominated 'indigenes' have claimed control of their customary land –Jos, and tried to exclude the 'settlers' from political governance of the local council, their Hausa Fulani counterparts have maintained that Jos belongs to them, and that they would resist any form of exclusion (Ambe-Uva, 2010; Krause, 2011; Orji, 2011).

The chapter argues that amidst this controversy, the journalists have played a divisive role rather than advance the cause of peace in communities (Albert, 2002; Pate, 2011; Udoakah, 2015). Thus, the media structure in Nigeria represents the country's regional, ethnic and religious divides. The journalists' use of inflammatory language has dominated media contents which in turn ignited conflict. The discussion in this chapter is followed by an analysis of the theories used for advancing journalistic strategies research.

Chapter Four

Objectivity, Mediatisation and News Framing: Theoretical Framework

4.1 Introduction

This study utilises three mass media models to examine journalists' approaches to handling conflict in Jos. They include the journalistic objectivity model, the theory of mediatisation and news framing theory. Each of these frameworks gives an insight into the practices of conflict journalists thereby providing logical support to the empirical process.

The objectivity model is a standard of practice for most journalists across the globe (Blaagaard, 2013; Lesage & Hackett, 2014; Muñoz-Torres, 2012; Stenvall, 2014; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013), which encourages them to report the story without any form of attachment to their subjects, or as D. Barker (2007) notes that they are required to 'tell it as it is'. Having been criticised by a growing body of scholars, the objectivity model has occupied much debate in contemporary studies. In this research, it is examined to gain an understanding about its adoption in conflict reporting. The researcher interrogates the 'trouble' with this model and looks at the emerging brands of journalism around it.

The study is also understood from the mediatisation theory and news framing theory lenses. While the former describes media logic in news production, the latter suggests the way the narratives which constitute news are constructed. Both theories explain journalistic practices in many respects. For instance, understanding media logic is the first step in identifying journalists' role in the Jos conflict which in turn determines the brand of journalism being adopted. The angle from which a story is developed explains the news framing process (Kapuściński & Richards, 2016; Phillips, 2015). The journalists' choice of

frames invariably shapes the perceptions of their audiences, especially the portrayal of 'indigenes' as victims and 'settlers' as aggressors of conflict or vice versa.

In this chapter, the Frustration-Aggression (FA) theory of conflict and the Peace Journalism (PJ) theory precede the three media theories employed in this research. The FA explains the context of conflict in which social groups express their frustration through aggressive means when their expectations are not met. This is typical of the Jos conflict involving a 'settler' group craving for recognition and legitimacy on the one hand, and a group of 'indigenes' that insists the territory is its inheritance on the other. While this theory is located in conflict research, it provides the foundation for understanding the nature of conflict in which journalists have played a role. The PJ is a brand of journalism committed to peace.

4.2 The Frustration–Aggression Theory

The theory of Frustration-Aggression holds that people whose needs or expectations are not met feel a sense of frustration leading to behaviour change. Maier describes it as 'frustration –instigated behaviour' (Maier, 1961, cited in Shorkey & Crocker, 1981, p. 376; Young, 2009) because exhibiting this new behaviour stems from frustration. The individual who is frustrated tries to depart from his/her state by taking an action that may offer him/her some relief. Sigmund Freud was said to have used the concept 'frustration' to explain the external and internal factors that inhibit needs satisfaction (Shorkey & Crocker, 1981). He noted that there were obstacles to attaining satisfaction which results in the change in behaviour that is being translated in aggression, regression, fixation and resignation (Norman & Ryan, 2008; Shorkey & Crocker, 1981; Young, 2009). Young maintains that 'each of the four characteristics illustrates a continued state of experienced interpersonal conflict, and none of the feelings associated with the characteristics directly helps an individual to attain a goal or meet a need' (2009, p.286).

The Frustration – Aggression theory was adapted by John Dollard and his colleagues in 1939 to explain the violent behaviour – aggression – that emerges from frustration (Ademola, 2006). Scholars such as Young (2009), Hornik (1977), Anifowose (1982) and Feierabends (1969) have distinguished what people desire and what they get in the long run. According to Ademola (2006, p. 47),

> Where expectation does not meet attainment, the tendency is for people to confront those they hold responsible for frustrating their ambitions [....] It is the outcome of frustration and [...] in a situation where the legitimate desires of an individual is denied either directly or by the indirect consequence of the way the society is structured, the feeling of disappointment may lead such a person to express his anger through violence that will be directed at those he holds responsible or people who are directly or indirectly related to them.

This theory suggests a terrain of hostility, conflict, violence, disorder and despair; all of which are rooted in frustration and aggression. This study presents the same scenario, a society characterized by ethnic and religious divides – where 'natives' and 'foreigners', 'Muslim North' and 'Christian South', 'majority and minority' ethnic groups have expressed their frustrations on account of alienation and denial of legitimacy. Their Frustration – Aggression antecedents have led to organised violence that has consumed the warring groups and other casualties. Lerner (1958) had predicted that the mass media, as definers of the Frustration – Aggression model would create expectations that would not be met, as they make people 'imagine themselves as strange persons in strange situations, places and times' (p.52). In other words, Lerner maintains that the media's portrayal of events (in this circumstance – conflict) can trigger a desire (want) which may not be achieved and could lead to frustration and fierce action - aggression.

The criticisms that have followed the media coverage of the Jos conflict – that they have instigated groups against one another rather than support peace initiatives aimed at uniting them (H. S. Galadima, 2011; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Golwa, 2011; A. O. Musa &

Ferguson, 2013), hinged on Lerner's argument. The media have planted a seed of discord among the people who now feel that their ideologies, beliefs and cultures are at variance and cannot blend.

4.3 Peace Journalism Theory: An Alternative to War Journalism

Peace journalism (PJ) and war journalism (WJ) were first used by Swedish scholar Johan Galtung (1973) to make a distinction between reporting that promotes non-violence in the society and the one that instigates conflict actors towards violence. He argued that peace journalism is an alternative to war journalism. This logic has guided most conflict journalism studies in the last decades. The goal of PJ was to counter the norm of objectivity which defined professional journalism in the US and, indeed, most parts of the world (Boudana, 2011; Maras, 2013; McMeel, 2003). Journalistic objectivity entailed working towards achieving neutrality, fairness and balance by those who report events (Berganza-Conde et al., 2010). However, while objectivity emerged as an ideal, with many journalists striving to pursue it, attaining it is difficult because it requires journalists to be disinterested observers of their subjects rather than participants in the events they report.

Johan Galtung believed that peace journalism would enable journalists to report conflict in a holistic manner – identifying the causes of the conflict and the actors, and providing a platform that would restore and sustain solidarity among the social groups in conflict as a means to reduce human suffering (Rukhsana, 2011; Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al., 2016). In contrast to war reporting, PJ is people-oriented and concerned with how to make a contribution to peacebuilding efforts in society ravaged by violence (Shinar, 2009), so that 'positive peace' may be achieved (Galtung, 1996, cited in Lynch, 2013a, p. 50). It is a reporting strategy aimed at enlightening media audiences on the imperative of peace thereby influencing their attitudes towards achieving peace.

Peace journalism is further expanded by a growing body of scholars (e.g., Howard, 2009, 2015; S. T. Lee, 2010; Lynch, 2008; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2005, 2013; Lynch, McGoldrick, & Heathers, 2015; Rukhsana, 2011; Singh, 2013; Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al., 2016) that used Johan Galtung's framework to produce a variety of concepts which are recognised in contemporary peace journalism research as 'solutions journalism' (Thier, 2016; Wenzel, Gerson, & Moreno, 2016). In some iterations, it is regarded as 'journalism of attachment' (Bell, 1996, 1997), 'responsible conflict reporting' (Singh, 2013), 'human rights journalism' (Shaw, 2016) – and in others, it suggests 'caring journalism', 'reliable journalism', 'innovative journalism', and so on (Rukhsana, 2011). These concepts attempt to define the role of journalists in violent situations – namely, peace advocacy. In all this, there is an effort to educate the public on the sanctity of human life and all forms of non-violence so as to prevent and/or manage conflict.

Recent peace journalism research has argued that a review of the PJ model would provide a framework for adoption by journalists across national frontiers because the variety of brands associated with PJ 'are more individual projects than coordinated and organised reforms, and they are scattered geographically and do not have a global scope' (Nohrstedt & Ottosen, 2015, p. 221). Thus, the study proposed what it termed as the 'consequence-ethical reflexivity, which […] expresses the kernel of the PJ programme' (p. 232). But like others, it is drawn on Johan Galtung's model which provides alternative to war journalism whereby journalists are expected to report conflict in the manner that would shape the attitudes of their audiences towards peace. It is a solution-oriented practice – a departure from the norm of journalistic objectivity. Putting it simply, Lynch and McGoldrick (2005) described the PJ process thus:

Peace journalism is when editors and reporters make choices – of what to report and how to report it – that create opportunities for society at large to consider and value nonviolent responses to conflict (p.5).

In their view, it would offer people whom the mass media message is targeted at, and the community, options for peace and dialogue among social groups. Ten years after they viewed this process as solution-oriented (because of the proactive and reactive responses to violence), one of the authors - Lynch (2015) – has not shifted from this standpoint. In a separate study, Lynch (2013a) maintained that peace journalism has a 'solution orientation, highlighting peace initiatives and, in the aftermath of violence, efforts to promote resolution, reconstruction and reconciliation' (p. 39).

The Solutions Journalism Network (SJN) has described solutions journalism as a 'rigorous and compelling reporting on responses to social problems' (Wenzel et al., 2016, p. 8). Solutions journalists often provide a 'yes' response to the following questions which form the framework for their practice (Curry & Hammonds, 2014, p. 6):

- Does the story explain the causes of a social problem?
- Does the story present an associated response to the problem?
- Does the story refer to problem solving and how-to details?
- Is the problem solving process central to the story's narrative?
- Does the story present evidence of results linked to the response?
- Does the story explain the limitations of the response?
- Does the story contain an insight or teachable lesson?
- Does the story avoid reading like a puff piece?
- Does the story draw on sources that have ground-level expertise, not just a 300,000 foot understanding?
- Does the story give greater attention to the response than to a leader, innovator, or do-gooder?

Solutions journalism scholarship recognises two brands of journalism – the first being peace journalism, and the second, the civic/public journalism which focuses on social problems with a view to creating public awareness on the remedies to such problems (Bornstein, 2011; Wenzel et al., 2016). But the current research is concerned with how PJ offers solutions to

conflict issues. Although some news contents in the 1990s were constructed in order to encourage media audiences to fashion out ways of solving social problems, the practice was not popular until 2013 when the Solutions Journalism Network (SJN) was inaugurated (Thier, 2016; Wenzel et al., 2016). At the time of writing (2016), solutions journalism had begun to gain acceptance among scholars in the US as solutions journalism courses had been developed and earmarked to run in US universities in the 2015/2016 academic year (Thier, 2016). This is expected to transcend the US borders in the next couple of years.

4.4 Journalistic Objectivity

A good reporter who is well-steeped in his subject matter and who isn't out to prove his cleverness, but rather is sweating out a detailed understanding of a topic worth exploring, will probably develop intelligent opinions that will inform and perhaps be expressed in his journalism

– Timothy Noah, 1999, cited in Cunningham (2003, p.9).

Journalism blossomed in the 19th century largely because it was recognised as a practice that upheld truth – a reflection of the real world. Journalists believed that they had the moral obligation to the society by being non-partisan in their framing of the news to guarantee good reporting (Barger & Barney, 2004). They wanted their stories to be trusted and to serve as authoritative sources upon which narratives of the real world could evolve.

In adopting this 'ideal' practice which describes the world 'the way it is' (Blaagaard, 2013; Cunningham, 2003; Marken, 2007; Pan & Chan, 2003), they tried to overcome partiality by embracing 'objective' journalism that could create a sense of transparency (Kaplan, 2002; Mindich, 1998; Schiller, 1981; Thorsen, 2008). Objectivity, therefore, became a standard embedded in journalism. As the challenges of this standard continue to manifest in the routines of journalism, the concept – which is centred on accuracy, fairness, balance, impartiality (Hackett & Zhao, 1996) or detachment, non-bias (H. Tumber & Prentoulis, 2003;

Ward, 2008) – has been redefined by professionals across all segments of the society including journalists and consumers of mass media contents. The definition of objectivity by Michael Bugeja is quite concise. He asserts that 'objectivity is seeing the world as it is, not how you wish it were' (Bugeja, cited in Cunningham, 2003, p. 2). This provides a foundation on which the concept is contested. The belief is that the desires and interests of the journalist should not prevail in the news narratives in order to earn the trust of the audience. As an observer of events involving social groups, the journalist is expected to stand aloof or be neutral in reporting the news.

The urge to embrace objectivity in journalism stemmed from the 'objective' empirical studies in the natural sciences believed to follow scientific process which often generated realistic data – truth (Blaagaard, 2013; Post, 2014). Social scientists envisioned a standard in their disciplines that would detach them from the subjects they were studying in order to earn credibility. When journalism embedded it in its codes of ethics handbooks in the 1920s with the aim of injecting the scientific objectivity (Streckfuss, 1990) that guaranteed 'factuality, non-bias, independence, non-interpretation, neutrality and detachment' (Ward, 2008, p. 19) , it seemed a lofty idea that focused on moral principle.

Objectivity is the widely accepted standard associated with journalism – the norm that has remained fashionable. It is central to this research because many journalists the world over believe it is at the heart of journalistic practice (Schudson, 2001; Tong, 2015). Cunningham (2003) acknowledges that 'plenty of good journalists believe it, at least as a necessary goal. Objectivity, or the pursuit of it, separates us from the unbridled partisanship [....] It helps us make decisions quickly – we are disinterested observers after all – and it protects us from the consequences of what we write' (p.2). The interpretation of journalistic objectivity varies from one scholar to another. For example, Tuchman (1972) refers to it as a ritual; Boudana (2011) and Ward (2008) say it is a set of practices while   Cunningham

(2003), Hackett and Zhao (1996) describe it as a myth. But importantly, the underlying consensus is that it is a standard of journalism that requires moral responsibility.

4.4.1 The 'trouble' with objectivity

In this study, the ensuing debate on journalistic objectivity is examined. Critics of objectivity call for a shift from detachment to attachment, objectivity to subjectivity (Blaagaard, 2013; Boudana, 2011; Bowman, 2006; Cunningham, 2003; Hackett & Zhao, 1996; Rosen, 1993; Streckfuss, 1990; Thorsen, 2008; H. Tumber & Prentoulis, 2003). This body of scholars suggests reformulating, rethinking, reconceptualising and redefining objectivity because its standard is no longer attainable in contemporary journalistic practice. It argues that those who adopted it have sought an escape from their convictions of doubt. They targeted a wide range of audience by presenting the two sides of the story even when the truth is said to be emanating from one side. Some frontline critics of objectivity (e.g., Greenwald, 2014; Seib, 2013) have reasoned that the process of traditional gate keeping – which translates in the selection of 'newsworthy' items that are structured on the inverted pyramid paradigm, is a departure from objective to subjective process. The argument follows the logic that if the reporters/editors determine who, what, where, why, when and how of a story and place the items in their 'order of relevance', with the most to the least important appearing in descending order, the norm of objectivity is compromised. It nullifies the objective principle that emphasises non-bias, non-partisanship, impartiality, fairness, balance, truth, detachment and neutrality. Fundamentally, the framing of 'reality' is, by design, an exercise that demonstrates bias (Seib, 2013) because journalists – being humans and have affiliations with family, ethnic or religious group, class or gender – may be influenced by these factors.

Particularly, some critics (e.g., Gaber, 2011; Hackett & Zhao, 1996) have pointed out that the pursuit of objectivity has led to reliance on the elite to call the shots as very little is

done to investigate these sources. Dolan (2005) laments that many journalists are blinded by objectivity to the extent that they engage in the 'he said, she said journalism' in which prominent personalities are glorified while the issues surrounding them are not classified newsworthy. Dolan implies that journalism demands interpretation of events being reported to enhance audience understanding. She argues that it is not enough for a top – bottom news narrative which limits the understanding of the events by the audience. In that sense, it is recommended that journalists should paint a bigger picture of the events they report, provide perspectives and follow up on the issues credited to news sources (Maras, 2013; Seib, 2013); a new phase of journalism which the norm of objectivity, in an attempt to achieve balance, cannot guarantee. The devotion to objectivity or what Marken (2007, p. 266) calls the 'norm of disinterestedness' may have been conceived, accepted and adopted, but not attainable because it is argued that where 'balance' and 'impartiality' – the thrusts of objectivity – seem to prevail, the journalists' reports are marred by prejudices. While balance is 'an equal – or inclusive, fair, harmonious – coverage of different identities and concerns of society', impartiality is 'a detached or factual dealing with contrasting claims, frames, interpretations, problem definitions' (Raeijmaekers & Maeseele, 2015, p. 7). Thus, studies have suggested a shift from 'objective' to 'subjective' journalism (see Blaagaard, 2013; Greenwald, 2014) that would provide a platform for partisanship. In this new paradigm, the journalists would not shy away from explaining circumstances of events and tilting to the path of truth rather than covering it under the guise of 'balancing both sides' – objectivity.

Cunningham (2003) insists that journalists only claim to be objective because the manner of selecting and presenting the story clearly demonstrates one-sided narrative of what constitutes news for the audience. He asks who defines objectivity in the circumstance of news framing – where the journalist is the judge who passes a verdict on content and gives the impression that what the audience consumes is a 'balanced', 'fair' and 'true' reflection of

the event? He believes that since journalists are imperfect beings and have the tendency to be influenced by this human frailty, they cannot be objective. Thus, 'letting them write what they know and encouraging them to dig toward some deeper understanding of things is not biased, it is essential' (2003, p.10). Central to this debate is that the limits of objectivity have necessitated the reformulation of the concept to allow journalists analyse and interpret the news thereby helping the audience to understand its context.

Furthermore, as Cunningham has explained that human nature is subjective and this innate character permeates all human life, journalists of 'objective' orientation cannot be doing their job outside this realm of nature. Applying this rationale which is opposed to the orthodoxy of objectivity, Greenwald (2014) maintains that journalists who uphold this principle pretend , no matter the degree of reverence of the rule or restraint, as their reports are garnished with 'facts' that only serve certain interests – often those who control affairs of state or authorities that marginalize the minority. He argues explicitly that:

> Every news article is the product of all sorts of highly subjective cultural, nationalistic, and political assumptions. And journalism serves one faction's interest or another's [....] The relevant distinction is not between journalists who have opinions and those who have none [...], it is between journalists who candidly reveal their opinions and those who conceal them, pretending they have none (2014, p.231).

Like other critics, Greenwald situates journalism in the domain of synthesising 'truth' rather than presenting 'both sides' with the aim of 'balancing' the report simply to adopt the template of objectivity.

4.4.2 Emerging brands of journalistic practices beyond objectivity

Like the embedding strategy in the war on Iraq in which journalists were active participants because they worked with the soldiers whom they covered at the warfare, some reporters have been entangled in conflict across the world. Embeds were associated with military troops but there were other war reporters (outside the troops) whose interests in defending the

rights of war victims influenced their coverage (Ruigrok, 2008; Russ-Mohl, 2013). This struggle to revolutionise journalism and establish an alternative framework on which contemporary practice could thrive continued in the 1990s with the emergence of another brand of journalism – journalism of attachment. It evolved because the myth of objectivity had been dismissed.

When former BBC reporter Martin Bell wrote his book, *In Harm's Way* – an engaging narrative of war reporting reflecting, in particular, the 'shading of truth' that characterised the coverage of the Bosnian war, he declared: 'we were hardly main players ourselves, but not mere bystanders either. Our role, in the theatre of Bosnian war, was partly that of messengers, and partly lamplighters, for we tried to cast some light on those dark places' (Bell, 1996, p. 141). He implied that the journalists had a clear goal; they attached themselves to the war they were covering by influencing a military action in favour of the victims. In another article titled, 'TV news: How far should we go?' Bell sheds light on this brand of journalism:

> In place of the dispassionate practices of the past I now believe in what I call journalism of attachment. By this I mean a journalism that cares as well as knows; that is aware of its responsibilities; and will not stand neutrally between good and evil, right and wrong, the victim and the aggressor. This is not to back one side or faction or people against another; it is to make the point that we in the press […] do not stand apart from the world. We are a part of it (Bell, 1997, p. 8).

Bell argues that journalism demands morality driven by a high sense of duty that engages the reporter in the event he or she is covering. He maintains that in conflict situation, reporters should transcend the routine of covering the unfolding hostilities by seeking to identify the aggressors and victims and the implications of their actions on the community. Bell's argument is that 'objective' reporting deepens conflict; as such, evil doers should be exposed. Those who uphold this logic maintain that reporters should be motivated by conscience to reduce human suffering. This moral disposition of journalists has its consequence – some of

them follow the dictates of the editorial hierarchy and their financiers rather than helping, in conscience, to bring succour to the suffering population (*British Journalism Review*, 2003). Editors, on their part, determine whether such conscience-centred reports should be published or broadcast. In other words, the traditional gate-keeping process has some degree of influence on conscience.

Like Bell whose journalism of attachment distinctively identifies with victims of conflict rather than the aggressors, and which separates good from evil, some scholars have argued that journalists have the moral responsibility to expose evil by going beyond 'what has happened' to forming an opinion that aims at resolving ongoing conflict to minimise the suffering of victims. For example, Tait (2011, p. 1221) observes that when human suffering is portrayed in the media, it is 'not only morally acceptable, but a moral imperative' because the attention of media audiences is drawn to trigger public sympathy. Wiesslitz and Ashuri (2011) have proposed a 'moral journalist model' which rejects the claim describing the journalist as a bystander who is detached from the events, but regards him as one who 'witnesses the suffering of others with the aim of changing the witness reality' (p.1039). It describes the journalist as a social agent who observes this evil and gives its account to those who do not have the knowledge. Shaw's (2016) human rights journalism model is another alternative which seeks to defend the moral rights of victims of conflict. He argues that journalists should not shy away from their obligation of exposing the evil meted out to defenceless victims by taking a position in favour of such victims. It means that journalism should be defensive of human rights in order to alleviate human suffering. These works (Shaw, 2016; Tait, 2011; Wiesslitz & Ashuri, 2011) provocatively define the moral journalist as a social agent who testifies about conflict in which right and wrong are distinguished; and, if necessary, the culprits are implicated. Thus, it rejects the 'neutral' ideology of objective journalism which has been consistently dismissed in contemporary discourse (e.g., Stenvall,

2014; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013; Barbie Zelizer, 2015) because despite the recognition by supporters of this tradition that attaining objectivity is impossible, they have insisted that journalists 'must try 'their best' to achieve the 'highest possible level' of it' (Muñoz-Torres, 2012, p. 575).

In this study, a number of brands of journalism which suggest both the objective and goal-oriented traditions in conflict research have been discussed. These include objectivity – 'bystanders journalism' (von Oppen, 2009, p. 6), and subjectivity – which demonstrates that 'the 'self' of the author has a strong influence on the representation of social reality' (Harbers & Broersma, 2014, p. 643). Others are journalism of attachment – 'that cares […] and will not stand neutrally between good and evil [….]' (Bell, 1997, p. 8) , and journalism of morality that seeks to 'publicize a reality of evil and suffering' (Wiesslitz & Ashuri, 2011, p. 1039). They describe journalistic practices in the context of conflict.

On the merits of these arguments, this study supports the new thinking that objectivity should be redefined as a result of its shortcomings and failure to achieve fairness and balance. But the danger which this scholarship portends to journalism is that if journalists become 'aggressive analysers and explainers' of news (Cunningham, 2003, p. 1), or are encouraged to 'place 'what you (*they*) see' in a broader context' (Seib, 2013, p. 6), reporting will also be marred by prejudices which will only provide the audience with another perspective of world view. This controversy has continued to generate debate among journalism scholars as the critics of both traditions (objectivity and non-objectivity) have viewed these principles as being manifestly defective in attaining journalistic standard. For example, Gaber (2011, p. 39), a critic of objectivity asserts that, 'every attempt by journalists to argue that they are able to put aside their own beliefs and feelings and become, or aspire to become, genuinely 'objective' strengthens a dangerous canard'. This implies that such 'beliefs' and 'feelings'

would tamper with the analysis/explanation of the news or the attempt at contextualizing the news as argued by Cunningham and Seib.

Objectivity model has been examined in the context of current research because, like elsewhere, it is believed to be the guiding principle of journalistic practices in Nigeria (Salawu, 2015a, 2015b). However, other forms of journalism emanating from objectivity discourse have been analysed in an attempt to locate the brands that fit into the practices of journalists who reported the Jos conflict.

4.5 The Theory of Mediatisation

'Mediatisation' has gained acceptance in communication studies in the last decade as researchers have coined it to describe media influence on society – notwithstanding grammatical rule of native English. Research has argued that the adoption of certain terms in institutionalised disciplines, such as communication, is necessary to provide a framework for solving problems across geo-linguistic boundaries (Couldry & Hepp, 2013). This somewhat ambiguous concept – like scientific inventions and the modus operandi of many disciplines – places the media at the heart of every human endeavour – culture, politics, economy, religion, conflict and so on. It suggests that the ongoing transformations in the world have absorbed the media into all aspects of human life in that the global community can no longer exist outside the media. Many years ago, the media were believed to perform the role of mediation which implied that they disseminated information to their audiences objectively without any form of attachment to the events they covered (Gilboa, 2005). They simply conveyed or transmitted messages but their involvement in this process of 'conveyance' or 'transmission' was not substantially significant. However, the research community has long passed this tradition. Rather than situate mediation at the heart of the communication process, scholars are now researching media's capability of constructing issues and events or how they have

infiltrated all domains of the society (Cottle, 2006; Livingstone & Lunt, 2014). Looking beyond mediation, therefore, translates to mediatisation.

Mediatisation is not easily defined. This explains the absence of a single definition of the concept by scholars (Deacon & Stanyer, 2014; Knoblauch, 2013). It also accounts for the current debate in which researchers have moved from analysing the mediating potentials of the media that make them channels of communication to explaining the complexities which characterise their new influential status of 'a standalone institution with its own logic'(Nie et al., 2014, p. 363). But fundamentally, there is a common ground on the adoption of this concept in the purview of communication research; namely, that the media institutions and technologies exert some degree of influence on society which may be responsible for the changes that take place in the society (Christensen & Jansson, 2014; Deacon & Stanyer, 2014, 2015; Falasca, 2014; Hepp, 2013; Hepp et al., 2015; Hepp & Krotz, 2014; Knoblauch, 2013; Krotz, 2014; Landerer, 2013; Livingstone & Lunt, 2014; Lundby, 2014). Going further to demonstrate this consensus, Falasca (2014, p. 583), for instance, refers to mediatisation as 'a process in society where media have become increasingly influential', that is, 'the process of increasing dependency of society upon media and its logic'(Nie et al., 2014, p. 363). Again, the issue of media logic expands the debate in mediatisation research. This is because there is a growing concern that the society is shaped by media logic and standards, rather than other actors and institutions – a notion which has been criticised as there may be other variables that lead to change (Deacon & Stanyer, 2014, 2015).

Mediatisation has a German origin – *mediatisierung* (Couldry & Hepp, 2013; Livingstone, 2009; Nie et al., 2014) that emphasised the dominance of the media in nearly all aspects of life during the 20th century (Hepp, 2013). With evolving media technologies,

individuals and institutions have increasingly relied on the media because media offerings have become convenient, affordable and dynamic (Nie et al., 2014). There is a robust critique of this standpoint – not in terms of the failure to recognise that the media are change agents but 'this media-centric narrative of change' would require 'full appreciation of joint sufficiency' (Deacon & Stanyer, 2014, p. 1041). The 'joint sufficiency', in their view, encompasses the media and other variables that transmit change. Thus, Hepp (2013) introduces two traditions of mediatisation – the institutionalist and social constructivist traditions. He argues that 'while the 'institutionalist tradition' has until recently mainly been interested in traditional mass media, whose influence is described as 'media logic', the 'social construtivist tradition' is more interested in everyday communication practices – especially related to digital media and personal communication – and focuses on changing communicative construction of culture and society' (2013, p. 616). This categorization has implications. The institutionalist tradition places the media in the capacity of influential behaviour driven by 'media logic'. In the social constructivist tradition, other actors in the digital media space contribute to the change.

There are key thinkers of differing orientations in mediatisation research that are crucial to this research. First, Deacon and Stanyer (2014) articulate the view that agents of transformation should include non-media actors and that the notion of 'powerful media influence' advanced in mediatisation literature has been exaggerated (Hepp, 2013; Hjarvard, 2008, 2009; Stromback & Esser, 2014). The common catchphrases of these authors include the ability of the media to 'exert an influence on culture and society' (2013, p.615), or 'how media exert influence' (2014, p.4) and how they 'mould the way people communicate, act and sustain relationships with each other' (2009, p.175).

Although Deacon and Stanyer (2014) do not dismiss this potential influence of the media, they argue that different causes of change, other than media agents, could be

identified. In their view, the notion of mediatisation suggests 'an account of change that is driven by narrow set of causal variables – the mass media and/or ICTs – which are seen as powerful enough on their own to bring about change overtime […], there is a tendency to see these agents of mediatisation as both necessary and sufficient to bring about change in all contexts' (Deacon & Stanyer, 2014, p. 1041). These scholars insist that since media logic is not sufficient to change communicative practice, mediatisation, in which media logic is embedded, is incapable of providing a theoretical framework for advancing research on cultural changes influenced by the media. In their defence emerging from a critique by Hepp et al. (2015), Deacon and Stanyer (2015, p. 655) admit that media 'role and power may be changing in profound and predictable ways', however, they criticize 'the rise of a concept (*mediatisation – the researcher's emphasis)* that claims to provide a 'holistic' theoretical framework for explaining and analysing such processes'. But whether the argument by Deacon and Stanyer is substantive or lacks merit, the mediatisation debate demonstrates commitment to scholarship.

As researchers engage in this debate, and as they gain understanding about media involvement in everyday life, there may be consensus in literature on mediatisation research. As explained by Knoblauch (2013, p. 297), 'the notion of mediatisation lacks certainly an exact definition […,] there is quite substantial disagreement as to what the word may mean in theoretical terms and in terms of empirical research. The disagreement is not so much routed in the lack of definition or ambiguity of definition but rather in the lack of a theoretical framework in which the two most divergent aspects of its meaning can be understood'. Despite the uncertainty emerging from mediatisation discourse with scholars giving this field of research labels such as 'word/term' (Knoblauch, 2013) or 'concept' (Christensen & Jansson, 2014; Deacon & Stanyer, 2014; Falasca, 2014; Nie et al., 2014), it is introduced as a theory by Hepp et al. (2015) who argue that 'the research field's understanding of

mediatisation has matured, theoretically as well as empirically' (p.315). They maintain that there is a growing conceptual and empirical research which explains mediatisation processes in different aspects of life - politics, religion, culture, education, commerce, even conflict. Thus, it has helped to provide the framework for several empirical studies in mediatisation and the efforts at theorizing this field of research are 'still in the early stages' (2015, p. 315).

These scholars argue that if much is being done in this regard; that is, current effort at providing conceptual and empirical support to mediatisation research, the emerging 'concept' or 'term' should assume the status of a theory. In their own rights as contributors to the debate, they dismiss the claim by Deacon and Stanyer (2014, 2015) and, perhaps, their supporters that 'mediatisation theory' focuses on media role as sole agents of change. Hepp et al. (2015) maintain that Deacon and Stanyer's critique of mediatisation research has an erroneous bearing, as the authors are blind to the fact that 'media-centric' and 'media-centred' approaches to understanding mediatisation discourse have differing meanings. As a result of this perceived misconception, they offer this explanation:

> Being 'media-centric' is a one-sided approach to understanding the underplay between media communications, culture and society, whereas being 'media-centred' involves a holistic understanding of the various intersecting social forces at the same time as we allow ourselves to have a particular perspective and emphasize on the role of the media in these processes (Hepp et al., 2015, p. 316).

Hepp et al's (2015) view suggests that while the media are at the heart of all human endeavours, the holistic understanding of these endeavours and how media logic is embedded in them underscores this 'media-centred' pathway. Perhaps, if this is recognised in mediatisation debate, then the standalone (media-centric) notion which excludes the intersection of social forces would not be contemplated. Also, while recognising the influential position the media occupy in everyday life as documented in communication literature (Deacon & Stanyer, 2014) which implies that news about 'everyday life' – politics,

religion, health etc., is shaped by journalists (Falasca, 2014), it provides a theoretical foundation for interdisciplinary engagement in mediatisation since the process involves analysis at different levels (Stromback, 2011). Going a step further, scholars from all disciplines will find this evolving theory useful for examining media impact on such disciplines. This is why Hepp et al. (2015) have recommended that 'what we can bring to such an interdisciplinary dialogue is our experience as experts in researching processes of mediated communication ('mediation') and their transforming potential ('mediatisation')' (p.316).

Drawing on Hepp et al's (2015) mediatisation theory, as they recall that 'mediatisation has emerged as an important concept and theoretical framework for considering the interplay between media, culture and society' (2015, p.314), the current research explores how the intermittent Jos ethnic and religious conflict has been 'mediatized'. First, it recognises the media logic that could influence conflict reporting in the area which may involve journalists' strategies of constructing news frames that reveal the interests they serve. Second, it considers other factors such as cumulative exposure to violence, ethnic or religious alliance etc., (various intersecting social forces) that may influence journalistic practices in that context. Conflict, like any social, political or religious activity in which human beings are participants, attracts the media which, in turn, employ their logic to report such conflict. Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2015, p. 1323) have pointed out that war and conflict 'are reliant or dependent upon media and, consequently, have been transformed to increasingly follow media logics; they are mediatized'. The narratives of the Jos conflict presumably conform to media logic and the reality about the conflict which this logic produces, most probably, constitutes the reality of the audience. Cottle (2006) has theorised mediatised conflict for an engaged discourse drawing attention to how the media have been implicated in conflict. He notes:

> The media are capable of enacting and performing conflicts as well as reporting and representing them; that is to say, they are 'doing something' over and above disseminating ideas, images and information. The media's relationship to conflict, therefore, is often not best thought of in terms of 'reflection' or even 'representation' given its more active performative involvement and constitutive role within them (2006, p.9).

The metaphor of enactment described above suggests the way in which the media portray conflict – their active construction of the narratives of conflict because, rather than provide the accounts, they align with social groups thereby 'doing something' beyond mediation. Hoskins and O'Loughlin (2015) have admitted that the media are active participants in conflict because their contents tend to 'emerge from nowhere' (p.1320) which often leads to one social group pitching camp against the other.

One of Cottle's (2006) three paradigms that explain mediatised conflict in the context of current research is manufacturing consent. It emphasises the overarching political economy orientation being examined by media and communication scholars. It holds that the media have vested interests in the subjects they cover, as a result of which the views of the political class dominate their contents while other social groups are marginalised. This, unarguably, is a departure from the perceived tradition of the media as an institution that serves common interests. Herman and Chomsky (1988) have postulated a propaganda model which aptly illustrates this scenario. They argue that the media resort to propaganda when they carry out their functions in the society where wealth and conflict of class interest take the centre stage. They explain the model as follows:

> A propaganda model focuses on this inequality of wealth and power and its multilevel effects on mass media interests and choices. It traces the routes by which money and power are able to filter out the news to print, marginalize dissent, and allow the government and dominant private interests to get their messages across to the public (1988, p.2).

Herman and Chomsky identify five 'news filters' that propel the propaganda model. Although this model explains US media report on 'worthy' and 'unworthy' victims of war

(Cottle, 2006), it implies that news materials pass through filters that are structured on political economy. First, the large media companies that withstand the harsh economic reality of society are profit driven, owned and controlled by those with enormous wealth. Second, the media rely on advertising revenues generated from wealthy individuals and their corporations. Third, the media rely on the information provided by the political class and the business community. Fourth, the 'flak' regime, which the authors describe as negative comments on media contents (e.g., phone calls, law suits, emails, petitions), largely emerges from people with great financial influence. Fifth, their analogy of 'anticommunism as a national religion and control mechanism' which was geared toward weakening the ruling class during communism established the struggle against 'the enemy'. In that sense, the media helped in enacting this ideology. These filters define news worthy contents of the media because 'the news material must pass through successful filters, leaving only the cleansed residue fit to print' (Herman & Chomsky, 1988, p. 2).

Apparently, the theory of mediatised conflict, in which the propaganda model is embedded, will enhance researchers' understanding about how media 'do things' with conflict. This theory provides logical support to the current research in which journalists' reporting of violence in Jos is examined. The prolonged ethnic and religious conflicts border on the struggle for identity involving the perceived 'indigenes' and 'settlers' as well as 'Christians' and 'Muslims'. The study is also premised on Cottle's (2006, p. 168) prediction that 'when media representations enter into fields of conflict structured by deep-seated inequalities and entrenched identities, they can become inextricably fused within them, exacerbating intensities and contributing to destructive impacts' This demonstrates the mediatisation logic advanced in this research.

4.6 News Framing Theory

Framing is at the heart of this study. It describes the journalistic process of communicating perspectives of reality to consumers of news and making them think and act in a particular way. Its classification as a theory (e.g., D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010; Scheufele, 1999), an approach (e.g., Pan & Kosicki, 1993) or a paradigm (e.g.,Entman, 1993) is a subject of debate in communication studies.

The narratives of events are constructed or coded to serve a purpose beginning with selection from a plurality of 'newsworthy' elements. This demonstrates the alteration of a portion of the perceived reality which gives way to the manipulation of the audience. For example, at the heart of a large body of research on media coverage of international affairs is the creation of a negative worldview about the developing world, especially the Middle East and Africa that have long been thought to have high conflict prevalence in the last decades (Wallensteen & Sollenberg, 1996, 1997). As a result of this 'predominantly negative coverage of the developing world' which demonstrates that 'international news coverage is Western-centric' (Beaudoin & Thorson, 2002, p. 48), the Western media are said to be flawed. The reason for this criticism is that the media of the West consistently choose to emphasise the negative and exclude the positive elements of the news on developing world which, in turn, influence the perceptions of their audiences. The choice to include and exclude the variety of media contents constitutes framing.

Research has recognised that Walter Lippmann's postulation about the power of the media to 'put pictures in our heads' provided the platform for scholarship on news framing (Lippmann, 1922, p. 3). Further studies (e.g., D'Angelo & Kuypers, 2010) have maintained that framing is the most utilised theory and 'a rapidly growing area of study in communication studies' (2010, p.1), even though it has been criticised for lack of

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standardised system of analysis which is synonymous with science research (Giles, 2010). A common definition of news framing which runs through a number of studies is by Robert Entman (see, for example, Archetti, 2007; Brewer & Gross, 2010; R. Coleman, 2010; Houston, Pfefferbaum, & Rosenholtz, 2012; Kuypers, 2010; Scheufele, 1999). It states that framing is to 'select some aspects of a perceived reality and make them more salient in a communication text, in such a way to provide a particular problem definition, causal interpretation, moral evaluation, and/or treatment recommendation' (Entman, 1993, p. 52).

The theory of framing was developed by social psychologist Goffman who discovered that public perception about social reality is influenced by media frames (Falkheimer & Olsson, 2015). This explanation is taken a step further. For example, two media sociologists have described this news making process as a 'strategic action involving a conscious choice of words and other devices to achieve desired effects' (Vincze, 2014, p. 568); 'rhetorical and stylistic choices, reliably identified in news, that offer the interpretations of the topics treated and are a consistent part of the news environment' (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997, pp. 39-40). Their views echo the view of Yoon and Gwangho (2002, p. 92) that 'news making is not random but patterned activities of reporters', which implies that frames 'are conscious or unconscious sets of journalists' perceived opinions on issues' (Hong, 2013, p. 89). In this sense, the construction of reality rests squarely with the journalists whose actions define their audiences' perceptions of reality.

As noted at the outset about Western media frames 'against' the developing world, journalists tend to be economical with truth; as such, news making process is flawed because it does not reflect reality of the world as it is often presumed (Hong, 2013; Schudson, 2011). Their work entails making 'hard' decisions by choosing from a plethora of ideas or facts about the conditions of the world and assembling them in a certain manner that they become

the narratives of the real world (Phillips, 2015; M. S. Reed, 2016; S. K. Reed & Pease, 2017).

This inclusion and exclusion strategy employed by the journalists is geared toward making their audiences to think in a particular way – their own way. Scholars of decision making discipline tend to agree that good decisions evolve from logic and objectivity whereas bad ones are as a result of the decision maker's emotional involvement (Frame, 2013). However, Frame is opposed to this tradition and proposes a new paradigm that transcends logic and objectivity. He argues that detaching oneself from decision making is itself illogical because of the human and social elements of the process.

This argument seems relevant to news framing discourse which provides a theoretical base for the current research. The reason is that in journalism what constitutes news is a matter of choice by the news makers. Journalists prioritise alternatives by constructing texts 'suitable' for their audiences which their decisions have gained. They immerse themselves in the events they cover (Seib, 2013) - a paradigm shift from traditional good decision making. News, therefore, 'is not a mirror of reality. It is a representation of the world, and all representations are selective' (Schudson, 2011, p. 26). This statement echoes the argument by Greenwald (2014). This explanation lies at the heart of Frame's (2013) idea of decision making. He rejects the rationality of decision making or its objective coloration. As journalists' news construction emerges from decision making – a social activity, Frame argues that such cannot be detached from human influence because people are naturally selfish.

This view supports the reasoning that journalists make framing decisions based on human subjectivity (Ewart & McLean, 2015; Fuller, 2010; Giles, 2010). The assertion is further hinged on the reality that 'people [*journalists –the researcher's emphasis*] have

personal perspectives and agendas and possess dramatic variations and capabilities. Quite often a decision is made by one set of people, executed by another set, is beneficial to yet another set, and is resisted by still another set' (Frame, 2013, p. 8). For journalists, the inclusion and exclusion criteria upon which news frames are coded suggest that their actions are well thought-out, and aimed at achieving a goal. They weigh the prevailing options and decide on the portions that meet these criteria – what they want their audiences to know at a given time and the impact it would have on them. They determine news tastes by formulating words, catchphrases and sentences that advertise the news to make it meaningful to their audiences. This journalistic tradition is synonymous with Frame's (2013) concept of making mindful decisions that are deliberate and consequential. For him, anyone who engages in this decision making has an aim – in the context of current research – it is to pacify media audiences.

Frames could be 'issue-specific' – coded in specific contexts – or 'generic' which deals with general contexts (Hong, 2013). Research has revealed that many media frames focus on general issues and are representative of journalists' reality which influences the perceptions of the audience (Shahin, 2015) . Shahin discovers that in these frames, human actors are identified as being responsible for the actions in which they are mentioned. In other words, the frames emphasise identification of subjects. For example, in his study of the coverage of terrorism, victims and aggressors were identified in the frames, ascribing to his Blame Frame and Explain Frame paradigm. The criteria postulated above are significant to the current research. Drawing from Shahin's (2015) model, the strategies of journalists who reported the Jos conflict and the reports about the conflict have been examined in terms of who is responsible for the conflict (Blame Frame) and what the journalists or their reports conveyed (Explain Frame).

These conditions under which current investigation is undertaken point to framing analysis. As Giles and Shaw (2009) have noted that analysing media frames entails identifying the story and its character, examining its narrative form and language use as well as making generalisations and final analysis, the strategies of reporting the conflict have been established through this process. The authors, here, have articulated Shahin's (2015) Blame Frame – Explain Frame model in great detail. Meanings of the different frames have been derived from the components embedded in this model. The strategies of reporting (how journalists construct news) and the function of that construction (the role each communication plays in a given context) have been analysed in this study. In that sense, this research suggests that the perceived reality of the violent conflict in Jos emerges from the framing of news by journalists who reported the conflict. How they assembled and reported 'facts' about the conflict to their audiences constitutes framing. Thus, the theory is utilised in this research to test this journalistic process.

4.7 Conclusion

This research has been analysed from three theoretical lenses: Objectivity, mediatisation and news framing. Journalistic objectivity evolved as a standard that ensures transparency, fairness, impartiality and balance in reporting (Hackett & Zhao, 1996; Kaplan, 2002; Thorsen, 2008). The criticisms that followed this standard have been articulated in this chapter as a growing body of research has claimed that it is unattainable (Blaagaard, 2013; Greenwald, 2014; H. Tumber & Prentoulis, 2003).

Despite its limitations, objectivity is recognised by many Nigerian journalists as their guiding principle (Salawu, 2015a) – thereby necessitating its adoption in this study aimed at understanding how it is translated in the conflict frame building process. While the current study invites scholars to rethink journalistic objectivity, it has argued that non-objective

reporting – that is, when journalists become 'aggressive analysers and explainers' of news (Cunningham, 2003, p. 1) - would be influenced by parochialism.

The mediatisation theory describes media involvement in all facets of society beyond the role of mediation – which includes the appropriation of media logic (Cottle, 2006; Livingstone & Lunt, 2014). In this chapter, media logics and journalistic strategies suggest the unique ways by which conflict narratives are constructed to shape the attitudes of the audience. In the context of this research, mediatisation is understood as 'the process of increasing dependency of society upon media and its logic' (Nie et al., 2014, p. 363). This has been explained to demonstrate the influential media system in conflict reporting and how its logic defines reality. The third theory – News framing – which is the process of constructing reality that entails the inclusion and exclusion of frames has provided the framework upon which these choices are made. The three models used in this research have helped explain journalistic strategies in the Jos conflict. However, the Frustration-Aggression theory and Peace Journalism theory have been introduced to explain the nature of violent conflict and the role of the peace journalist.

The discussion on these theories precedes the chapter on methodology which describes how the research was conducted. Thus, the theories underpinning the research have been explained in this chapter because the choice of methodology (in Chapter 5) is influenced by theoretical reasoning (Goldberg & Allen, 2015).

Chapter Five

Research Design, Process and Methodology

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodological paradigms on which scientific enquiries are conducted to advance knowledge. It describes the research process, outlines the criteria for analysing data obtained from 26 interview participants and 30 editions of Nigeria's *Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers.

5.2 Research Process

The study adopted the metaphor of 'Research Onion' developed by Saunders et al. (2012) to describe the research process. It follows the logic that the research journey begins with the observation of human behaviour in the natural environment (Crano, Brewer, & Lac, 2015; Wadsworth, 2011) which defines philosophies, approaches, methodological choices, strategies, time horizon and techniques of data collection. Each of these elements depicts a layer of an onion fused into another layer – the interrelationship that drives the research process. Saunders and colleagues believe that a coherent research process demonstrates the 'onion' paradigm shown in Figure 5.1. In this sense, the current study describes the research journey in the analogy of the 'onion' layers.
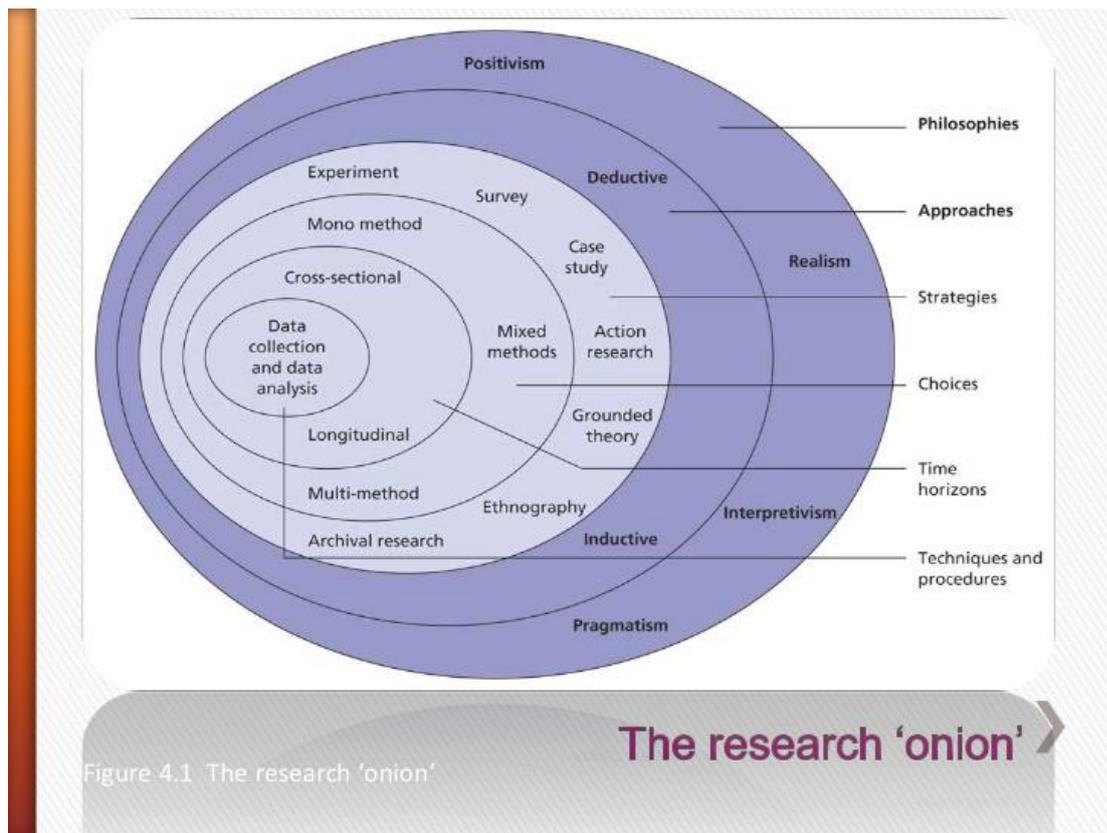
Figure 5: 1 The Research 'onion' process developed by Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, (2011), cited in Saunders, et al, 2012).

5.3 Research Philosophy

The first layer of the research 'onion' presents the philosophical worldview that guides this study. Crucial as philosophical context is to social research, it is often ignored in many studies (Creswell, 2014). Easterby-Smith, Thorpe, and Lowe (2002) have argued that studies that are conducted through philosophical lenses have quality. A growing body of research (e.g., Blaikie, 2010; Crotty, 1998; May, 2011) states that the orientation about the world which is brought to a study provides perspectives that influence the research. The understanding of these perspectives, according to May, 'is important for the actual practice of research to enable the practitioner to understand the influence of wider social forces on the process of research, as well as the arguments and the assumptions that are made about the world [....] (2011, p.7).

Research philosophy broadly describes the understanding about the nature of the world which guides any enquiry on three levels: epistemology, ontology and axiology (Pathirage et al., 2008). The first level explains the researcher's knowledge about reality and the assumptions about the way and manner of acquiring knowledge (how reality is perceived and how knowledge is acquired). The second – ontology - is the understanding of, and assumptions about knowledge (what knowledge is) and the third level – axiology -explains the values attached to knowledge (value system). In their analysis, Pathirage et al. (2008) argued that these components of the research philosophy influence the choice of research approach and methods (see also, May, 2011). Each component is explored in this study to demonstrate the appropriateness of the research approach and methods selection process.

The epistemological component is twofold: positivism and social constructivism, and both schools of thought uphold contrasting reasoning (Blaikie, 2010; Crotty, 1998; Easterby-Smith et al., 2002; Mackenzie, 2011). Positivism exists in the natural sciences and follows the logic that every enquiry 'should be measured through objective measures, where observer must be independent from what is being observed' (Pathirage et al., 2008, p. 6). It believes that meaning resides in objects outside the human mind. On the other hand, social constructivism believes that the perception of worldview is socially constructed and that people attach meaning to things around them. In other words, social constructivism is opposed to the logic that reality is independent of human construction.

Based on the contrasting implications of these epistemological stances which have the potential to influence the current research approach and methods (Dresch, Lacerda, & Antunes, 2015; Pathirage et al., 2008), these explanations have sufficed. First, the current research examined participants' strategies of reporting violent conflict aimed at obtaining information based on their perceptions of reality and their linguistic choices. Rather than perceive reality 'objectively' or 'outside-the-mind' (positivism/objectivism), they constructed

meaning about their experiences of reporting conflict (social constructivism/subjectivism). Second, the deductive research approach, which moves from theory to data is synonymous with positivism while the inductive approach, which transits from data to theory –as adopted in the current study because of the meanings people [journalists] attached to an event [conflict], is grounded in social constructivism (Gill & Johnson, 2002).

From the foregoing, while positivism is appropriate for scientific enquiry which upholds objective measurement, the epistemology orientation of this research is drawn on social constructivism in which interpretivism (the theoretical perspective of constructivism outlined in the first layer of the research 'onion') is embedded (Creswell, 2014; Robson, 2011). Constructivism, as Gunter (2000) has described, is interpretative social science in that communication which may include conversation of text is examined 'to discover embedded meaning' (Neuman,1994, cited in Gunter, 2000, p. 5). The 'common sense' each communication conveys is not necessarily common once it is subjected to interpretation. Thus, constructivist researchers have become interested in 'making sense of the subjective and socially constructed meanings expressed about the phenomenon being studied' (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 163). Furthermore, 'meaning does not exist in its own right; it is constructed by human beings as they interact and engage in interpretation' (Robson, 2011, p. 24).

This logic suggests that the world is structured by human beings who make meaning of it. It means individuals interpret their reality independently as they experience phenomena – the premise which nullifies the principle of journalistic objectivity. Thus, it is a philosophy which describes the conditions of qualitative enquiry (Creswell, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Saunders et al., 2012). Its ideals – although interpreted in a variety of ways (Avenier, 2010), and on the basis of professional relevance – presuppose that 'individuals develop subjective meanings of their experiences – meanings directed toward certain objects and things [....] The goal of the research is to rely as much as possible on the participants' views

of the situation being studied' (Creswell, 2014, p. 8). Constructivist researchers believe that discussions and interactions with participants – when samples are carefully selected – could generate relevant data on the subject being studied because the participants are well informed and the researcher would be able to interpret their views based on individual characteristics and disposition (Crotty, 1998; Mertens, 2010).

Crotty (1998, pp. 42-43) enumerates some Constructivist assumptions:

- Meaning is not discovered but constructed. Meaning does not inhere in the object merely waiting for someone to come upon.
- Meanings are constructed by human beings as they engage with the world they are interpreting.
- They may be pregnant with the potential meaning, but actual meaning emerges only when consciousness engages with them.

Constructivism suggests that human beings interact on issues that affect them and when they are studied, they can express themselves about their experiences, anxieties, fears and hopes which the researcher would find useful. This study is located in constructivism as the journalists were interviewed in their work environment on how their news narratives on the Jos conflict were being framed. The researcher, in this approach, chose to 'focus on the specific contexts in which people (*journalists* – italics researcher's addition for the purpose of explanation) live and work in order to understand the historical and cultural settings of the participants' (Creswell, 2014, p. 8). The process enabled the researcher to derive meaning of the situation; how contents of the news were being constructed in the circumstance of conflict and how the journalists were, themselves, influenced by the outcomes of their actions. The researcher observed the severity of their encounters as they took turns to recall this 'witness to violence' which, perhaps, produced the news narratives that invariably formed the perceptions of their audiences.

Another component of the research philosophy – ontology – presents two assumptions commonly referred to as realist and idealist (Johnson & Duberley, 2000; Pathirage et al., 2008), or realism and pragmatism [shown in the first 'onion' layer] (Saunders et al., 2012). Realists believe that their worldview is structured on objective orientation which aligns with positivism. For idealists, people hold various views about the things they observe or share, implying that reality is subjective – a key feature of social constructivism. In this sense, realists may be classified as positivists while idealists are social constructivists. Axiology, as a third component, describes reality as value-free or value laden (Pathirage et al., 2008). The research that is value free adopts the objective paradigm while a value-laden study takes into account that reality is shaped by people's experiences and beliefs. Thus, the implication is that value free researchers share the positivists' 'common sense' as opposed to value laden researchers who support social constructivism.

These philosophical stances have shown that the researcher's goal to examine strategies of reporting conflict – which involved journalists' shared experiences and the stories they reported in two selected Nigerian newspapers – could lead to theory inductive research.

5.4 Research Approach

There are two research approaches: deductive and inductive research (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014; Pathirage et al., 2008; Saunders et al., 2012). Both are at variance (see Table 3). Dresch et al. (2015) have made this distinction; 'from the inductivist's perspective […], the researcher starts building conjectures that can contribute both to the solution to the problem and to supporting new theories [….] The deductive method starts from the proposition of laws and theories that encompass some given phenomenon, and knowledge is built from the definition of the premises and the analysis of the relationships between them' (pp.17-18). In deductive research, a theory is identified in literature through analysis and synthesising of

concepts. The researcher, primarily, develops a theoretical paradigm upon which a phenomenon is tested to establish its validity through observation. This sequence – theory, method, data, findings (Pathirage et al., 2008) , is a rigid procedure which entails the application of a set of rules by researchers, especially in the natural sciences (Collis & Hussey, 2003), to explain phenomena. The theory comes first (evaluating assertions or set of hypotheses in existing literature); a method is adopted for data gathering and analysis then the results are drawn (findings).

In contrast, the inductive research is grounded in observation and the shared understanding of phenomena – the process which produces theory. The orientation of this research is drawn on method, data, findings and potential theory. The theory of induction suggests that methods are chosen, data are obtained and analysed, and then theories are generated from the findings. The researcher has a reasonably open mind to deal with the data which may generate a theory. However, the debate between researchers of deductive and inductive orientations, as argued by Pathirage et al. (2008, p. 4), lies in the logic that deductive researchers are 'enslaved normal scientists' – who deduce hypotheses from theories, while inductive researchers are 'paradigm – breaking revolutionaries' – whose approach to social enquiry is predicated on observation and experience.

The current research is concerned with inductive reasoning which proceeds from data to theory as opposed to deductive approach. It is best suited for qualitative studies (Creswell, 2014; Gray, 2014; Saunders et al., 2012). It involves design of methods for collecting and analysing data from which results and theory emerge.

Deduction	Induction
Moving from theory to data	Moving from data to theory
Common with natural sciences	Common with social sciences
A highly structured approach	Flexible structure to permit changes
Explain causal relationships between variables	Understanding of meanings humans attach to events
Select samples of sufficient size to generalize conclusions	Less concern with the need to generalize

Table 5. 1 Major differences between deductive and inductive research approaches (Adopted and modified from Saunders et al, 2007, cited in Pathirage, et al, 2008).

5.5 Research Strategy

The selection of the research strategy was based on the inductive logic that emphasises data gathering and analysis from which theory on the subject is generated. Strategy, in Robson's view, is a broad theoretical orientation that seeks answers to the research questions. In this 'broad' sense, the current research strategy is Phenomenology which is suitable for understanding phenomena – factors that influenced the practices of journalists reporting conflict. Since this effort was aimed at setting in motion a mechanism of exploring the somewhat hidden 'factors that influenced their practices', in order that phenomena may 'speak for themselves, unadulterated by our preconceptions', it gained 'new meaning, fuller meaning or renewed meaning' (Gray, 2014, p. 24). This means that phenomenology examines critically human experiences that are overlooked or taken for granted yet they are significant in real life (Finlay, 2012; Song, 2017). In phenomenology, researchers ascribe value to 'ordinary' situations that could be interpreted 'beyond the ordinary' in order that people may understand their world.

Phenomenological enquiry emerged from Philosophy and Psychology (Creswell, 2014) to offer the investigator the opportunity of interpreting the 'facts' generated from the

participants who have experienced a phenomenon. The relevance of this strategy to the current research is further explained by O'Leary (2014, pp. 138-139):

- Phenomenological studies are highly dependent on individuals. Individuals, either through interviews or their cultural products – what they write, paint, etc., are used to draw out the experience of a particular phenomenon [....]
- Phenomenological studies are also highly dependent on constructs. Constructs such as displacement, victory or power are central to the phenomenological experience being explored [....]
- Phenomena, which are the focus of phenomenology, actually sit at the interaction of people and objects, and centre on an individual's lived experience of these objects. Rather than ask what causes X, or what is X, phenomenology explores the experience of X. In other words, phenomenology is the study of the experience of the relationship between the individual and the object [....]

These explanations by O'Leary provided the criteria for analysing journalists' strategies of reporting the Jos conflict. The 'individuals' described in the first criterion were the conflict journalists – the interview participants – who shared their experiences on 'what they write' *(wrote)* about, and how they reported the conflict in an interaction with the researcher. In the context of current research, O'Leary's description of constructs and 'exploring the experience of X', in the second and third criteria, included the fears, anxieties, motivations and concerns of the journalists resulting from witness to violence.

5.6 Time Horizon

The choice of time in every study, that is, the period covering the investigation, is paramount. Pettigrew (1990, p. 271) writes that 'time sets a frame of reference for what changes are seen and how these changes are explained'. This study was designed on the longitudinal research that aimed at investigating new working practices and attitudes of groups or individuals over a period of time. It examined journalistic practices during the intermittent conflict in Jos which had come to be known as the 'Jos crisis'. The years covered were 2001, 2008 and 2010 (because these were periods believed to be the most violent in the history of Jos) (Taft & Haken, 2015, pp. 63-64). The 2001 civil unrest was said to be the first organised armed

conflict in the city (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016). This was to understand the changes in the attitudes of the journalists – their strategies of reporting the conflict. As there had been renewed hostilities, it was likely that the journalists' patterns of news framing may have changed. Thus, the capacity of the longitudinal research to investigate change and development (Pettigrew, 1990; Saunders et al., 2012) was recognised by the researcher. As Gray (2014) has pointed out, 'a longitudinal study of working practices might examine changes in staff (*journalists*' – italics researcher's emphasis) attitudes over time, looking at attitudes before the introduction of new working practices, and then at various periods afterwards' (p, 35). Given this assumption that journalists' exposure to violence may have influenced their sense of neutrality – a departure from fairly responsible reporting to new forms of the craft – the researcher examined these changes over the three years' conflict.

5.7 Research Questions

In the light of current effort to build on existing knowledge, this study poses the   following research questions:

RQ 1.What factors influenced the practices of journalists who reported the violent conflict in Jos?

RQ 2.How have journalists' experiences of violence affected their framing of news on the conflict?

RQ 3.What strategies did journalists employ in reporting the Jos conflict?

The three research questions emerged from the topic under study to generate data relevant for achieving the research objectives (Creswell, 2014; Goldberg & Allen, 2015). RQ 1 examines the factors which influence the practices of journalists reporting conflict in Jos. The 'experiences of violence' and the 'framing of news' coded in RQ 2 describe journalists' exposure to violent conflict and how it has influenced their coverage and writing of news

about the conflict. It includes bearing witness to conflict, constructing frames or news representations about the warring groups and their implications, their adoption of the standard of objectivity in news framing and the circumstances that could lead to compromise of the practice. RQ 3 is a build-up on the preceding questions, but it borders on the sensibility of the journalists' 'crafts' which are understood in this study as the strategies of reporting conflict. It means that journalists employ different strategies to engage with their audiences. This research question was posed to gain an understanding of these journalistic strategies in the Jos conflict and the interests they have tended to serve.

5.8 Methodology

Given that research methods are drawn on philosophical stances earlier discussed in this chapter (see, M. M. Davies & Mosdell, 2006; May, 2011; Pathirage et al., 2008), Gill and Johnson (2002) have reasoned that nomothetic (realist) or ideographic (idealist) ontology – component of the philosophy – should be the basis for choice of methods. They explained that nomothetic approach is synonymous with quantitative (objective) data processing that is typical of the natural sciences while ideographic approach is concerned with generating and analysing qualitative (subjective) data employed in social sciences and the liberal arts. The nomothetic approach involves deductive and structured data analysis while the ideographic ontology is inductive and allows researchers to analyse subjective accounts that provide perspectives of reality. The understanding that research philosophy is crucial to determining methods helps the researcher 'to take a more informed decision about the research design […,] understand which design will work and crucially […,] adapt research designs according to the constraints of different knowledge structures' (Pathirage et al., 2008, p. 8).

Nomothetic methods emphasise	Ideographic methods emphasise
Deduction	Induction
Explanation via analysis of causal relationship	Explanation of subjective meaning systems
Generation and use of quantitative data	Generation and use of qualitative data
Testing hypothesis	Commitment to research in everyday settings
Highly structured	Minimum structure

Experiments	Surveys	Case study	Action Research	Ethnography

Methodological continuum

To align with epistemological, ontological and axiological philosophy on which methods are formed (positivism/social constructivism, realist/idealist, and value-free/value laden), this study employed the qualitative research method. This was because the researcher recognised that the orientations of social constructivism, idealist and value laden research as well as inductive approach are synonymous with qualitative studies.

The qualitative research method was employed in this study to gain an understanding about the strategies utilised by conflict journalists to produce news narratives of the conflict and the factors that could influence these strategies. This was a necessary first step because 'the way journalists define their relationship with society helps them give meaning to their work and enables them to justify and emphasise the importance of their work to themselves and others' (Thomas Hanitzsch & Vos, 2017, p. 1). The qualitative research method was also used to examine the reports of the conflict in two Nigerian newspapers to know how these strategies manifested in both publications and the ideologies they portrayed or the interests they served. While research is generally concerned with obtaining and analysing data in a systematic way to contribute to knowledge (Crano et al., 2015; Guthrie, 2010; Wadsworth, 2011), the

qualitative approach, in particular, provides an overarching framework for understanding human phenomena in their contexts (Twining, Heller, Nussbaum, & Tsai, 2017). It interrogates human behaviour extensively to gain an understanding of such behaviour in the natural environment. Qualitative studies are developing and increasingly attracting scholars as the numerous methods with which they are identified – interviews, observations, focus groups etc. – have helped to create a richer description and interpretation of data (Shank et al., 2014). Polit and Beck (2010, p. 1452) have explained that the 'the goal of most qualitative studies is to provide a rich, contextualized understanding of human experience through the intensive study of particular cases'. Shin et al. (2009) have also maintained that these methods 'help us understand what a world means to us by adopting and utilizing certain perspectives' (p.850). Robson (2011, p. 19) explicitly outlines some features of qualitative study:

> Accounts and findings are presented verbally or in other non-numerical form. There is little or no use of numerical data or statistical analysis; an inductive logic is used starting with data collection from which theoretical ideas and concepts emerge; a focus on meanings; contexts are seen as important […,] situations are described from the perspective of those involved; the design of the research emerges as the research is carried out and is flexible throughout the whole process; the existence and importance of the values of researchers and others involved is accepted; objectivity is not valued. It is seen as distancing the researcher from participants […,] generalizability of findings is not a major concern […,] social world is viewed as a creation of the people involved.

Drawing from these reservoirs of thought, the qualitative research entails an interpretation that would make the 'understanding of what a world means' a reality; that is, providing meaning of a phenomenon. The study of the strategies of journalists reporting the conflict in Jos was believed to be 'intensive' and a 'particular case' that would entail the sharing of 'experience' (see, Polit & Beck, 2010). Thus, interviews – as method of qualitative data collection – were conducted among the conflict journalists in their environment. But while

this data gathering method was considered appropriate for the current research because of its ability to probe the experiences of the participants, the Qualitative Content Analysis was employed to understand the direction of news texts through their linguistic choices. This followed the logic that information shared does not necessarily convey its meaning (Waite, 2013). Thus, it required further investigation; in this case, the QCA to measure and interpret the use of language in the narratives of the conflict.

Qualitative research has been employed to study social phenomena in various disciplines including journalism. In this investigation, a number of strategies for data collection and interpretation were adopted to achieve the research objectives. Based upon the phenomenon under investigation – assessing the strategies of journalists reporting conflict – this research paradigm guaranteed investigator involvement both as the data collection instrument and the interpreter of data (Creswell, 2014; Tetnowski & Damico, 2001). The strength of qualitative research is its ability to study phenomena in particular contexts (Silverman, 2007; Twining et al., 2017). As such, this study was conducted in the journalists' natural settings in order to obtain and analyse the data within that context. Furthermore, the qualitative methodology required a detailed interpretation of journalistic strategies to understand the extent of framing from participants' perspective (interview) and their output (texts).

Qualitative studies have postulated that the qualitative methodology is appropriate for investigating social phenomena (Goldberg & Allen, 2015; Harding, 2013; Lofland, Snow, Anderson, & Lofland, 2006; Miles, Huberman, & Saldana, 2014; Patton, 2015; Polit & Beck, 2010; Saldana, 2015; Shin et al., 2009; Twining et al., 2017; Waite, 2013). They outlined, among other advantages, that qualitative data help to establish how and why phenomena occur; its approach is useful for describing complex phenomena; can help people to

understand local situations and conditions; make meaning of a situation. While these strengths of qualitative methodology are not contested, its weaknesses are also obvious. Tetnowski and Damico (2001) argue that it is labour intensive because data collection and analysis are time consuming. Another fundamental challenge is that the results could be influenced by the researcher's personal biases. They believe that the entire process may be marred by prejudices emerging from researcher's beliefs. Apart from this open-to- abuse tendency, the results may not be generalized as they deal with phenomena in particular contexts.

It was understood, however, that research methodologies are designed to answer questions that prompted certain investigations. Their applications vary; as such, each is characterised by strengths and weaknesses (Frost et al., 2010; Goldberg & Allen, 2015; Waite, 2013). These studies suggest that researchers must understand their research objectives and choose methodologies that systematically respond to their research questions. For example, Shin et al. (2009, p. 850), in their review of research methods and strategies, have argued that 'even studies that present analysis methodology appear to differ somewhat in analysis procedures and description styles, depending on the author(s) of the studies, which brings serious confusion and frustration to [...] researchers'. Also, Crotty (1998, p. 12) claimed that 'any of the theoretical perspectives could make use of any of the methodologies, and any of the methodologies could make use of any of the methods'. Since this controversy apparently constitutes much research debates, the consideration should be the rationale for the choice of research methodologies.

Notwithstanding the laborious process of data collection and analysis, the tendency of manipulation of data through under and/or over interpretation by the researcher, this study relied on the participants' antecedents and what their strategies of reporting conflict had produced. It means that the qualitative approach could generate authentic data about the

journalists' strategies of news framing and the meaning they conveyed. Although there is no consensus on how qualitative research should be adopted and analysed because of its flexible meaning making (J. Lee, 2013), the researcher endeavoured to translate the data transparently and examine the conceptual variables that described the phenomena under investigation.

5.8.1 Data Collection Method: Interviews

Interviews typically involve interaction between investigators of social phenomena and the people believed to be knowledgeable about what is being studied. The investigators (interviewers) attempt to probe the experiences of those they are studying (interviewees) by asking them questions about their behaviours, beliefs, attitudes, conditions, anxieties and general wellbeing relating to the subjects under investigation. This process entails 'face-to-face exchanges in which one person, the interviewer, attempts to acquire information from and gain understanding of another person, the interviewee' (Rowley, 2012b, p. 260). Although this effort has helped researchers to obtain 'facts' about what people genuinely feel given that the information they share is first-hand (O'Leary, 2014; Seidman, 2013), the validity of that information is being contested by a growing body of scholars (e.g., Creswell, 2014; Robson, 2011). For instance, its lack of standardization has been criticised because it is susceptible to bias (Robson, 2011).

Notwithstanding this argument which tends to undermine the interview process, its elements, as O'Leary (2014) outlines, are useful in obtaining first-hand information from conflict journalists about their strategies of news framing and the factors that have influenced their reporting of the protracted ethno-religious conflict in Jos. For instance, O'Leary (2014, p. 217) states that interviews:

- allow you to develop rapport and trust;
- provide you with rich, in-depth qualitative data;
- allow for non-verbal as well as verbal data;
- are flexible enough to allow you to explore tangents;

- are structured enough to generate standardized, quantifiable data.

Aware of journalists' intense workload – reporting conflict in great detail especially in high risk areas and the pressure of deadline as well as the desire to 'break the news' – the flexibility of the interview process which guarantees rich data and establishes trust between the investigator and participants was considered relevant to this research. The researcher conducted an In-depth Individual Interview (III) by asking the participants questions about their experiences of the conflict which included their attitudes, beliefs and the way in which they made decisions on the narratives of the conflict. Some scholars (e.g.,Gray, 2014; May, 2011; Seidman, 2013; Silverman, 2007, 2013) have explained that interviews provide rich insights into people's attitudes, beliefs and experiences. This is because the interviewees have the competence to speak, and are often knowledgeable about the subject being investigated (Baker & Gilbride, 2015; Gubrium & Holstein, 2012).

In order that the participants may be stimulated by a series of open questions which were followed up by probing questions to enable them answer in their own view and freely provide contexts, the semi-structured interview was employed. May (2011, pp. 134-135) explains that this type of interview enables the investigator to 'probe beyond the answers and thus enter into dialogue with the interviewee [...]', and it 'represents an opening up of the interview method to an understanding of how interviewees generate and deploy meaning in social life'. With this latitude to 'answer in their own view', the participants found this method appropriate to explain phenomena in great detail, and to illustrate the contexts – the elements which were lacking in the structured (standardized) interview method.

For the purpose of this study, a series of steps were taken by the researcher to avoid failure and demonstrate his competence in conducting the interview. This involved planning

– having a grasp of the subject under investigation, constructing the interview themes and getting the participants informed about the research and their involvement as well as identifying appropriate location for the interview (Miles et al., 2014; Morris, 2015; Saunders et al., 2012).The researcher's experience of reporting of the Jos conflict and his knowledge of the context enabled him to identify the participants whose views about the conflict and their reporting experiences would constitute the research data. For example, the researcher was aware that in Jos environment, the 'yes' response by an interview participant may only indicate that he/she understands the question which may not mean consent. The implication is that the verbal and nonverbal cues that emerged from the interviews were interpreted in that context.

In the second step, interview themes were carefully constructed which constituted the interview guide (interview questions). In addition, relevant information about the research as contained in the participant information sheet, participant/organisation consent forms were supplied to enable the participants prepare for the interview and provide relevant data for the research. In the end, consideration was given to the environment where the interviews were conducted. Since Jos was the work environment of the participants, because they lived in the area and were constantly reporting the conflict, they could share their experiences and explain the strategies they employed in their news framing. The appropriate locations included the participants' offices, houses (as some journalists preferred) and the Nigerian Union of Journalists Press Centre (where they often assembled to share information about their work).

5.8.1.1 Interviewing professional peers

The researcher was not unaware that having worked as a journalist during the early years of the conflict before he ascended to academia – from newsroom to classroom within the Jos area – his relationship with professional peers whom he would interview could pose a challenge to the process. In such circumstance, as some researchers have reported (see, for

example, Coar & Sim, 2006; Lofland et al., 2006; Platt, 1981; Seidman, 2013), a number of the interview participants may not freely reveal information about themselves or their colleagues whom the researcher may have come in contact with. This is largely because this category of respondents tends to feel embarrassed once there is a continuing relationship with the researcher. Some may tactically decline to respond to important questions that could have formed the desired data if they were answered. For instance, in their study, Coar and Sim (2006) revealed that 'familiarity of the 'insider' with the area of study may dominate the process of data analysis and prevent novel insights [….] Informants who feel they are being judged will be particularly cautious in conversations with a fellow professional' (p. 254).

While these factors may potentially influence the interview data, substantial evidence which supports the rationale for conducting interviews with peers in this study sufficed. Granted that the researcher's field experience as a journalist could imply an inclusion of the shared community membership, his identity – as captured in the ethical approval documents (see appendices) – was, first, that of a researcher in an academic environment desirous of contributing to knowledge. The understanding about this mission by peers that the journalist-cum-researcher was supported by the academic community to undertake the study apparently led to participants' endorsement and freedom to express. Second, the assurance to uphold academic honour by ensuring that their confidentiality was secure, in addition to data protection, the researcher was able to obtain data in the right quality and form. Third, where the researcher's professional identity reigned supreme over scholarly status, the participants were favourably disposed to the study because 'a fellow professional can harness prior understanding of the topic and the professional culture, and may be able to pursue issues more thoroughly by virtue of not having to seek explanations of basic terminology and concepts' (Coar & Sim, 2006, p. 254). In this argument by Coar and Sim (2006), they noted that the participants would recognise that they 'can enlist feelings of professional cooperation

and solidarity to encourage disclosure, and gain informants' confidence more readily than a non-practitioner' (2006, p. 254).

Holliday (2016) argues that when the participants recognise the researcher as a member of their professional or cultural community they would provide the information the researcher needs because he/she is one of them. He illustrates this by drawing experience from previous study (Herrera, 1992, cited in Holliday, 2016) which relied on the researcher's relationship with the participants for data collection. Herrera had noted: 'It was only after I started using culturally acceptable ways of gaining access as a friend of a friend of a friend that I was able to dispel the fears of the teachers and begin to be accepted as one of them' (cited in Holliday, 2016, p. 160). This suggests that the researcher lacked the cooperation of those she was studying until she took on an informal role. Holliday (2016) rationalises this researcher-participant relationship when he points out that

> The researcher's experience of her relations with people in the research setting is an important source of data, not just within the ongoing process of improving her own relations, but to increase understanding of the culture generally, thus contributing to the whole investigation (p. 165).

The analogy of 'a friend of a friend' or, in the context of current study, the researcher's relations with professional colleagues – journalists, was a great opportunity to explore the numerous strategies of reporting violent conflict. From the foregoing, the researcher took into account that his professional background may not allow him to establish some degree of distance from his study. He therefore, took advantage of the 'researcher-colleague' relationship to understand the context from which he served as a journalist by noting all verbal and nonverbal cues that emerged from the interviews. In the end, there was an intriguing outcome as the participants' notion about the researcher being 'one-of-us' brought about cooperation hence the data turned out to be sufficiently accurate to achieve the research objectives.

5.8.1.2 Interview Participants

There were 7 commercial radio and television stations in Jos, and about 16 national, regional, local and faith-based newspapers/magazines were in circulation at the time of this research (Gobum, 2015). A purposive sampling procedure was used to select conflict journalists from these segments of the media who had reported the most violent conflict which occurred in Jos in 2001, 2008 and 2010.

The purposive sampling technique, or as O'Leary (2014, p. 190) termed 'hand-picked sampling', which 'involves the selection of a sample in mind', is mainly used in qualitative research (Harding, 2013; Teddlie & Yu, 2007) to ensure that samples considered to be relevant to a study are included with the aim of achieving the research objective. Teddlie and Yu (2007) have recommended that in critical scenario, which could be understood in the context of current study – that is, the sensitivity of news framing of conflict involving religious and ethnic groups, purposive sampling would be appropriate.

This approach was aimed at obtaining data from those who had knowledge about the three years' conflict to enable the researcher understand its antecedents, and to know if there were changes in reporting of the conflict, and whether these changes had influenced the way they worked. For most national and regional newspapers, their correspondents did not meet these criteria as many of them had been posted to Jos out of Jos in the last five years (after the 2010 conflict). Based on the journalists' profile assessment, 14 reporters were picked (7 comprised of radio and TV journalists who represented Jos-based broadcast stations; 7 national, local, faith-based and 'ethnic-oriented' papers that met the selection criteria).

The researcher selected the national and regional journalists from a list of leading newspapers in the country believed to be 'credible' and having a wider reach (African Media

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Development Initiative, 2005). All the 7 broadcast journalists had been involved in conflict reporting since 2001 and, incidentally, the broadcast media have the largest audiences in Jos because radio and television are affordable and accessible (Gobum, 2015). The popular faith-based magazines/newspapers were being circulated among the rival Christian and Muslim communities. Other participants included 8 editors (distributed across 4 print media, 3 broadcast media and 1 News Agency of Nigeria); and 4 television cameramen (2 each from private and public television stations) whose camera lenses had captured images of the conflict. The total number of participants was 26. Each participant had a coded prefix of IP (Interview Participant), followed by his/her number (e.g. IP 1, IP 2, IP 3).

Based on audience perception among residents of some cities in Nigeria that the media have been polarised along ethnic and religious lines (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013), 4 journalists whose media were believed to serve these interests were identified. They include IP 3 –IEG, IP 8 – FBC, IP 12 – HFS and IP 20 – FBM. The researcher had a purpose for which they were selected – that journalists who understood the Jos terrain, its conflict actors and media representations were included in the study. The interview questions were the same because they applied to their role of news framing and gatekeeping. The researcher envisaged that the responses would vary in terms of their experiences and strategies.

At the outset, the researcher recognised that conflict reporting is a specialised news beat and, in most organisations in Nigeria, only a reporter is assigned to the beat (except in the case where there are sporadic attacks and reporters of other beats are assigned to cover). Therefore, only conflict journalists of the selected media organisations were studied. The editors' selection was necessitated by the desire of the researcher to know how the framing of news by the reporters was further shaped in the newsroom. Although editors are the final gate

keepers in the news production process, the strategy of news construction resulting from internal and/or external influences - the focus of this research - rests on the reporters. The television cameramen are those who capture the images at warfare but, in this study, they constituted a minority group because reporters often do their job unless such reporters are unable to combine their functions with those of the cameramen.

Table 5. 3 Interview participants' distribution

PARTICIPANT	CODE	DESIGNATION	MEDIUM
Participant 1	IP 1	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 2	IP 2	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 3	IP 3 – IEG	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 4	IP 4	Editor	Radio/TV
Participant 5	IP 5	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 6	IP 6	Reporter	Television
Participant 7	IP 7	Editor	Newspaper
Participant 8	IP 8 – FBC	Editor	Magazine/Newspaper
Participant 9	IP 9	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 10	IP 10	Editor	Newspaper
Participant 11	IP 11	Editor	Television
Participant 12	IP 12 - HFS	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 13	IP 13	Reporter	Radio/TV
Participant 14	IP 14	Reporter	Radio
Participant 15	IP 15	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 16	IP 16	Reporter	Television
Participant 17	IP 17	Cameraman	Television
Participant 18	IP 18	Cameraman	Television
Participant 19	IP 19	Reporter	Radio
Participant 20	IP 20 - FBM	Editor	Magazine/Newspaper
Participant 21	IP 21	Cameraman	Television
Participant 22	IP 22	Editor	News Agency
Participant 23	IP 23	Reporter	Newspaper
Participant 24	IP 24	Editor	Radio/TV
Participant 25	IP 25	Cameraman	Television
Participant 26	IP 26	Reporter	Radio
IE G – *Indigenous Ethnic Groups*	**FBC** – *Faith-Based Christian*	**HFS** – *Hausa-Fulani Settlers*	**FBM** – *Faith-Based Muslim*

5.8.1.3 Data Analysis

Given that data obtained from interviews are generally complex because the researcher is confronted with a volume of 'facts' from which he selects relevant portions for analysis, this study explored the steps recommended by Rowley (2012b, p. 268) in analysing the data.

These include: organising the data set; getting acquainted with the data; classifying, coding and interpreting data; presenting and writing up the data.

- *Organising the data set*

The transcripts of IP 1- IP26 (Interview Participant 1-26) were organised in sequence. In it, the participants' responses to a specific interview question were assembled in one place to understand the context of their shared experiences. In other words, all answers to the questions were distinguished by their themes and the coded names of participants ascribed to such answers. The essence of identifying the participants was to establish the source and present their thoughts in logical manner.

- *Getting acquainted with the data*

The researcher read the data thoroughly to understand the underlying themes that would build the body of research. It entailed an evaluation or post-interview review that enabled the researcher to note details of the observations that emerged from the exercise (Creswell, 2014; Fowler, 2009; Gray, 2014). It was done immediately after the conduct of interview because the experience was fresh. This helped in the actual interpretation of the data and guaranteed its quality. It is believed in qualitative studies that when the researcher becomes familiar with the data and observes salient points that would form the research report, the easier it would become to interpret the data (Seidman, 2013; Silverman, 2013). Each interview question was a key theme for analysis and the answers ascribed to it were studied to recognise the strategies of news framing that were common and the ones that were peculiar to them.

- *Classifying, coding and interpreting the data*

The researcher classified the codes (texts which describe the conditions of the interview questions) and explained them in the context of the themes. The researcher envisaged that

more sub-themes would emerge from existing literature if the participants' responses were not adequately captured in the main themes. Rowley (2012b, p. 268) describes themes as 'the main areas in which insights have been generated, and will eventually become the basis of the narrative in the findings chapter'. In the current research, the themes which were generated from the interview questions included: factors that influenced the practices of journalists reporting conflict; sources of pressure faced by them; their experiences of reporting conflict; how these experiences influenced their work; whether their news framing shaped the perceptions of their audiences; how they reported conflict involving 'indigenes' and 'settlers' or Muslims and Christians; how they applied journalistic standard of objectivity in their news coverage of conflict; how their work helped to deescalate violence or promote peace building initiatives; whether media owners influenced their work, and the level of training they attained to engage in journalism.

After the themes and codes had been drawn, the texts that contained similar themes in the interviews were compared to gain an understanding about the participants' experiences of the conflict. The interpretation was done under the main themes as the findings were reported. The findings included subjects about which the participants had a common ground and their divergent views about the phenomena.

- *Presenting and writing up the data*

The report was written in descriptive form based on the recorded data and observations during the interview – careful listening, gestures of participants and their general disposition –and the interpretation of the findings by the researcher. Where applicable, the researcher used the NVivo software to produce Word Cloud and Word Tree, and other diagrams to illustrate the findings (Rowley, 2012). Rather than use the quotations as excerpts, the report discussed the themes of the interview in sequence, under each research question, and

supported them with relevant quotations to establish actuality and attain credibility. The researcher recognised that substantial part of an author's work should not to be used in the form of quotations as that would interfere with the researcher's originality (Gray, 2014). Some photographs of objects taken during the interviews (e.g., the Nigerian Union of Journalists Press Centre) were used to supplement the data.

5.8.2 Data Collection Method: Qualitative Content Analysis

A number of research designs have been employed in quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods studies. Robson (2011) has classified these components as fixed, flexible and multi-strategy designs which include, among others, experiments and surveys, ethnographic studies and focus groups, the quantitative-qualitative incompatibility studies etc. As most of these studies are numerically defined which accounts for their adoption in the natural sciences, the flexible designs provide a platform for interpretation of coded information. As such, 'the researcher must adopt and conceptualise the research method to the specific investigations to be conducted' (Dresch et al., 2015, p. 27).

While many techniques of data gathering are utilised in social science and interdisciplinary studies (e.g., interviews as used previously), Content Analysis mainly exists in media research to examine mass media messages and derive meaning from them (Krippendorff, 1989; Lombard, Snyder-Duch, & Bracken, 2002). Its adoption is determined by the nature of the research problem, theory and the purpose for which it is designed (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005). To achieve the current research objective, the Qualitative Content Analysis (QCA) was used to understand the contextual meaning of newspaper reports and special features on the conflict that may not be quite obvious. In other words, it focused on the content of newspapers. Ogunyemi (2012) explains that content is an important element of journalistic process and it is influenced by a number of factors. He notes:

Content is the end product of journalistic endeavours. It is the outcome of journalistic functions such as newsgathering, news processing and gatekeeping on the one hand; and of the application of professional values such as objectivity, news values and ethics on the other. Despite the fact that media organisations, irrespective of size and orientation, replicate these functions and the fact that journalists speak of similar values, there is a wide variation in content. The reason for this could be attributed to organisational culture and the social systems within which they operate (p.105).

As argued above that 'journalists speak of similar values' – implying that they share a common notion about what they should do (e.g., achieving balance, fairness and impartiality) – the data on this component emerged from interviews conducted among the journalists. The QCA examined the 'variation in content […] attributed to organisational culture and social systems' to discover how the journalists' professional values and practices impact on content. Therefore, analysing the newspaper content provided insights into the writer's mind because the actual message coded in the text was revealed thereby giving it a new meaning. It implies that every communication requires some form of interpretation to establish its essence. As Denscombe (2010, p. 282) has noted that 'the text carries some clues about a deeper rooted and possibly unintentional message that is actually being communicated', it required a critical examination of some sort to understand its meaning. In this sense, the current research – apart from employing interview method to gain knowledge about journalists' strategies of reporting conflict – focused on the 'actual' meaning of the reports and special features published in two Nigerian newspapers: The *Punch* and *Daily Trust*. It was not enough to conduct interviews that would provide first-hand knowledge about their experiences of the conflict; it also required understanding the perspectives about what they had produced. This combined strategy of 'learning' (interviews) and 'seeing' (analysing text) is recommended by Schreier (2012, p. 4) who has argued that 'if you have conducted interviews [...], you will probably use QCA to decide what your participants have said'. The process was aimed at understanding the message beyond its literal meaning because the description of any

information, if examined within a context, may carry with it something weightier than it would appear.

A body of research (e.g., Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Van Dijk, 2012; Weber, 1990) has explained that in dealing with QCA, the characteristics of the language of communication must be examined to aid the grasp of the context. In this study, this linguistic analysis focused on content and form of the *Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers. Schreier (2012, p. 19) makes this distinction: 'an analysis of content would be about what is being said, whereas an analysis of form would be about how something is being said'. This approach enabled the researcher to gain knowledge about the manifest content (what is understood at a glance) and its 'other' meaning (what is not immediately noticed) to understand how the strategies or tactics of reporting the conflict by journalists played out. Like previous studies (e.g., George, 1959) that examined wartime propaganda which entailed an analysis of strategy, the current research takes into account the context in which the narratives of the Jos conflict have been portrayed. In other words, the strategies used in the framing of the news about the conflict cannot be detected at a glance until the text is analysed and interpreted in order to derive its connotative meaning – the focus of the QCA.

While literature on the Jos conflict establishes that journalists' bias manifests in their reports (J. D. Galadima, 2010; Rasaq, 2012), how this is demonstrated largely depends on the interpretation of what constitutes bias. Schreier (2012) recommends that when handling meaning that is embedded, such as the current investigation, the researcher should adopt the Qualitative Content Analysis because it is appropriate for descriptive and interpretative purposes.

5.8.2.1 Content Category

The study considered language use in examining the contents of the newspapers which potentially defined the meaning that the readers attributed to the reports. This use of language

was mainly to identify news values in the conflict narratives (Bednarek & Caple, 2014), especially the negative aspects which tended to portray some social groups as aggressors.

There were two dimensions to this analysis: the use of language that expressed the 'obvious' and the other that revealed the 'hidden' elements. Hsieh and Shannon's coinage of 'explicit communication' and 'inferred communication' (2005, p. 1278) to describe the former and the latter was adopted in this research to establish what was 'obvious' and that which was 'hidden'. This underlying assessment variable helped to explain how journalists' news construction was trivialized or tilted towards charting a cause with a tendency to incite or instigate one warring group against the other. Language use was also essential in understanding the 'hidden' meaning of the writers of the newspaper texts – reporters, editors, features writers – whose reports/ commentaries were believed to have excluded minority groups and classified them as aggressors (Olofsson, 2011). The basis for this content classification was that the linguistic alternatives for constructing reality and words could have been formed to achieve certain goals (U. Bello, 2014).

5.8.2.2 Units of Analysis

The units of analysis are the elements that are counted by the researcher. They make up the body of the text identified by their themes. This research examined news stories (including headlines and leads) and features as these constituted 'news'; newspaper editorials, news and commentaries dedicated to the conflict. Other contents of the newspapers such as advertisements, opinions, letter to editor, opinion polls, etc., were not included because they expressed personal views.

5.8.2.3 Samples

The researcher used purposive sampling technique to select 10 editions (5 for each newspaper) per year across 5 successive days of the week that carried 'breaking news' on the

same conflict. This was to ensure a comparative assessment of framing to establish the direction of the stories by both newspapers. The years covered were 2001, 2008 and 2010 because these were periods believed to be the most violent in the history of Jos (Taft & Haken, 2015, pp. 63-64). In all, there were 30 editions of the *Punch* and *Daily Trust.*

The *Punch* and *Daily Trust* newspapers were selected because a comparative research on the news framing of Jos conflict by both publications is non-existent despite their seemingly high readership and regional clouts. The *Punch* represents the dominant southern press, or what is generally regarded as the 'Lagos-Ibadan axis' (Ralph Afolabi Akinfeleye, 1985, 2003; Duyile, 1987), while *Daily Trust* is the 'voice of the north' (African Media Development Initiative, 2005; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013). Both publications have dominated Nigeria's newspaper industry at different levels. The *Punch* is not only popular in the south where it is located but it has been rated as the country's most widely read newspaper (African Media Development Initiative, 2005, p. 25), with a daily circulation of approximately 60,000 to 80,000; and 381, 000 website readers who visit its website monthly (Olutokun & Seteolu, 2001; Domain Tools, 2012, cited in Zeng & Akinro, 2013, p. 198).

The *Daily Trust* has the largest readership in the north (African Media Development Initiative, 2005) – circulating 11,672 copies daily (A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013). Although its circulation is regional, it is the only strong voice of the region that 'has increased religious coverage of previously neglected ethnic groups [...], helping to break the concentration of newspapers in what is derisively referred to as the 'Lagos-Ibadan axis'' (African Media Development Initiative, 2005, p. 27). Based on the locations of both newspapers – *Punch* in the south (where Christians are dominant) and *Daily Trust* in the north (a predominantly Muslim region), they were assumed to align with the Christian 'indigenes' and Muslim 'settlers' of Jos in their identity struggle.

The *Punch* newspaper was established as a limited liability company on March 17, 1973. The company, known as Punch Nigeria Limited, began its operations with the launch of the *Sunday Punch* which was followed by the introduction of *Daily Punch* on November 1, 1976. Both publications contained sensational reports that were said to reflect the Nigerian society. Its main goal was to ensure freedom of expression and equal opportunities for all Nigerians irrespective of religious, ethnic and political leanings.

It was founded by Chief Olu Aboderin, who originated from Ibadan, Oyo State, in south-western Nigeria. The newspaper witnessed rapid expansion over the years and has attracted wide readership across the country making it one of Nigeria's leading newspapers (African Media Development Initiative, 2005, p. 25). Although it has attained some degree of integrity as demonstrated by the high patronage, it is one of the newspapers located in the Lagos – Ibadan south-western region believed to be serving the interests of the Christian south (J. D. Galadima, 2010; E. Ojo, 2003; Okidu, 2011). For instance, the major gatekeepers in the organisation (e.g Adeyeye Joseph – editor/executive director and Azubuike Ishiekwene – managing director/ editor- in-chief) are drawn from the southern region, and profess Christianity; as such, they are likely to influence the contents of the newspaper. Therefore, in this study, the *Punch* represents the 'South-Western Christian' newspaper.

The *Daily Trust* is owned by Media Trust, a limited liability company in Nigeria. The publication which made its debut with *Weekly Trust* in 1998 emerged to give a voice to the 'oppressed' northern Hausa Fulani Muslims who soon realised that there existed a southern-northern media dichotomy which almost relegated them to the background (A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; E. Ojo, 2003). Also, as a strategy to consolidate on its gains of establishing a 'northern voice' (African Media Development Initiative, 2005; J. D. Galadima, 2010), and to compete with the south- western press, the Media Trust group introduced *Daily Trust* in January 2001. It had set out its vision to earn a world class media status that would be trusted

by all and sundry. However, its composition of a seven- member board of directors and an eight-member management/editorial team (e.g., Abdul Mumini Bello and Kabiru Yusuf – chairman and editor-in-chief), who are all northern Hausa Fulani Muslims, except Onah Iduh, has demonstrated the newspaper's northern/Islamic agenda as opposed by the south-western media. It is a newspaper that has become very popular among, mostly, the northern elites and a significant number of the nation's population because of its perceived credibility. Thus, these 'credible' south-western and northern newspapers (see appendices 8 and 9) have aroused the researcher's interest towards understanding their approaches to news framing on the ethno-religious conflict in Jos.

5.8.2.4 Coding the Data

The coding of data is drawn on the Summative Content Analysis (SCA), one of the three approaches to QCA developed by Hsieh and Shannon (2005). The three paradigms have distinctive application procedures aimed at interpreting text data. In the conventional approach, the content categories emerge from data during the analysis. The directed content analysis is undertaken by examining a relevant theory upon which a coding scheme is developed for the exercise.

Table 5. 4 Major Coding Differences among Three Approaches to Content Analysis

Type of Content Analysis	Study Starts With	Timing of Defining Codes or Keywords	Source of Codes or Keywords
Conventional Content Analysis	Observation	Codes are defined during data analysis	Codes are derived from data
Directed Content Analysis	Theory	Codes are determined before and during data analysis	Codes are derived from theory or relevant research findings
Summative Content Analysis	Keywords	Keywords are identified before and during data analysis	Keywords are derived from interest of researcher or review of literature

Source: Hsieh & Shannon, 2005. Qualitative Health Research, 15(9), p.1286.

The Summative Content Analysis enables the researcher to identify and count key words or themes in the text and examine their usage to understand the contextual meaning of the text. Thus, the analysis 'goes beyond mere word counts to include latent content analysis [...] the process of interpretation of content' (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, pp. 1283-1284; Lombard et al., 2002). It explores the functions of words in the body of text or how words are used in a certain context. For example, the use of the word 'extremist' in any report on the Jos conflict was interpreted by the content analyst as a person prepared to 'do anything' in defence of religion, even by means of violence. The word, when identified in a text, carries with it the image of a person who 'steps his bounds' (manifest content), not necessarily in defence of faith but any action. However, in Nigeria, it has been used to refer to anyone whose expression of faith violates the law, which could incite others to take up arms against their perceived enemies. In that sense, the SCA researcher would code the word but subject it to interpretation to produce the contextual (latent) meaning.

Other coding criteria that applied to this research which were embedded in the SCA include: use of expression in its intuitive form (communication that is 'self-evident') and use

of referential element (when an expression is represented; for example, 'The number one citizen' referring to head of government of a country) (Stemler, 2001). These are common expressions associated with linguistic analysis which defined the coding units in this research. The text focused on ethnicity, religion, dialogue and reconciliation as well as other topics on the conflicts that were reflected in the reports.

Beyond analysing the manifest contents of the newspapers to understand their inferred meanings, the researcher identified the possible gaps in the texts (the 'important' elements that were excluded) to explain the conditions that suggested the writer's intent. This process helped to reveal the functions of the manifest communication and the implications of the omitted communication thereby giving an insight into the writer's overall mind. It means that the writer's inclusion and exclusion of certain codes implied that he/she desired to achieve a goal. In this regard, the researcher adopted the recommendation by Carvalho (2008, p. 171) that a content analyst 'should constantly look for what is present in the text and for what is absent', because 'silence can be as performative as discourse'. She implied that certain codes may be ignored by a writer simply because he/she preferred to deemphasise or exclude certain portions of reality while drawing attention to others for the purpose of achieving set goals. This approach helped the investigator to understand the way the newspaper journalists reported the Jos conflict and what such communication sought to achieve.

5.9 The Qualitative Content Analysis Coding Scheme

Coding strategies/Operational definitions

The key elements analysed include:

- Samples – *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch*
- Study period – 2001, 2008, 2010
- Content category – Language use
- Units of analysis – Straight news/news feature/commentaries
- Focus – Manifest and laden contents (Explicit and inferred communication)
- Sample characteristics – 10 editions (5 each) of both newspapers after outbreak of violence
- Periods sampled - September 8-12/13, 2001; November 29- December 3, 2008; January 18-22/23, 2010
- Approach to coding – Summative Content Analysis
- Theories/concepts – Objectivity, subjectivity/non-objectivity, mediatisation, news framing
- Direction of news – Positive (favourable) and negative (unfavourable) contents
- 'Present' and 'absent' – What is in the text (present) and what is not in the text (absent).

Table 5.5: Coding strategies/Operational definitions

Concept/theme	Emphasis	Newspaper	Examples of usage
Content category *It describes the* **content** *(what is being said) and* **form** *(how it is being said)*	Language use (Word meanings that explain the context)	*Daily Trust (DT)* *The Punch (TP)*	**DT** – *Content* -'Tears freely flowed on the faces of the Muslim community who had brought the corpses on a trailer …' (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 1). *Form* – This was reported in the manner that would attract public sympathy for the Muslim community that was purportedly attacked. **TP** – *Content* – 'A similar event also occurred in Kano where Muslim youths, on Tuesday night, touched two churches located in Shagari quarters' (Ogunwale, Yakubu, & Daniel, 2001). *Form* – There was another angle to the story which suggested that the violence in Kano and Jos was ignited by Muslims.
Units of analysis *Reports on the Jos conflict*	Straight news/news feature/comm entaries (headlines, leads and	*The Punch (TP)*	**TP** – *Straight news* – This conflict was 'between mainly minority Muslim ethnic Hausa youths and people from the Christian Berom indigenous majority' (Owete & Madu-West, 2001, pp. 1-5). The newspaper separated the rival groups as a straight

	body of news)	*Daily Trust (DT)*	narrative. **DT** – *Straight news* – 'The Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) has condemned the recent killing of Muslims in Jos' (Dan-Halilu, 2001, p. 4).
Explicit communication *Information that is obvious* **Inferred communication** *Information that is less obvious*	Manifest content Laden content	*The Punch (TP)* *Daily Trust (DT))*	**TP** - *Explicit* – 'The deputy governor of the state , Chief Michael Botmang, also alleged that sophisticated firearms were freely used during the riots' (Ogunwale, Ladigbolu, et al., 2001). **DT** – *Inferred* – 'This time, however, they seemed hell bent on finishing what they started on November 28, 2008' (H. Mohammed, 2010, p. 64). *Meaning: The Christian 'indigenes' were on a mission to wipe out Muslim 'settlers'.*
Sample characteristics *Selection of editions of both newspapers covering the three waves of conflict: 2001, 2008, 2010 (Purposive sampling)*	2001 conflict 2008 conflict 2010 conflict (10 editions [5 each] of both newspapers after an outbreak of violence)	*Daily Trust (DT)* *The Punch (TP)*	
Coding the data *Identifying the themes and statements in the story and attaching meanings to them based on intuition (content that is self-evident) or when the statements are referential (i.e., expression is represented).*	Summative Content Analysis (SCA)	*Daily Trust (DT)* *The Punch (TP)*	**DT** – *Intuition* - 'One of the most pronounced of the victims in Jos was the killing of one Alhaji Mohammadu Mai Gwanjo and 20 members of his family' (J. N. Musa et al., 2008b, p. 4). **TP** - *Referential* – '…the ANPP supporters had allegedly poured onto the streets chanting war songs' (Owuamanam, 2008b, p. 7). ANPP represented a 'Muslim party' because it was dominated by Muslims, an indication that the violence was ignited by Muslims.
Objectivity *Detachment from*	Accuracy Balance Impartiality Neutrality	*The Punch (TP)*	**TP** – 'The disagreement was said to have escalated and attracted rival youth gangs […] Another report said there had been simmering crises in the area over the

subjects/events being reported			refusal of either religious sect to allow each other to reconstruct the houses destroyed during the November 28 crisis' (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2)
		Daily Trust (DT)	**DT** – 'It was not clear as to what caused yesterday's brutal escalation, though some sources said it may have been caused by some communities' anger at the losses in lives and property that they suffered' (Lalo & Bashir, 2010, pp. 1-5)
Subjectivity/ Non-objectivity *Attachment to subjects/events being reported (Goal-oriented reporting)*	Journalism of attachment (JA) Conflict sensitive journalism (CSJ) Peace journalism (PJ)	*The Punch (TP)* *Daily Trust (DT)*	**TP** – *Attachment* – 'Christians in the North should always defend themselves in the event of any unwanted violent attack by opponents of the religion' (Fabiyi & Owuamanam, 2010, p. 8) **DT** – *Attachment* – 'As at the time of this writing hundreds of so-called settlers have been murdered in cold blood in many cases allegedly by the police who are supposed to put out the fire' (H. Mohammed, 2010, p. 64).
Mediatisation *Reporting beyond mediation/ unique ways by which journalists frame conflict narratives*	Media logics and intersecting social forces (journalistic strategies influenced by social factors)	*The Punch (TP)* *Daily Trust (DT)*	**TP** – '[…] almost all mosques, except the central mosque, have been burnt by Christian youths who were said be *retaliating the previous day's attacks on churches'* (Madu-West, Murray, & Ibrahim, 2001, pp. 1-5) **DT** – 'The crisis that engulfed the Plateau State capital of Jos on Sunday started [..] *when Christian youths tried to stop a Muslim man from renovating his house'* (Lalo & Bashir, 2010, p. 1)
News framing *Choice of words/phrases to distinguish between conflict victims and aggressors*	Representations of ethnic and religious identities	*Daily Trust (DT)* *The Punch (TP)*	**DT** – 'JNI has condemned the recent killing of Muslims in Jos' (Dan-Halilu, 2001) **TP** – 'We were surprised at the way some of our churches were attacked and some of our faithful and clergy killed' (Owuamanam, 2008a, p. 9)
Direction of news *Positive news – when a party in conflict is portrayed as the victim.*	Positive (favourable) and negative (unfavourable) contents	*Daily Trust (DT)* *The Punch*	**DT** – *Favourable to Muslims* – 'the burial could not be held immediately because the Muslim community was waiting for all the corpses of victims to be gathered […] 424 corpses had been washed, dressed and lined up for burial' (Lalo & Mohammed, 2008c, p. 1) **TP** – *Favourable to Christians*- 'the ANPP

Negative news – when conflict party is portrayed as the aggressor. *It demonstrates journalists' bias*		*(TP)*	supporters had allegedly poured onto the streets chanting war songs. In the ensuing confusion, churches were burnt around Sarkin Mangu' (Owuamanam, 2008b, p. 7)
'Present' and 'absent' *Inclusion and/or exclusion of a portion of conflict narratives*	What is in the text (present) and what is not in the text (absent)	*The Punch (TP)* *Daily Trust (DT)*	**TP** – The first outbreak of violence was not reported (Absence of frame in the September 8 edition). *Why?* **DT** – The newspaper did not report the number of Christian casualties (Absence of frame in the stories sampled). *Why?*

5.10 Ethical Implications

The researcher applied to the University of Salford Committee on Ethics which granted approval for the conduct of the study as specified. The application contained the research summary, objectives, approaches and methods, as well as supporting documents that sought the consent of the participants and managements of their organisations in which he encouraged voluntary participation.

It was revealed at the outset that the researcher was interested in understanding how narratives of the Jos conflict were produced, and the interests they served; which would be a modest contribution to the global research community by providing authentic data on this journalistic process. The interview, particularly, focused on journalists' approaches to news construction and the strategies they adopted in reporting the conflict involving 'indigenes' and 'settlers' or 'Muslims and 'Christians' in the city of Jos.

Four documents were distributed: The organisation's consent form, participant's invitation letter, participant's information sheet and participant's consent form (parts 1 & 2 –

one sought their consent on participation, anonymity and data protection while the other required their consent for the use of their photographs where the interviews were not problematic) (see appendices IV, V, VI, VII, & IX). Based on the conditions of anonymity and data safety, the participants' confidentiality remained secure as they were assured that they would be identified by coded names: IP 1-26 (Interview Participant 1-26).

Before taking part in the interview, the participants voluntarily agreed that:

- the researcher was free to use some portions of the interview transcripts, that is, relevant quotes, in his analysis of data to lay emphasis and establish actuality in his dissertation being an academic document for the advancement of knowledge.
- their photographs and other related images in their environment (either full, Ariel or rear view), taken during the interview, may be used in the study as evidence of their witness.

On completion of the study, the interview data was protected through preservation in the archives (stored electronically via the University of Salford USIR platform) so that only authorized researchers could access. Its use would be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

5.11 Conclusion

Chapter 5 has focused on the research design, process and methodology which show the procedures of investigating journalistic strategies in the Jos conflict. The research process, known as the 'Research Onion' (Saunders et al., 2012), describes the research philosophy (the constructivist epistemology, idealist ontology and value-laden axiology), the inductive research approach and phenomenological research strategy. These elements are associated with qualitative research – a non-numerical investigation of phenomena in their natural settings (O'Leary, 2014; Silverman, 2007, 2011, 2013).

The chapter has justified the suitability of qualitative research in this study. Thus, interview and qualitative content analysis (QCA) tools have been designed to obtain two data

sets. The interview method follows the four-step framework for analysing data developed by Rowley (2012a) while the QCA is drawn on the Summative Content Analysis proposed by Hsieh and Shannon (2005). Chapters 6, 7 and 8 contain the analysis in connected sequence showing these frameworks.

Chapter Six

Presentation and Analysis of Interview Data

6.1 Introduction

A large volume of data was generated from 26 conflict journalists in Jos who met the selection criteria for the study. Like most qualitative studies in which coding of data occurs during and after the actual data collection (Saldana, 2015, 2016; Silverman, 2013), the current research proceeded from the recording of conversations and the observation of verbal and non-verbal cues during the interview to transcription of data. Coding being at the heart of this analysis – the process whereby a researcher describes the functions of words, phrases or sentences in a given communication and ascribes meanings to them (Chowdhury, 2015) – is focused on the participants' strategies of reporting the Jos conflict. As Saldana (2016) advises that when coding the interview data about the perceptions of participants – how they understand their lived experiences (which includes journalistic practices in the context of current research) – the researcher should lay emphasis on the 'participants' data' in order to achieve the research objectives.

In this analysis, the researcher recognises that, to date, qualitative research scholars have not found a common ground on the amount of data to code. Some (e.g., Lofland et al., 2006) argue that the entire data generated should be coded to avoid exclusion of relevant elements. Others believe that coding the total body of data would amount to repetition of the texts rather than reducing contents to their essence (Gray, 2014; Saldana, 2016; Seidman, 2013). In the light of current research, the analysis followed the logic that only relevant portions of the data required coding to stimulate critical examination of the phenomena. As it is demonstrated in this chapter, 'only the most salient portions […] related to the research

questions merit examination […] leaving the remainder for intensive data analysis' (Saldana, 2016, p. 17). In that sense, the researcher-generated construct, regarded as the participants' 'salient' or 'key' responses to the research questions, included the direct or embedded codes in the interview transcript that addressed journalistic practices in the volatile environment. It also pertained to their experiences of violence and how these have impacted the way they constructed conflict narratives, as well as their strategies in the news framing process. Although there is no universal approach to coding in qualitative studies because of the peculiarity of every research (Patton, 2015; Rapley, 2007), the researcher identified the corresponding responses which suggested a consensus of ideas among the journalists on their experiences and strategies. Simply put, where the majority opinions have been expressed, as Harding (2013) argues, it provided the framework for generating the research results. In some instances, the participants' responses were matched with their products (media contents) to understand what they claimed and what they actually performed. In other scenarios, the coding focused on stand-alone opinions (what may be regarded as participants' unpopular opinions) which generated controversy or contributed to the research results.

Given that qualitative research data analysis is now supported by digital technology to reduce the laborious nature of the exercise, especially when dealing with interview transcripts (Paulus, Lester, & Dempster, 2014), the NVivo software was used to identify key words and/or phrases coded by the participants. The offerings of this digitised coding platform are numerous; but in this study, the software mainly focused on the Text Search Query and Word Frequency Query which helped the researcher to obtain results preview and word clouds in order to illustrate some codes, direct and inferred, that have emerged from the interviews.

At a glance, the NVivo diagrams suggest topics coded by the participants, most of which have been described extensively. Thus, the use of this qualitative research tool was mainly to highlight the frequency of words and other variables such as the phrases connecting

key terms (e.g., the Word Tree) rather than organise or interpret the data. The NVivo was not a replacement for the researcher's role of analysing and synthesising data – for it lacked the capacity to do so (Friese, 2014, cited in Saldana, 2016, p. 32). Its function was to provide some bit of information about the data emerging from the participants that would be useful for the researcher's analysis.

The interviews focused on specific themes which derived from the three research questions outlined in Chapter 5. Seventeen interview questions were formulated to elicit responses from the participants who were required to provide information, not specific answers, on the topics because of the flexibility of unstructured interviews (Crano et al., 2015). But it is recommended that every approach to qualitative enquiry, including the handling of interview data, should be analysed to attain some level of precision (Goldberg & Allen, 2015; Gubrium, Holstein, Marvasti, & McKinney, 2012; Morris, 2015). This necessitated the adoption of the descriptive coding – an analytical approach which explained these 'specific themes' and helped to answer the research questions (Miles et al., 2014). The description included the summary of the huge amount of data, some intriguing claims by the respondents and the meanings ascribed to them. The essence was to 'assist the reader to see what you saw and to hear what you heard' in a more transparent manner (Wolcott, 1994, cited in Saldana, 2016, p. 102). The results from this effort have shown a high level of participant-involvement in the Jos conflict.

Figure 6: 1 Offices of some media organisations in Jos.

6.2 RQ1: What factors influenced the practices of journalists who reported the violent conflict in Jos?

This was the opening enquiry that probed the activities of conflict journalists aimed at identifying the elements that have made them to act in a particular way – either as mediators, peace advocates or agents of violence. Studies have revealed that social, physical and emotional conditions (e.g. trauma, threat to life), and pressure from within and outside media organisations (e.g., conflict actors, media owners) are potential factors that influence the attitudes of people who are exposed to violence (Keats & Buchanan, 2013; Obilom & Thacher, 2008; Rasaq, 2012). Due to the frequent violent conflict in Jos, the researcher envisaged other conditions such as residential segregation that inhibits access to conflict areas, which could emerge from the participants who were directly reporting the conflict. The three succeeding interview questions (1, 2, 3) were geared towards an engagement with the participants in which they could identify these factors and explain them in relation to reporting of conflict in Jos. These units of questions stemmed from Research Question 1. The Word Cloud (Figure 6.2) and Word Tree (Figure 6.3) have summarised the participants' responses.

Figure 6: 2 Word Cloud: Factors influencing practices of conflict journalists

Figure 6: 3 Word Tree: Factors influencing practices of conflict journalists

The researcher undertook a word search which produced the cloud and tree from the reservoir of responses on RQ1. The words /phrases included: factors, influence, practices of journalists, and sources of pressure and conflict in Jos; which were the key variables in interview questions 1, 2, 3.

The journalists recognised that the intermittent Jos conflict (or crisis – used interchangeably) between Christians and Muslims, or 'indigenes' and 'settlers' had influenced their work (see dominant words in the cloud: conflict, journalist, Muslim, Christian, Jos, report, story, religions, pressure, situation, ethnic, interest etc.). The themes

outlined above reflect a society where conflict involving social groups has ensued, and the activities of journalists who reported the conflict in the mass media for their audiences.

6.2.1 Residential segregation of Jos

All the participants viewed the residential segregation of Jos as a major factor that influenced their work in the area. The spates of violence in this city have forced many residents to relocate to 'safe areas' – such as, Angwan Rogo (for Muslims) and Rock Haven (for Christians) - where their ethnic or religious groups had gained dominance as documented in literature (e.g., Aliyu et al., 2012; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016). A number of respondents said that they felt a common goal between communities may have existed in the past since the outbreak of violence in the area. In their study on the implication of intangible location attributes on residential segregation in Jos, Aliyu et al. (2012) discovered that long before the eruption of violence in the city, some communities had pulled more ethnic groups or attracted a number of religious events than others. This was due to noticeable and indescribable location causes such as access to social amenities, security and commercial activities. Despite that, no part of the city had been identified as an enclave of any ethnic or religious group.

Some of the respondents noted that soon after the September 7, 2001 conflict, the residents realised that they could no longer co-exist, and that communities had been split into Muslim majority and Christian minority or 'indigenous' majority and 'settler' minority, or vice versa. They said, like other residents, many journalists fled their homes and settled in places considered to be safe for habitation. But their work required reporting the emerging conflict in both 'safe' and 'unsafe' areas (IP 5; IP 9; IP 22). Some respondents remarked that they saw themselves as Christians or Muslims, 'indigenes' or 'settlers' and were identified by such labels.

The Muslim journalists relocated to places dominated (and almost entirely occupied) by Muslims such as Angwan Rogo, Gangare, Yan Shanu, Bauchi Road, Alikazaure, Sabon Layi, Kwararafa,Yan Trailer and Kasuwan Nama. Christian journalists, on the other hand, joined other Christians in areas such as Rayfield, Rock Haven, Jenta Adamu, Kabong, Lamingo, Apata, Busa Buji, Sabon Barki, and Tudun Wada, among others. This has continued to the present day. If John or Mary (identified as a Christian) is said to reside in Jos, he/she is likely to be in the midst of Christians in Rayfield, Rock Haven etc., whereas Mohammad or Zainab (identified as a Muslim) would be comfortable among his/her Muslim community of Angwan Rogo, Gangare etc. Also, 'indigenes' like Azi, Dung and Nyam are likely to reside in the ancient settlements of Narraguta, Gwong and Dong as well as other Christian-dominated areas. The likes of Kabiru, Sani and Aisha who are regarded as Hausa Fulani 'settlers' live in Muslim-dominated areas of Angwan Rogo and Gangare, among others. As a result of this residential segregation, journalists have been confined to their ethnic and religious boundaries implying that the 'indigenous journalist' cannot go to a 'settler community' when there is an attack on that community; or a 'Muslim journalist' could be attacked if he/she goes to cover any incident in a Christian-dominated area. The impact of this on the reports of the journalists was a possible manipulation of facts which tended to pitch one group against the other.

Studies by J. D. Galadima (2010) and Rasaq (2012), for example, have shown that journalists' reports on the Jos conflict were a trigger to the reprisal attacks that followed. Thus, the reality of the conflict was defined by those closed to the journalists or the social groups/communities to which they were affiliated. This divide between communities and religious groups was described by all the participants as a challenge to their work. For example, IP19 comments:

> The way the city is divided into religious and ethnic factions has confined us journalists to certain areas. We don't move freely and cover events in the domains of

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our perceived enemies. If you are a Muslim, your coverage begins and ends in your community and the mosques. If you are a Christian, you are confined to Christian-dominated areas and the churches. Again, you are either an indigene or a foreigner. This is how we have played along.

Others also concur:

The residential segregation in Jos since the 2001 conflict has been a challenge as journalists who are Christians cannot go to Muslim-dominated areas and journalists who are Muslims cannot go to Christian-dominated areas (IP12 – HFS).

The Christian/Muslim and indigene/settler divides in Jos have made the work of journalists very challenging. Journalists tend to serve the interests of their religious and ethnic groups (IP 14).

In Jos, if you go to certain areas, they will tell you they are danger zones because there are terrorists there. What they are saying in essence is that there are places that you as a journalist cannot go as far as the conflicts here are concerned. Even the insurgents don't respect journalists. In fact, when they see you as a journalist, they believe you are coming to expose them and you would be the first target (IP 5).

Jos is divided on religious lines – The Christians on one side and the Muslims on the other. The divide also affects most journalists who report this conflict. When there is crisis in any part of the city, the journalist must think first about his/her safety – whether the place is secure for coverage. If it is a Muslim dominated area, the Christian reporter cannot go there, and if the area is dominated by Christians the Muslim reporter cannot go as well. It is worse for us who report for television because when people of the community under attack see you with a camera (with our logo); they may molest or even kill you (IP 13).

The communities in Jos are divided based on religious and ethnic affiliations. This makes it difficult for the journalist to go to conflict areas when there is an outbreak of violence. The consequence of this is journalists' reliance on eye-witness accounts or rumours which often turn out to be false (IP 26).

The interviewees have noted that Jos has been split between Christians and Muslims, 'indigenes' and 'settlers' – the data which confirms the research conducted by Aliyu et al. (2012) that the city had witnessed massive relocation of people as a result of the conflict. The interviewees' concept of 'challenge', as emphasised above, describes the difficulty brought about by the actions of the rival groups. The journalists have limited access to conflict areas

which made their work even more challenging. The response by IP 19 that journalists no longer report about events in the territories occupied by their 'perceived enemies' for fear of attacks, corroborates the statement which suggests that going to such conflict areas means endangering their lives. In that context, a reporter is perceived as an enemy of a certain conflict actor, especially a religious or ethnic group, when he/she lives in the community of the opponent and is believed to share the sentiments of that opponent. The participant also says that the conflict journalist is 'either an indigene or a foreigner' to be able to live in the community.

The loyalty of the journalist to his/her community of habitation may have been absolute; otherwise he/she could be subjected to social exclusion. The journalist is literarily an 'indigene' or a 'foreigner' when he/she becomes an active participant in the conflict by reporting one side of the story; that is being sympathetic to the 'indigenes' or 'foreigners' with whom he/she is associated. This establishes the inclination of the journalist to ethnicity. IP 19 demonstrates this by admitting that apart from having limited access to conflict areas (because the journalist is confined to churches and mosques), he/she also operates within an area dominated by 'indigenes' or 'settlers' depending on the journalist's ethnic status.

According to IP 5, people generally make the distinction between 'safe' and 'unsafe' areas in Jos, to the extent that they warn journalists against going to areas regarded as 'unsafe'. The notion that the journalist covering conflict is an 'enemy' of warring groups, as earlier discussed, is re-echoed by this participant. He explains that whenever a journalist is approaching a conflict scene, the community would be suspicious of him/her because it is unsure about the path the reporter would follow.

The effect of this on the reporting of conflict is that the tense environment (characterised by the fear of attacks and molestation) may influence his/her selection of news frames which is likely to serve the interest of that community. If the journalist fails to portray

the community in a good light, that is, reporting the conflict as the community wants it, he/she may fall prey of attacks and the medium which the journalist represents will not be spared. The implication is a possible misrepresentation of facts which would have an adverse effect on the audience. This atmosphere of uncertainty has made conflict journalists tread with caution so that they do not become victims rather than reporters of conflict. Therefore, journalists' coverage of the Jos conflict depends on, first, how safe the conflict area is for the reporters and, second, whether the inhabitants of the area are 'our own' or 'their own'. This explains why the TV reporter (IP 13) says the sighting of the camera by an aggrieved community portends danger for the journalist handling the camera.

If the journalists think about their safety and realise that the conflict areas are not accessible because they involve the 'other' group, they would resort to other means of getting information rather than go to the conflict areas. There are a number of implications. The journalists' reports about the 'other' may emerge from their imaginations, and conversations with friends and acquaintances that are not authoritative news sources. In other words, what they report about the community is not based on concrete evidence due to lack of access to that community. For example, a participant recalls that once there was violence in any part of the city, 'the head office would insist that you get the story by all means' (IP 1); and where the area ravaged by violence was considered unsafe for the journalist to access, any member of the community whom the journalist chose as a news source was contacted for information on the conflict.

In the same vein, IP 5 remarks that whenever the atmosphere was tense, 'even the security men would advise you; do you want to risk your life? Why don't you wait and get the feedback from us?' .In that circumstance, the security operatives would become the major news sources. They would be eager to supply the raw materials with which the journalist would produce the news. A TV reporter also explains that the absence of information during

conflict 'can water down your report' (IP 6). These observations suggest that the conditions under which they performed their role as conflict journalists have not been conducive (see Figure 6.3).

It can be deduced from this data that residential segregation is a major factor influencing the work of journalists reporting the Jos conflict. It has limited journalists' access to some conflict areas resulting in the construction of conflict narratives which may not be based on facts.

6.2.2 Pressure from conflict actors, editors and news sources

Some participants admitted that they were facing a lot of pressure from conflict actors – who expected them to report in their 'favour' (IP 2; IP 5; IP 12 – HFS), the editors – who were interested in the casualty figures of victims of the conflict so that the Jos story may hit the front page (IP 3 – IEG; IP 6), and news sources – who often provided false information (IP 19). According to the participants:

> When you write a story, that story may be faulted or seen as offensive to a certain group. Another group may be impressed with what you've written because you are writing in their 'favour' (IP 2).

> The different groups in the Jos conflict want our reports to be favourable to them [….] If you are a reporter and a Muslim, the Muslim community would want you to do something that would project them or serve their interests [….] If you are a Christian, it's the same thing (IP 5).

> There is pressure from the 'indigenous' ethnic groups on the allegation of bias reporting by our newspaper (IP 12 – HFS).

> There is pressure from communities and individuals who provide you with false information about conflict in the name of eye-witness which, if not verified, can escalate violence in the city (IP 19).

> If you send any story that has nothing to do with 'how many died on the Plateau, it's not a serious story as far as the paper is concerned (IP 3 – IEG).

The respondents feel that the merit of a story is measured by its ability to satisfy the interest of the audience. As IP 2 explains, one group in conflict may derive satisfaction from a report that tends to portray the group as the victim and its opponent as the aggressor. That same group may accuse the reporter of bias if it is portrayed as the aggressor in another story. In that sense, there are high expectations on conflict journalists to immerse themselves in their stories to be able to construct conflict narratives that meet these expectations – usually from the groups that have strong affiliations with the journalists or the media they represent.

There is pressure from Muslims and Christians, and pressure from 'indigenes' and 'settlers'. They want the journalists to justify their actions in the conflicts as if they were not responsible for them. IP 12 –HFS points out, for instance, that 'indigenes' have put pressure on her newspaper to report the Jos conflict in the manner that would not undermine their integrity as good hosts whose customs, traditions and cultures should be respected by their visitors. The journalists have continued to grapple with this pressure from conflict actors and the media organisations. But when faced with this pressure, the journalists have fashioned ways of overcoming it. Two respondents say:

> The only thing that is key to good conduct is to be objective. I encourage conflict journalists not to take sides in any event. Don't say, 'Look, this one is a Muslim and I am a Muslim, I have to protect him'. There should be no protection there' (IP 5)

> One of the ways to manage the pressure of poor information about the conflict is to crosscheck the facts that are emerging. I try as much as possible to confirm from different sources and parties in conflict to achieve balance in my stories (IP 6).

The views above express the fundamental journalistic practice. First, the standard of objectivity advocated by IP 5 is a guiding principle for journalists and, second, IP 6's call for the crosschecking of facts is also grounded in the ethics of journalism (Chari, 2007; Ward, 2006). However, given the circumstance under which the journalists operate, because the residential segregation in the area has forced them to depend on the communities harbouring them, they are likely to take sides with such communities they regard as their own.

Also, as a strategy, some journalists have endeavoured to divert the attention of the conflict actors and editors to other non-violent events thereby putting new 'pictures in their heads'. In the circumstances where news managers persisted, some journalists would bow to the pressure by quoting fictitious figures of the dead and injured persons in their reports while portraying the 'enemy' as the aggressor. For some others, they would rather resign (which is a decision rarely taken because of the implication that comes with the loss of one's job) than shade the truth (Bell, 1996, 1997). For others still, rather than lose their job – when they have failed to produce the casualty figures for their news managers, or lose their lives – when they have moved into conflict zones unprotected, they would take on the characters of the members of that community or change their pattern of coverage so that no one would recognise them. IP 13, a TV reporter, explains how this strategy has worked:

> If we have to cover a conflict zone where we don't feel safe, we often disguise ourselves, seal off our newsgathering equipment – camera, microphone, office vehicle, etc., so that no one may identify us through our logo, or the media we represent. This has greatly helped us to do our work, even if it is done in a hurry.

This kind of strategy is what IP 1 proposes for journalists determined to overcome the pressure of reporting conflict in Jos (interview Question 3). He urges them to 'think fast, improvise […,] use your initiative to discharge your duty as a professional journalist' (IP 1). The idea to improvise which IP 1 has put forward may be understood in the light of the measures taken by some media organisations to ensure the safety of their reporters who cover conflict. For example, IP 12 – HFS, a Muslim reporter, reveals that since her coverage was limited to Muslim or Hausa Fulani-dominated areas, the newspaper decided to assign a Christian reporter to Jos, to enable both 'penetrate areas dominated by the two religious groups in conflict'. IP 14 refers to this strategy as a means of 'striking the balance' to

demonstrate the organisation's commitment to equal representation of the rival groups in the news.

6.2.3 Constant witness to violence

The participants have acknowledged that constant exposure to violence has made them to develop lifelong traumatic conditions. This data confirms the works of Keats and Buchanan (2013), and B. Zelizer and Allan (2011) (see 6.3.1 for more on this). Some of them see violence as the most attractive news value that is given much attention by most news media. This journalist admits that:

> Journalism thrives on conflict because it is the odd thing that becomes the news. Anything that is flowery actually does not make news. We always find angles to news when conflict occurs (IP 11).

It was necessary to know the factors that have influenced the journalists' practices. As the interviews transited from identification of the 'factors of influence' to 'sources of pressure', and the strategy to 'overcome pressure' (Interview Questions 1-3), an understanding of the journalists' circumstances has been gained. They have identified the factors and how these have influenced their news coverage, and their strategy of 'improvisation' to overcome emerging challenges.

Figure 6: 4 The Nigerian Union of Journalists (NUJ) Press Centre, Jos, where journalists meet regularly

6.3 RQ 2: How have journalists' experiences of violence affected their framing of news on the conflict?

Using interview data to address RQ2, the researcher desired a deeper understanding of the journalists' experiences of conflict as further explored in Interview Questions 4-9 (experience of conflict; how the experience has influenced reporting; effect of framing on audience perception; role of journalists as 'umpire'; how objectivity is applied and the circumstances in which objectivity is compromised). Since the factors which influenced conflict journalists have been established in previous analysis, an understanding of how they work – the manufacture of news within this system is of essence. Figure 6.5 and Figure 6.6 show the results of this investigation at a glance.

Figure 6: 5 Word Cloud: Journalists' experiences of conflict

Figure 6: 6 Word Tree: Journalists' experiences of conflict

The researcher assembled the participants' responses which were relevant to Questions 4-9, and undertook a word search. Based on the wide range of themes embedded in RQ2, 10 key words/phrases were fed into NVivo. They include: experience, journalists, framing, role, indigenes and settlers, Christians and Muslims, objectivity, compromise, Jos conflict and audience. The 'cloudy' result in Figure 6.5 highlights issues bordering on conflict (most

frequently used word), Jos, report, story, crisis, people, Muslim, way, journalist, objectivity, dominated, interest, try, Plateau, killed, indigenes, news, groups, victims, ethnic, balance, religious, etc. The Word Tree is centred on objectivity – an indication that this tradition is still recognised in conflict reporting, even though its application has a seeming complexity. For example, from left wing of the Tree to its right, a critical analyst would spot these weighty remarks by two participants: 'I like the idea of objectivity but in terms of […]' (IP 6); 'Therefore, one is just between objectivity and subjectivity' (IP 7). This complexity of journalistic standard of objectivity and other issues emerging from the participants' explanations about their experiences of reporting conflict, as shown in the results preview, are further examined in Articles 6.3.1; 6.3.2; 6.3.3; and 6.3.4.

6.3.1 The experiences of journalists reporting Jos conflict

In the fourth interview question, the researcher required a vivid description of the journalists' experiences of the conflict. Their 'experiences', in the context of this study, included their encounter with conflict actors – victims and aggressors, the conflict environment (e.g., burnt houses and worship centres, migration of persons) and the potential threat to their lives. But the experience of the 'giving of account' or 'constructing the narratives' of this encounter for their news media was most desired. The researcher envisaged that the participants would concentrate on the 'fieldwork' rather than the 'newsroom' experience from which news frames on the conflict evolved. This is because 'experience' has been synonymous with torture, assault, escape from attacks etc., since the first major armed conflict erupted in Jos in 2001 (Krause, 2011). The question was meant to, first, trigger a common response about the fieldwork experience which could be narrated with ease and, second, the unknown strategies of reporting the conflict which was peculiar to each interviewee. This was based on the understanding that these strategies, in the light of the Jos conflict, were not likely to be

revealed in a straight-question-answer approach unless the researcher engaged them with tact. In that regard, follow-up questions which dug into these strategies were most appropriate.

Figure 6: 7 Word Cloud: Journalists' experiences of conflict (Component of RQ2)

The word search was further narrowed to the responses on the participants' experiences which enabled the researcher to identify the variables inherent in their narratives. The searched words/phrases were: describe, experience, challenge, write, story, handling conflict, influence, way, trauma, safe, favour and interest. The Word Cloud (Figure 6.7) captures a variety of the subjects in Figure 6.5.

As the researcher had anticipated, the interviewees revealed their encounter with conflict actors in conflict zones – how some of them were attacked and how they witnessed the suffering of victims. They described their experiences as 'traumatising' (IP 1; IP 9; IP 11), 'terrifying' (IP 2), 'not palatable' (IP 5), 'challenging' (IP 16), 'unpleasant' (IP 20; IP 24) and 'terrible' (IP 21). The use of these adjectives demonstrates the severity of the violence which the journalists have constantly reported. Some of them shed light on this:

> We see how human beings are slaughtered like animals […] how women and children are killed; communities are wiped out (IP 11).

It has got to a level that would make you hate doing the job because you wake up in the morning and all around you are corpses [....] (IP 1).

Their witness to violence – especially seeing the slaughtering of women and children and the scores of bodies all over the place could be traumatising (see Keats & Buchanan, 2013; B. Zelizer & Allan, 2011). As noted in Chapter 2, since conflict journalists are required to report violence in great detail like other social phenomena (Novak & Davidson, 2013), their work has become challenging as revealed by IP 16. Some of the respondents have claimed that their witness to the Jos conflict had made them to believe it was no longer a fearful event. The respondents said before 2001, violent conflict was alien to the people and had been a fearful event for many journalists, but when it became a recurring decimal, they got used to it. Their claim supports existing literature on global wars; that violent conflict has moved from being a distasteful incident to being something fascinating and tolerable. It 'was transformed into a hymn of life […], a welcome, sought-after and desired event' (Lazzarich, 2013, p. 39). This was how some journalists in Jos perceived it – the argument which has been upheld by this study.

Beyond the fieldwork 'experience', the participants have revealed the process of the manufacture of news (regarded in this study as newsroom experience). The analysis of this component is crucial to the attainment of research objective 2. The participants' responses to Interview Question 5 have been explained in the same context. The question was drawn from previous enquiry on their experiences of conflict. The emphasis was on how their 'fieldwork' experiences had impacted on their 'newsroom' experiences – whether, for example, their constant witness to violence had made them assume the position of conflict actors by reporting in 'favour' or 'against' a warring group, or they reported both sides.

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Some interviewees have revealed that in-between the conflict zone and the newsroom there exists a conspiracy of thought that often influences the structure of news or the importance attached to the elements that form the news (Wheeler, 2005). It also includes the interest it would serve – internal and external forces, and how the process would convey the intended message. When putting pen to paper, the lead is defined by an interest that is sustained throughout the report (IP 15; IP 3 – IEG). Sometimes, the selection of frames is influenced by what the journalists see, because, for example, a TV cameraman says he captures 'the killings and the corpses of victims littered all over the place […] the pictures are too difficult to behold' (IP 18), and leaves the reporter or editor to select the 'important' visuals that would accompany the story. An editor also explains how this newsroom ritual is performed:

> I get a lot of stories from reporters out there on the field with respect to what they see, what they hear and, of course, process of their interviews with news sources and even victims. What we try to do is to edit the stories and be sure that they would help the society; particularly, paying attention to making sure that it doesn't worsen an already bad situation (IP 22).

The editor's response above is hinged on Johan Galtung's peace journalism and Ross Howard's conflict sensitive reporting (Galtung, 1973; Howard, 2009; Lynch & Galtung, 2010) which require journalists to report conflict with restraint so as to reduce human suffering. Recently, Singh (2013) used these frameworks to propose responsible conflict reporting that emphasises proactive measures by journalists in presenting conflict and promoting peace. Like IP 22 who ensures that the story he moderates (his term for sensitive editing) 'doesn't worsen an already bad situation', Singh (2013) recognises that 'conflict should not be treated as any ordinary story, but handled with due care given its potentially-damaging, long-term effects' (p. 119).

Having been influenced by the residential segregation in Jos which limits the journalists' access to information, what they write about conflict emerges from secondary sources such as eye-witnesses (who are not likely to reveal what happened but what they want the journalists to know and report), and their colleagues. Some of the respondents explained that at critical moments, they sit in the newsrooms and make phone calls to their friends and acquaintances, as well as persons from their ethnic or religious blocs; and on the basis of this interaction, their stories are formed. They might claim that the information was obtained from an 'authoritative source' who 'pleaded anonymity' so that their audiences might accept this constructed reality. While some of the journalists have denied knowledge of this practice for fear of blame for 'shading truth' (Bell, 1996, 1997), the absence of information due to the lack of access to some communities has led to the adoption of alternative news source. To demonstrate how the Muslim/Christian and indigene/settler divide has influenced news construction, IP 12 – HFS reveals that whenever she shares information with her colleagues about an incident she has covered in a Muslim-dominated area – because she is a Muslim and can go to that area, she often withholds some information that would only be read in her newspaper. She remarks:

> When things happen in Muslim areas, my Christian colleagues will call me to find out about the incident [....] but the truth is that if you rely on me I can't give you everything. I can't just go there, get the information first-hand, or sometimes even risk my life, and you expect me to get everything and give it to you and then tomorrow we have the same angle of story; I can't do that. I would want to have an exclusive. Mine must be different.

Based on the above remark, IP 12 –HFS wants to have an exclusive for the story in terms of an original angle. However, if she chooses to withhold substantial part of the information, and alters the facts that may constitute the news materials for her Christian colleagues, it is likely that the reports emerging from Christian reporters would not reflect the reality of that incident. Suppose that the Muslim journalist saw how Christian 'women and children were

slaughtered like animals […]' (IP 11) in that Muslim-dominated area, would this form part of the news materials that she would release to her Christian colleagues? This withholding of information by the journalist, in another sense, is a strategy to conceal some facts that may implicate 'her community' – the Muslim-dominated area. Should the need arise for Muslim journalists to rely on their Christian counterparts for information on attacks in Christian-dominated areas; the same withholding interface may occur. Based on this, the information is likely to be withheld, or suppressed in worse scenarios where the Christians are identified as the aggressors.

So what version of 'truth' do the audiences read, hear or view on the Jos conflict? Perhaps, this is why Stolley (2010, p. 267) writes that 'Truth comes in layers […] and when you excavate – we call it reporting – Truth can change [….] Sometimes Truth comes wrapped in rhetoric'. Some editors, for instance, have argued that what they do with reporters' manuscripts does not necessarily amount to changing truth. Rather, it is a form of moderation that is most desired. An editor explains this:

> If a reporter talks about somebody of a particular ethnic group killing somebody somewhere; what we try to do is to just say: 'Two young men fought, and one was killed' [….] The reporter may have told the truth, which we uphold in journalism, but the profession also envisaged that some things could also be moderated if that would help the society (IP 22).

But do these moderators and reporters who construct news understand the implications of this process on the perceptions of their audiences? This question was posed to the participants (Interview Question 6) as the researcher sought to know if the journalists understood the implications of their reports on the attitudes of their audiences.

6.3.2 Shaping audiences' perceptions through framing

This was another dimension to examining journalists' newsroom experience. Figure 6.10 and figure 6.11 show the Word Cloud and Text Results Preview.

Figure 6: 10 Word Cloud: Shaping audiences' perceptions through framing (Component of RQ2)
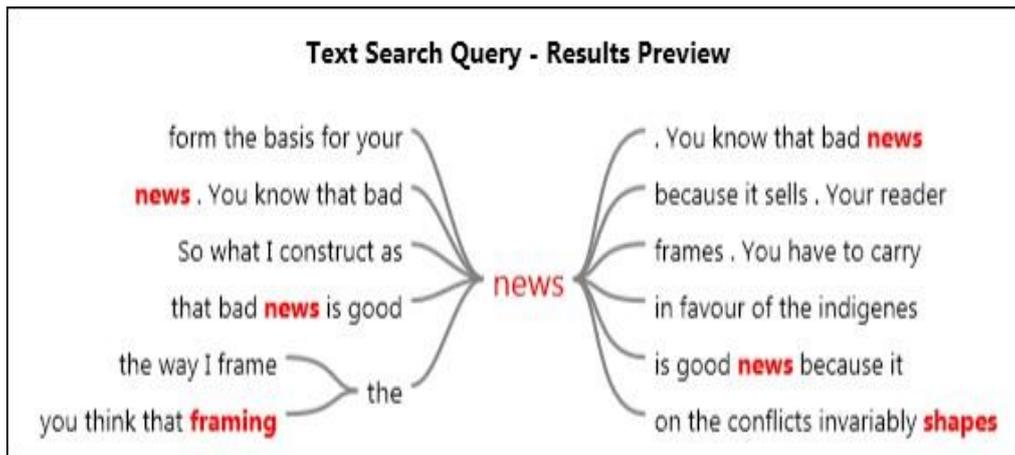
Figure 6: 11 Word Tree: Shaping audiences' perceptions through framing (Component of RQ2)

The search pertained to participants' responses to Interview Question 6. The key words were: Framing, news, strategy, shapes, perceptions and truth. The Word Cloud shows the dominance of words such as audience, people, write, news, interest, stories, crisis, believe, look, try, responsibility, reader, sentiments, perception, picture, casualty etc. These words suggest the process of news framing in a typical newsroom.

Like a word puzzle, there are phrase matches in the Word Tree (Figure 6.11) – from left wing to the right, which reveal the responses attributed to the participants. For example, the Tree captures these statements:

> So what I construct as news in favour of the indigenes forms the perception of my readers. Based on that, they have come to know that the settlers are the aggressors (IP 3 – IEG)

> You know that bad news is good news because it sells (IP 9).

These participants recognise that what they publish or broadcast to their audiences have significant impact on them. In the first scenario, the journalist weighs the options of reporting in favour of an ethnic group or against it, and/or taking a neutral position. But he chooses to support one group (the indigenes) and leaves the other (the settlers). He understands, perhaps, that any reader who reads the news is likely to share his 'common sense' reality (his perspective of reality) which may portray the 'indigenes' as victims of the conflict who have

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been attacked in their territory by the 'settlers'. Thus, the story presents an image of foreigners who want to take over the heritage of those upon whom nature has bestowed such privilege. Again, it suggests to the reader that communities, generally, should beware of foreigners in their domains and treat them as such, to avoid loss of their heritage to the 'settlers' as it was being experienced in Jos.

The analogy of 'bad news' is 'good news' is a fundamental journalistic tenet which follows the logic that people are interested in human conditions that are sorrowful, negative and humiliating (Phillips, 2015; Seib, 2013). They want to identify those associated with these and how they are affected. Violent conflict is one of such conditions because in it, lives and property are lost and gained by those who, for example, loot or achieve territorial control. The journalist who reports the 'bad news' about rival ethnic and religious groups in Jos is quick to 'break the news' to the audience who waits anxiously to consume the product. Since the audience is thirsting for the news on 'indigenes' and 'settlers', Muslims and Christians – to know those winning the war, it changes its form to 'good news'. In other words, 'bad news' becomes 'good news' when it appeals to the audience. The implication, however, is that this journalist looks for hot spots in the conflict (e.g. persons killed), even when the information is not accurate, so that the bad news may sell. This reporter explains the rationale for this:

> Your reader wants to see the casualty figures and the extent of damage in the conflict because these elements tend to capture his attention. I take my lead/intro from the figures and damages then explain the circumstances in subsequent paragraphs to sustain that interest […].The order in which I present my report and the importance I attach to it will have a deep impression on my reader (IP 9).

Again, the reporter's role performance as described above is a standard journalistic practice. Communication scholars still regard conflict as a news value (Archetti, 2007; Friend & Challenger, 2014; Fuller, 2010). This data supports existing conflict journalism literature

which holds that conflict attracts much of media attention than other subjects (Esman, 2004; Wheeler, 2005).

In contrast, and in the light of the newsroom ritual of moderation, some participants believe that their audiences do not deserve 'bad news' that turns 'good'. For them, any element of conflict that is capable of inciting the audience must be ignored as a measure towards building peace. They follow the doctrine of peace journalism (Hawkins, 2015; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013; Saleem & Hanan, 2014). Most of the participants say they take the issue of peace to heart and try to dampen the tension arising from violent conflict. They dismiss the idea of quoting figures of the dead and injured which are rarely verified.

From these responses, the participants clearly know that the framing of news which they undertake shapes the perceptions of their audiences. Some take advantage of the bad situation – violent conflict, to attract the audience while others ignore the somewhat attractive elements in the interest of the same audience.

6.3.3 Journalists' role in the Jos conflict in which 'indigenes' and 'settlers' or Muslims and Christians are active participants

The journalists' role as 'umpire' in the conflict between the rival ethnic and religious groups was examined in the context of reporting both sides – the thrust of objectivity (Seth & Matt, 2015). The understanding of this role was critical to this study because the researcher was interested in locating the brand of journalism that would fit into the practices of journalists who reported the Jos conflict in view of the volatile environment that has been polarised on ethnic and religious lines. This effort was grounded in a recent framing research which re-echoes that 'the decision to prefer one frame over another during news coverage depends both on internal and external factors that influence the media organisations at all times' (Rettig & Avraham, 2016, p. 113). Thus, the role of journalists can shape their experiences of the conflict.

While scholarship on media role in conflict points to the direction that media efforts should be geared toward preventing and managing conflict or promoting peaceful coexistence among individuals and social groups to minimise human suffering (Saleem & Hanan, 2014), it has not produced enough clarity on what constitutes the ideal media role. A number of societies have frequently advocated the need for a responsible media system in which journalists are required to combine 'patriotic spirit' with their professional ethics when reporting conflict (Morton & Aroney, 2016; Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). These standards of patriotism and ethical conduct are neither defined nor translated by those who promote them; hence the decision to apply them rests squarely with the journalists (Chari, 2007). In that circumstance, the ambiguity of media role in conflict prevention and management is established.

Research has revealed that although journalists tended to support the idea that their role entailed contributing to peace building, they had to grapple with how to apply it (Berganza-Conde et al., 2010; Howard, 2009; Panickar, 2001; Singh, 2013). Perhaps, this role implies an action that translates in the logic to 'get the facts straight' (Harbers & Broersma, 2014, p. 642), which conforms to mere 'journalistic conventions for defining and reporting stories' (Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013, p. 1042), and reinforces the Media-Conflict Resolution model that urges the media to 'adopt neutral position in conflict' (Saleem & Hanan, 2014, p. 192). Others may understand it from the standpoint of peace journalism research (e.g., Hawkins, 2015; Lynch & McGoldrick, 2013; Saleem & Hanan, 2014) committed to conflict resolution through the media.

This distinction has further compounded the role of the media in conflict because the journalist determines how it is performed. This role often manifests in the news the journalists construct but the audiences rarely notice it because they are unable to interpret the intentions of the journalists and recognise the interests such news stories serve (Howard,

2009, 2015; von Oppen, 2009). Often when mass media audiences recognise that certain media are credible, they tend to rely on them for their news. As argued by Harbers and Broersma (2014), 'trust in news stories does not depend that much on their actual correspondence with reality, but rather on the formal conventions by which news is 'packaged'' (p.642). That is why critics of journalistic objectivity have maintained that the news process is subjective because journalists have a strong influence on their reports which implies that truth is a social construction of the journalists.

Figure 6: 12 Word Cloud: Journalists' role in Jos conflict (Component of RQ2)

Figure 6: 13 Word Tree: Journalists' role in Jos conflict (Component of RQ2)

The word search focused on Muslims, Christians, Jos crisis, role, indigenes and settlers which were the key variables in Interview Question 7. The process produced the Word Cloud and Word Tree shown in Figure 6.12 and Figure 6.13. The Word Cloud captures Plateau, state, Jos, Muslim, Christian, conflict, people, ethnic, crisis, objective, reporting, journalist, majority, minority, try, shots, group, interest, Fulani, indigenes, aggressors, write, neutral and many others. The participants' responses revolved around these subjects. The major actors have been identified and their roles in the conflict defined.

A few phrases have been depicted from the Word Tree which derived from the responses of the journalists. The word 'Christians' was at the heart of the dialogue, but used in many contexts by the journalists of the two religious groups. For example, the contexts in which the journalists have been quoted in the Word Tree are examined thus:

I do not manipulate the <u>camera to the advantage of Christians or Muslims or even indigenes</u> and settlers (IP 21).

The statement is credited to a cameraman, a Christian, explaining his 'neutral ritual' in the conflict between Christians and Muslims or the 'indigenes' and 'settlers'. He denies ever using the camera to portray Muslims as the aggressors.

I also discovered as a person that the crisis in Plateau State is still a continuation of the struggle between the majority and the minority. Because of this line of thinking, <u>I have sympathy with the minority Christians</u> (IP 1).

The above statement is the context in which IP 1 understands the conflict in Jos, that is, the minority struggle against their oppression by the majority. He says although he is a Muslim, he has sympathy with the Christian minority. In other words, his role is that of an advocate of minority rights in Plateau State and the Middle Belt. Interestingly, this action suggests that his ethnic or regional alliance is stronger than that of his religion.

The Word Tree also captures, in part, the statement made by another Muslim reporter (IP 12 – HFS) who re-echoes Nigeria's south-west media concentration (African Media Development Initiative, 2005; Oso, 2011), and the fact that the print and broadcast media are largely owned by Christians. She notes:

> Nearly all the papers are owned by Christians. Our paper may be the only fish in the ocean.

She says this against the background that her newspaper, which is owned by a Muslim and circulated among the predominantly Hausa Fulani in the north, is believed to be performing the role of a crusader for the northern Muslims (African Media Development Initiative, 2005). This explains the orientation of the newspaper in trying to challenge the monopoly of the Southern press, known in Nigerian media research as 'Lagos-Ibadan axis' – a region dominated by Christians (M. A. Ojo & Lateju, 2010; Oso, 2011). According to A. O. Musa and Ferguson (2013, p. 9), it is a situation where 'the South towers over the North'.

Another reporter also explains his role thus:

> I am a Christian but I do not allow my faith to affect my professional calling [....] I have earned the confidence of both Christians and Muslims in Jos through my objective reportage (IP 6).

This reporter, like other participants claiming objectivity, insists that what he reports is a reflection of events that occur, which explains why he claims that he earns the confidence of the rival religious groups. But a report credited to his paper may not have earned him or his medium the confidence of the Muslim 'settlers'. A portion of the report reads:

> Majority of the casualties are Christians and non-indigenes who were suddenly attacked by the Muslim fundamentalists (IP 6 newspaper, September 24, 2001, p. 21).

In this circumstance, both the reporter and editor who are the main gatekeepers in the news production process have decided to publish the story to achieve the goal set by their organisation; that is, the Southern-Christian agenda (promoting the interests of indigenous

ethnic groups and the Christian South). It suggests that the gatekeepers and their organisation have conspired – through their report – to portray the Hausa-Fulani Muslims as the aggressors. By mere reading these lines of the story, the reader is able to grasp the message that the reporter had intended to convey – that 'innocent' Christian indigenes and non-indigenes (who comprised of Christians from the South) were attacked by the Hausa-Fulani Muslims. The consequence of the report could be harmful. This is why IP 22, in the analogy of a story (earlier cited) in which a person of an ethnic group is identified as having killed somebody of another ethnic group, says he would moderate it in these words: 'Two young men fought, and one was killed […] if that would help the society'. Conflict sensitive reporting scholars (e.g., Hoffmann, 2014) have argued that doing so would entrench peace in the community.

Most of the responses of the participants have suggested that their reports are objective. Many have claimed that their organisations' goals define their role in conflict. Some of them mediate conflict, while others defend their religions and the rights of social groups. But how this role is performed in order to achieve the needed balance and disinterestedness, as they have claimed, or the extent of their attachment to subjects or level of involvement in conflict, is of essence in this study. This is because a number of journalists simply follow the canons of journalism that emphasise the need for objectivity (Tong, 2015). Some respondents concur that since they have been trained to detach themselves from their subjects, they have tried to do so.

Furthermore, the purpose for which faith-based and 'ethnic-oriented' publications were selected was to meet the criteria for analysing their role in reporting the Muslim/Christian and 'settler/indigene' divides. These publications have tended to serve the interests of the Muslim and Christian communities on the one hand, and Muslim-dominated Hausa Fulani 'settlers' and the Christian-dominated 'indigenes' on the other (Aliyu et al.,

2012, p. 78; Dowd, 2014, p. 8; Taft & Haken, 2015, p. 63). The journalists who were identified by these labels have also shown understanding of their role in the Jos conflict. The goal of the researcher was to know how this role has been applied in their coverage of the conflict – whether their 'patriotic spirit' and ethical conduct have prevailed to support peacebuilding efforts and reduce human suffering (Saleem & Hanan, 2014). This was drawn on studies that argue that journalists recognise their role in conflict resolution but how this role is performed constitutes ambiguity given that they share common ideologies, beliefs and traditions with the warring social groups (Howard, 2009, 2015; Panickar, 2001; Singh, 2013).

IP 20 - FBM says this about the Muslim newspaper for which he is both reporter and editor:

> We started the publication as a result of underreporting of Islamic activities by the secular media, at least to serve as a voice for the Muslim Ummah […].We advance the cause of Islam but we don't criticise other religions. Rather what we do is to emphasise the areas that we have common interests. We have in our paper a portion dedicated to comparative religious studies – the way Christians look at things. We often realise that there are similarities in most of them. These are things that we advance in the paper. The paper does not instigate anyone. We advance only things that would unite, not things that would further show a kind of barrier between the two religions.

There is a manifestation of advancing 'the cause of Islam' in IP 20 – FBM's newspaper as the reporter has claimed. For example, it published a story which exonerated Muslims from the 2010 Christmas Eve bombings of Christian-dominated areas of Kabong and Angwan Rukuba, and blamed the attacks on the residents of the affected communities. The report reads:

> We can confirm that no Muslim is responsible for the bombings in Kabong and Angwan Rukuba for we are law-abiding citizens. The affected communities are responsible for these acts. They know their attackers (IP 20 – FBM newspaper, January 5, 2011, p.2).

This report which was credited to Jama'atu Nasir Islam (the umbrella body of Islamic organisations in Nigeria) preceded the setting up of the commission of enquiry by the Plateau State government to probe the attacks. It was a swift reaction to the wide rumours among

many Christians that the two settlements were bombed by their perceived enemies – the Hausa-Fulani Muslims. Since no group had been indicted by a judicial commission, or a court of competent jurisdiction, 'the cause of Islam' was defended before investigation into the bombings began, and the newspaper being 'a voice for the Muslim Ummah' (IP 20 – FBM), did not hesitate to publish it in order to instil in their readers (and those who may rely on their readers for information) the belief that the suspected Muslim attackers were innocent. The report claimed that the Muslims were 'law-abiding citizens' and had no knowledge of the bombings which was a proof of their innocence. The defence mechanism provided in this data is grounded in Herman and Chomsky's propaganda model, as discussed in previous chapter, which explains 'journalists' strategies of prediction […] that try to manage readers' expectations by framing visions (whether real or imagined) of future warfare' (Plotnick, 2012, p. 656). It means that whether Muslims were law-abiding as claimed, or law breakers as many Christians had alleged, the newspaper was on hand to perform its role of defending the Muslim Ummah as it demonstrated by publishing a yet-to-be-established report that tended to exonerate the Muslims.

Although the report cited in this study has not produced any evidence which contradicts IP 20 – FBM's claim that the newspaper does not criticise other religions, its goal to 'advance the cause of Islam' is hinged on a subjective orientation; that is, taking side with the Muslims by giving them a voice. The giving of voice is not unethical in journalism but what that voice stands for, especially in critical circumstances where there are differing opinions. Furthermore, when the respondent was asked to shed light on the 'giving of voice' during the interview, he looked up with some bit of guilt, nodded his head and smiled suggesting that some meaning had been embedded in the phrase. Since the interview involved the recording of verbal and non-verbal cues, the researcher implied that such actions meant that 'voice' was metaphorically used for 'positive portrayal of the Muslim Ummah'. This

defence falls short of the journalistic standard of 'telling it as it is' which the reporter had claimed the newspaper stood for.

IP 20 – FBM's response also provides an explanation against the perception about Islam as a religion associated with violence. He maintains that Islam signifies peace and its newspaper propagates this philosophy and serves as a platform for strengthening interfaith relations. He explains further how the newspaper performs this role:

> We reach out to the Christian community by covering some of their activities. We interview some Christian leaders on some of the burning issues arising from the conflict in Jos to provide their perspective about the issues, and when we come back we look at them from our perspective so that we will have a common understanding […] I recall that a Reverend Father (Catholic priest) was a columnist in our newspaper until he left for further studies abroad.

IP 20 – FBM's newspaper has demonstrated this coverage of interfaith issues including the activities of the Christian bloc. A front page news titled 'Bishop leads Christians to Jos Central Mosque' was reported in the monthly newspaper in March 2011. It was the visit of the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) to the mosque in the aftermath of the 2010 ethno-religious conflict. Also, the priest being referred to in this newspaper has had his article published on the essence of interfaith dialogue in Jos (November, 2012, p.8). It was his first and only article in the newspaper contrary to the reporter's claim that he maintained a column to achieve the newspaper's goal of finding a common ground in terms of the teachings and traditions of Islam and Christianity. Due to non-circulation of the newspaper on a regular basis, a random selection of three editions of the newspaper (June 2010, February 2011, April 2015) was undertaken to identify topics of 'comparative religious studies' as claimed by IP 20 FBM. However, none of the samples contained these topics.

From the foregoing, the data has confirmed IP 20 FBM newspaper's commitment to the cause of Islam, and that it does not criticise other religions. But the data dismisses the

reporter's claim that the newspaper makes comparison of religious ideologies through critical analysis because such platform does not exist. There is a distinction between comparative analysis of two traditions or teachings (which, expectedly, the newspaper should undertake) and the opinions of individuals in the newspaper which are at the discretion of the audience to determine their merits.

IP 8 - FBC, a reporter and editor of a Christian newspaper, also recounts the role his medium has performed in resolving the conflict between Christians and Muslims despite his claim that 'the church, most of the time, is at the receiving end'. He remarks:

> We realised that the church is not given a voice in the media during conflict [….] You hardly read about issues that affect the church on the pages of newspapers neither do you see them in the mainstream media [….] Our paper therefore, speaks the voice of the church. We report the crisis as it affects the church particularly, and the Christian community.

As quoted above, IP 8 - FBC corroborates the concept of 'voice' for which his Muslim counterpart offered a definition at the outset – this time around, it is the voice of the Christian community. IP 8 - FBC maintains that while the newspaper speaks that voice, it ensures that it reflects the gospel of Jesus Christ. He continues:

> Our mandate is to explain Christian response to violence. Ours is not about putting up a defence. When we need to call a spade, a spade, we have to do it. If the Christians trigger violence we tell the whole world that they are the culprits and when the Muslims trigger it we say it as it is. This is our witness to the gospel of Christ […] But when we write about conflict, we don't aggravate the situation.

The denial of 'voice' which IP 8 – FBC re-echoes may be understood as the total neglect of the activities of Christians or issues pertaining to their general wellbeing, while other social groups are reported by the secular media. In that sense, the claim is contestable. While the concept of 'voice' appears ambiguous in this context, it connotes 'favourable' narratives about Christians and their wellbeing or the 'positive' portrayal of the Christian image in the secular media. It does not imply the absence of news on Christianity. This is because the

media in Nigeria tend to publish or broadcast information about different issues and events including religious groups (Adebanwi, 2004; Ralph Afolabi Akinfeleye, 2003; E. Ojo, 2003; Pate, 2011). As the reporter declares that his newspaper now 'speaks the voice of the church' and reports how the Jos conflict 'affects the church particularly, and the Christian community', it means the paper may be blind to aspects that affect other groups or institutions. It may focus on the plight of Christians in conflict areas and their response to conflict. This is what news framing entails; that is, 'every journalist understands that stories need angles' (Phillips, 2015, p. 8).

A story published in IP 8 – FBC newspaper (August, 2015, pp. 1-2) demonstrates the above news framing. In it the reporter gives account of his visit to some areas of the North-East which have been reclaimed from the Boko Haram insurgents by the Nigerian military. Rather than report about the activities of the insurgents in the affected communities where Muslims, Christians and the adherents of other faiths have suffered loss, the newspaper framed the story in such a way as to show that Christians were the most hit. It was supplemented with pictures of burnt houses which were reportedly owned by Christians and the houses of Muslims in the same community which were neither vandalised nor burnt. The story was introduced thus:

> Christians in parts of Nigeria's North-East where Boko Haram insurgents have unleashed terror on communities are still mourning the loss of their loved ones and property [….] (August 2015, pp. 1-2).

This is the kind of 'voice' that IP 8 – FBC speaks about – a voice that attracts sympathy for Christians in the North-East. It is a voice that ignores the suffering of other victims outside the Christian bloc because only the plight of Christians 'affects the church' (IP 8 – FBC).

Again, there is some bit of contradiction in IP 8 – FBC's comments. He claims that 'if the Christians trigger violence we tell the whole world that they are the culprits and when the

Muslims trigger it we say it as it is'. But in subsequent response he admits that 'when it comes to the interest of the church; where I feel we are at fault or *Christians are at fault*, I would rather *not delve into that* (italics- researcher's emphasis)'. In the first scenario he tries to demonstrate an objective culture which treats his Christian community and the Muslims equally – a journalistic philosophy of 'getting both sides' (Fürsich, 2002, p. 59). He claims balance and fairness. In contrast, this culture is compromised when 'Christians are at fault' because he would 'not delve into' the matter in terms of news coverage. Thus, he is likely to conceal some information that may implicate Christians or the church. For example, one of the newspaper editions (January 2011, p.7) reported that an attack was 'allegedly masterminded by Hausa-Fulani elements' (who are predominantly Muslims), whereas in the entire publication, the 'indigenous elements' (who are predominantly Christians) were not identified as suspected culprits. In the same paper (p.12), Christian youths were warned by a cleric not to take laws into their hands but engage in dialogue with members of other religions.

Both participants' responses reveal that the media which they represent recognise their role – giving a 'voice' to Muslims and Christians because the secular media are alleged to have underreported their activities. But J. D. Galadima (2010) has described the media coverage of the Jos conflict as adequate – that is, conflict actors including Muslims and Christians have been reported by all segments of the media. Thus, the research evidence contradicts the claim by both religious groups that they have been underreported.

Two other participants (IP 12 - HFS and IP 3 - IEG) commented on their role in the conflict between the 'indigenes' and 'settlers' which is often linked to religion – chiefly because the 'indigenes' are predominantly Christians while the 'settlers' are predominantly Muslims (Dowd, 2014; Taft & Haken, 2015). They represent a segment of the media that is widely believed to align with ethnic groups – the Hausa Fulani versus the 'indigenes'. These

perceptions have led to the labelling of the publications as 'Hausa Fulani paper' and 'the paper for the natives' making the people to cast doubt on the integrity of the journalists who report for the newspapers. Zeleng (2008, p. 5) writes about the Hausa-Fulani paper which IP 12 – HFS represents:

> […], a newspaper that has continuously maintained strong anti-Plateau and anti-Christian sentiments […] was joined in the crusade by some Hausa services of the BBC, VOA and Deutsche Velle, all of whom totally misrepresented the crisis to the outside world.

This negative image has adversely affected the journalists reporting for the newspaper. IP 12 – HFS explains its extent:

> At times when you go for an assignment, and you introduce yourself, they look at you somehow – with great suspicion. They are sceptical. They are careful. They choose their words carefully. And when you go to certain communities, you have to be careful – you don't really have to introduce yourself because you know that you may be a target.

But despite this negative impression about the newspaper among the indigenous ethnic groups, IP 12 - HFS claims that the newspaper coverage has not been one-sided in favour of the Hausa-Fulani as it was widely acclaimed. What this participant admitted was that some columns in the newspaper might have prompted that reaction.

> They said our paper was anti-Plateau. But one thing we came to realise was they were more critical about some of the columns than the reports. The truth is that none of them could actually accuse us directly of taking sides in our reports.

However, there are two dimensions to this claim. First, that the newspaper coverage is not sympathetic to its owners – the Hausa-Fulani, is a misrepresentation of fact. Second, much of what the newspaper is accused of emerged from opinion articles written by commentators and columnists rather than reports as the participant has noted. These two scenarios manifest in the following story published in the newspaper.

The latest genocidal bloodbath in Plateau State was the fifth. The fourth was the Yelwan Shendam massacre which occurred in February 2004 [...] in which Christian tribes in Plateau State massacred Muslim men, women and children in their hundreds during a two-day orgy of violence (IP 12 – HFS newspaper, December 1, 2008, p.58).

The story indicts all the 'Christian tribes' in Plateau State over the purported plot to wipe out Muslims – the Hausa-Fulani, men, women and children who profess Islam. Since these allegations against Christians were not verified which is a common practice among many journalists (Weaver & McCombs, 1980), they constituted the 'reality' of their readers. Although IP 12 – HFS' response suggests an equal representation of reality that is favourable to both ethnic groups in conflict, the overwhelming patronage of the newspaper by the Hausa Fulani ethnic group, as testified by the interviewee, shows that the paper is sympathetic to the ethnic group because it (group) claimed that other media did not grant it access. IP 12 - HFS reveals thus:

I had an interview with the chairman of *Miyeti-Allah* (a Hausa Fulani group) and he said his group had met other reporters several times; and had gone to the Nigerian Union of Journalists for coverage and submission of press statements but they did not respond.

The 'response' which *Miyeti-Allah* later got from the interviewee's newspaper may have been favourable because it approached the newspaper that could give it a 'voice'. The group and the newspaper readers were likely to derive satisfaction because, as Phillips (2015, p. 24) says, 'it matters where it (information) comes from because we are forced to take it on trust'.

Participant IP 3 - IEG was asked about his role in the conflict. He revealed that while many journalists found the Jos conflict appealing by daily reporting casualty figures to hit the front page, his reports largely focused on developmental issues in which he rebranded the state by showcasing its endowments and the hospitality of the people. His goal was to move the attention of the audiences away from the much publicized violence. Existing research reveals that this strategy worked for many conflict journalists who tried to avoid the

imposition of government agenda on them to draw attention of their audiences to other news materials (Herman & Chomsky, 1988). However, the participant was not silent on the issues involving the visitors and their hosts and used his paper to separate the 'good guys' from 'bad guys' (Ruigrok, 2008) and to identify with the victims (Bell, 1996, 1997). IP 3 - IEG offers reasons for his action:

> I am a middle-belter (the geopolitical zone where Jos – Plateau State is situated) and I have a stake in this state. You don't operate as a journalist in a vacuum; you operate within a society and the interest of that state must be protected. Therefore, issues that have to do with the interest of Plateau, sometimes I downplay them. The three major ethnic groups in this country want to swallow this state; I won't allow that.

His response evolved from his belief that if he fails to 'defend' the interest of the ethnic groups in Plateau State – the 'indigenes', the 'settlers' might take over the state which is the political hub of the middle belt, the zone from where he originated. For him, his news frames demonstrate this solidarity with the indigenous ethnic groups; and having lived in Jos for over 18 years and reported the conflict since it began, he was convinced that the Hausa Fulani 'settlers' were the aggressors. He explicitly illustrates this role of separating the 'good guys' from the 'bad guys':

> Whenever I pick a story about killings in Plateau, I always go direct and say: 'Fulani herdsmen […]' to describe the culprits. Some of my colleagues would rather use the phrase, 'unknown gunmen' or 'alleged Fulani herdsmen', when in reality they know the aggressors. I know it is not the natives that are killing themselves. I am on ground and I know this is the situation here.

He continues:

> I don't pretend about it […] Normally, I try to downplay the issue of the killing of the Hausa Fulani in Jos in particular. In 2001, for instance, I downplayed the killings at Bauchi Road. I remember the soldiers and the mobile police were drafted in. They pursued some of these boys to their fathers' compounds; brought them out and shot them. That story was majorly reported by […*paper identity withheld*]. For those of us who were Christians, that story did not find its way into our papers. Rather, I took my own story from the point that the Hausa community in Jos are trying to eliminate the

natives to take over their land. So in my writings, I try to defend the interest of the natives and Christianity which is my faith.

IP 3 - IEG's concept of 'downplay' which runs through his narratives connotes a framing in which the substance of the news regarded as 'important' and which might be a true reflection of the conflict is ignored or presented in the manner that it loses its taste. His sympathy with fellow minority ethnic groups of the middle belt and his Christian religion has sufficiently manifested in his claim.

A report published in his newspaper on September 10, 2001 points to the same direction. It reads:

> The conflagration that engulfed Jos [...] raged on [...] with the number of victims reaching an astronomical rate. Mutilated bodies littered the streets as students, traders many of them Igbos, as well as indigenes grieved over the loss of dear ones [...] the proprietors of the crises, described as Muslim fundamentalists engaged [...] (pp.1-2).

Two other papers of this orientation that reported the same conflict give their accounts:

> The looted shops are mainly owned by Igbo traders most of them located near the Jos Central Mosque. Millions of Naira were also stolen from the shops [....] The biggest Catholic Church in Jos. Our Lady of Fatima has been razed down by fire. This is in addition to COCIN (Church of Christ in Nigeria) and the Assembly of God Church that were razed down on Friday (XXXX, September 10, 2001, p.1).

> The Police Commissioner delayed the release of policemen to quill the riot [...] the Hausas reportedly had field day killing the natives and southerners because there was no police assistance [...] The Muslims gained upper hand as they hack (ed) down any indigene or Christian on sight while the indigenes were armed with sticks only. It is still baffling to many people how the Muslims who were praying in the mosque got access to knives, machetes and other dangerous weapons (YYYY, September 24, 2001, p.1)

The underlying role of journalists as defined by the participants is to serve the interests of religious groups (IP 20 - FBM, IP 8 - FBC) that claimed to have been underreported by the secular media and the Hausa Fulani (as implied in the case of *Miyeti-Allah* in IP 12 - HFS

interview) as well as the cause of the 'indigenes' (IP 3 - IEG). This affirms that media role in conflict is a social construction of reality by journalists who bear witness to the conflict.

Journalistic role has received much attention within journalism studies in the last decades because there is no consensus on 'how journalism ought to be (ie journalistic role conception) and how journalism is performed (ie how those roles manifest in practice)' (Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015, p. 1). The journalists' role, as testified by them and manifested in the stories cited, includes 'neutral reporting' and 'active participation' in the Jos conflict. They have demonstrated these conditions in their claims and the reports they produced. Previous research on journalistic role conception had predicted that journalists who perceived their role in terms of disseminating information would write their stories from the onlookers' point of view, while those who believed their role required interpreting the events would give their accounts as stakeholders (Cohen, 1963; Shoemaker & Reese, 1996). Thus, this study follows the logic that what constitutes news, or any piece of work produced by journalists for their audiences, are a reflection of journalistic roles (T. Hanitzsch & Mellado, 2011). But beyond that, it examines the role conceptions of the conflict journalists – what they say or claim about their roles in the Jos conflict, in the light of their role performance – what they do, to understand 'the relationship between what journalists think they should do and what they actually perform within the structure of a newsroom and a particular system' (Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015, p. 2) .

Among other factors, there are organisational and political systems within the journalists' work environment that have shaped their role conceptions and performance. For example, the role of IP 8 –FBC and IP 20 – FBM in the conflict suggest that their goal is to 'defend' Christianity and Islam (the organisations they represent) because their organisational 'voice' has been silenced and therefore, should be heard. While they both claim to be neutral (role conception), their actual work manifests what may be regarded as an advancement of

the 'cause' of their organisations (role performance). Also, IP3 IEG's affiliation with the 'indigenes', because of the politically-motivated Middle Belt agenda which binds them, has defined his role conception. This role is consistent with his role performance. He says he does not pretend about taking sides with the 'indigenes', the outcome of which manifests in the report of September 10, 2001 that blamed the conflict on 'Muslim fundamentalists' without substantial evidence.

Drawn on constructivist epistemology that 'meaning is not discovered but constructed' (Crotty, 1998, p. 42), and given the purpose for conducting the interviews – to 'rely as much as possible on the participants' views' (Creswell, 2014, p. 8) of the Jos conflict, the findings show that their 'neutral' role conceptions (claimed by many) do not conform to their role performance. They have been participants in the conflict.

6.3.4 Journalistic objectivity: How has it been applied or compromised?

The researcher sought to investigate how the participants have applied the standard of journalistic objectivity in their coverage of the conflict. They were also asked about the critical circumstances of the conflict in which they could compromise journalistic objectivity (Interview Question 9). This engagement on objectivity became necessary because it is the guiding principle of most journalists (von Oppen, 2009) – including Nigerian journalists, and its advocates have maintained that it should be attained as much as possible (Muñoz-Torres, 2012). Although objectivity is a universal standard, journalistic role conceptions and performance from which this practice emerged, are understood based on cultural contexts (Berganza-Conde et al., 2010; Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015). The journalists' 'individuality and creativity which Hellmueller and Mellado (2015, p. 3) have identified as key variables in measuring practice are at the heart of this analysis.
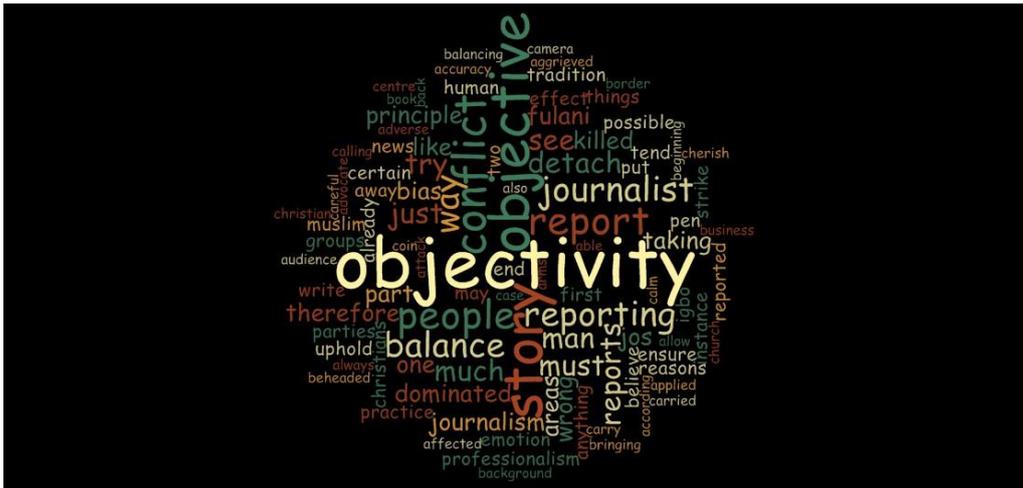
Figure 6: 14 Word Cloud: Journalists' objectivity (Component of RQ2)
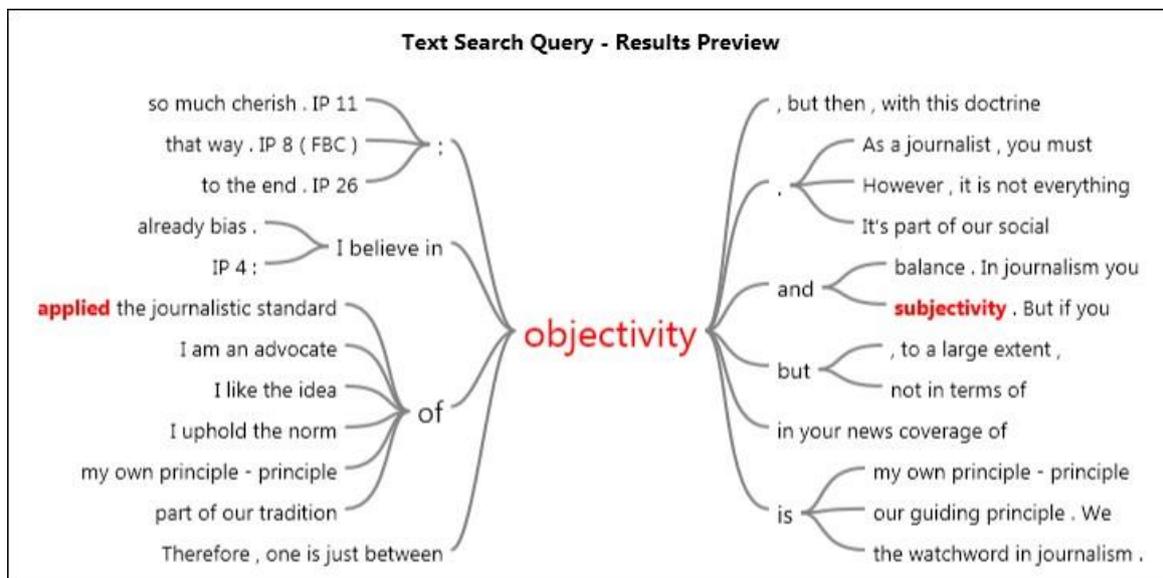
Figure 6: 15 Word Tree: Journalists' objectivity (Component of RQ2)

Based on the word search which included objectivity, subjectivity, Jos conflict, applied, and journalists; the above Word Cloud and Word Tree emerged. Both results reflect the subject under examination – objectivity. A few responses captured in Figure 6.15 suffice:

I believe in objectivity but not in terms of reporting conflict (IP 4).

I am an advocate of objectivity [….] Try to strike a balance (IP 5).

I like the idea of objectivity. However, it is not everything that a journalist sees that he/she reports for security reasons (IP 6).

> I uphold the norm of objectivity but to a large extent; since we are human and have our sentiments, there is the tendency that our practices may not be objective (IP 16).

The remarks of the participants referred to in the above examples are most instructive. By their affirmation they have accepted the standard of objectivity which can only apply to certain conditions. As a social phenomenon that is sensitive, and which should be reported with restraint (S. T. Lee, 2010; Pintak, 2014), conflict is not one of such conditions. They re-echo Bell's (1997) argument that objective reporting deepens conflict because when contents are not moderated under the guise of reporting both sides, or describing the situation 'the way it is' (Blaagaard, 2013; Marken, 2007), the conflict may escalate.

In their attempts to explain how objectivity is achieved in reporting the conflict, participants IP8 – FBC, IP12 – HFS and IP 20 – FBM have claimed absolute adherence to the standard. However, some of their comments have suggested the contrary. For example, IP 20 - FBM's revelation about his newspaper's engagements with priests of the Christian bloc implied an effort to achieve balance (Muslim and Christian perspectives) – which is the key driver of objectivity (Stenvall, 2008). But he remarked that as a Muslim, his faith was paramount and would not be compromised. It must be defended. In other words, in reporting the conflict, he is, first and foremost, a Muslim; and then a journalist. The outcome of his 'attachment' to Islam would be subjective rather than objective. He makes this analogy:

> If you hit my daughter mistakenly with your car and she eventually dies; when you ask for forgiveness I will grant it because I believe it was destined to happen. But if you blaspheme the faith, the prophet, I won't forget that. It is the teaching of the religion, and I have agreed to submit myself to the religion. It is my duty to defend the religion.

The respondent's answer above indicates that his faith can inhibit his journalistic standard of objectivity. And coming from a highly religious society, because Nigerians were once ranked 'the most religious people in the world with 90 per cent believing in God, praying regularly and affirming their readiness to die on behalf of their belief' (Agbiboa & Okem, 2011, p.

112), this identity is likely to manifest in the product of the religious journalist. IP 8 - FBC admits that despite his Christian faith which he defends, achieving objectivity is almost impossible:

> You know we are human beings and honestly sometimes our emotions fail us [….] When it comes to the interest of the church; where I feel we are at fault or Christians are at fault, I would rather not delve into that.

IP 12 - HFS also concurs:

> The truth is that we are human. Journalists are human. There are times that I would be so eager to do a particular story; I want to give someone a voice. Why? Because I'm closed to the person, or the person is from my community, or from my religion. I'm eager to give him a voice. It happens. It has happened several times.

Their responses suggest that personal and organisational interests, as explained by Hellmueller and Mellado (2015) have defined their role. They have identified with the subjects they reported and failed to 'allow the facts speak for themselves'. IP 3 - IEG also reveals thus:

> I don't report about the settlers, and I don't pretend about it. I wonder why people who should be in their own homeland came to settle in their (indigenes') midst and have turned their guns against their hosts.

IP 3 - IEG has demonstrated courage by admitting that his reports have been one-sided, driven by an ideology that serves the interest of the 'indigenes'. This robust subjectivity is said to characterize news framing as argued by Greenwald (2014):

> Every news article is the product of all highly subjective cultural, nationalistic, and political assumptions. And journalists serve one faction's interest or another […].The relevant distinction is not between journalists who candidly reveal their opinions and those who conceal them, pretending they have none (p. 231).

From the foregoing, a new thinking towards defining the role of journalists in conflict is evolving. Journalists have not applied the principle of objectivity in reporting the Jos conflict.

6.4 RQ 3: What strategies did journalists employ in reporting the Jos conflict?

The researcher required journalists' responses about their unique ways of reporting the conflict or their strategies of constructing reality. The Interview Questions 10-14 were formulated to elicit response on this.

Question 10 dwelt on ethics. The concept of an engagement 'behind the scene' referred to the conduct of journalists which did not conform to global best practices. Since factors such as poor remuneration of Nigerian journalists and the absence of insurance policy had tended to influence their work (Pratt & McLaughlin, 1990), the researcher wanted to know if conflict journalists had received 'rewards' from conflict actors in exchange for 'favourable' news against the 'other'.

The participants were also asked about peace-building initiatives which journalists could promote in Jos to minimise human suffering (Question 11). In it, the participants were required to demonstrate this by sharing their experiences if they believed in peace journalism, conflict sensitive reporting or human rights journalism (Howard, 2009; S. T. Lee, 2010; Rodgers, 2012, 2013; Shaw, 2016). It was also inspired by the new orientation in journalism that members of the International Federation of Journalists – the largest organisation of journalists in the world – ought to promote peace in their various media (Ellis, 2012, cited in Singh, 2013, p. 113). In Question 12, they were required to suggest ways that would improve conflict reporting in Jos and guarantee professionalism.

Question 13 examined the capacity of regulatory agencies to check the conduct of journalists who flawed the law by aligning with warring groups in the Jos conflict. The National Broadcasting Commission and the Nigerian Press Council were particularly identified as the agencies that regulate broadcast and print media contents in the country. The researcher, in Question 14, wanted to gain an understanding about the role of media owners and gatekeepers in the news production process because they are believed to exert

some level of influence on the journalists (N. Godfrey Danaan, 2007; Strömbäck & Karlsson, 2011).

Figure 6: 16 Word Cloud: Journalists' strategies of news framing

Figure 6: 17 Word Tree: Journalists' strategies of news framing

The word search focused on: way of reporting, way of writing, strategies, unprofessional practices, behind the scene, de-escalate violence, peace building, professional honour, regulatory institutions, media owners, and interfere.

The way they report the conflict varies because their role also differs. Their overarching interests have made them to devise a means to express them – either in support

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of peace through 'moderation' (IP 22), or by revealing the facts unadulterated, or instigating one party against the other. These are the strategies they have adopted. Those whose role in the conflict is geared towards promoting the Christian indigenous cause have consistently drawn the attention of their audiences to what may be regarded as the wicked and intolerable actions of the Muslim Hausa Fulani 'settlers' who want to reap where they have not sown. This strategy of portraying the 'settlers' as the 'bad guys' and 'indigenes' as 'good guys' (Ruigrok, 2008), is revealed in the responses of this category of journalists.

> In my writings, I condemn people who know that this place is not theirs but they are still fighting over it. The fact is that you have to respect your host. For instance, I am in Plateau, and I know that I am not a Plateau man despite that I was born in Plateau State. I know that I am going back one day to my state of origin because I come from another state. Why should people forget their roots and then come to fight their hosts? I have a quarrel with it; and in all my write-ups, I have insisted that, 'look, respect your host. They are not asking you to leave; all they are telling you is to respect their norms, respect their customs [….]'(IP 15).

IP 23 also puts it succinctly:

> I am fully attached to the story I write […].There is no doubt that I take side with the indigenes who have suffered in the hands of their visitors.

Their strategy includes the writing of news which describes, explains and colours the 'facts' to tell the story of the 'indigenes'; and creating sensational headlines that suggest an act of violence meted out to 'indigenes' by the 'settlers' (for most newspaper journalists). Although the cameramen claim to be neutral in their representation of visuals, their strategy of 'stealing' the shots of subjects without their consent for their TV stations (IP 17; IP 21) may be an expression of indigenous interests. This is not because they are 'indigenes' but the owners of all the TV stations in Jos (apart from the 2 government owned TV stations which are headed by 'indigenous' managers), are Christians who can influence the shots.

The strategies of news framing of the conflict by Muslim journalists are implied. While they have consistently argued that they do not take side with any party in conflict,

especially the Muslim 'settlers', their remarks have pointed to the direction that they defend 'their own'. They seem to be unaware of the weights of their responses. For example, IP 12 – HFS notes that being human, she is

> [….] eager to give someone a voice [...] because the person is from my community or from my religion.

Likewise, IP 7 claims, 'I write the way things happen. I don't insinuate. I don't editorialise. I don't put in my opinion [….]', but he acknowledges that he 'is just between objectivity and subjectivity'. It means neither objectivity (which he upholds), nor subjectivity (which he dismisses in theory) applies to his work. In that sense, he might have covered his strategies of reporting the conflict that serve an interest (perhaps, the Muslim interest because he is a Muslim).

Most of the journalists deny being engaged in practices 'behind the scene' but some of them have admitted the following:

> There are a lot of officials out there that we have personal relationship with. The stories in which their interests are not protected are often stepped down (IP 6)

IP 5 also recalls that,

> […] an incident had happened which I covered and was ready to publish it. But when a major player in the case came to plead that the story be discarded, I succumbed to that pressure.

These responses have satisfied the curiosity of the researcher who sought to know their practices 'behind the scene'. Both scenarios confirm Howard's (2009) findings that political elites were exploiting the media in societies considered to be vulnerable. Theorists of conflict sensitive reporting have therefore, recommended that when faced with this challenge, conflict journalists should ensure that they give only 'none-elite sources voice and space' (Singh, 2013, p. 121).

The journalists believe that they can support ongoing peace building efforts in Jos by detaching themselves from the conflict and avoiding the instigation of social groups.

At a glance, the Word Tree (Figure 6. 17) shows how media owners interfere, or not interfere, with their work. The concept of moderation of content introduced by IP 22 is advanced by media owners whose interests the journalists tend to serve. Some reporters have revealed that their editors and managers often alter their reports on the conflict while others enjoy relative independence.

6.5 Participants' level of journalism training and editorial engagements

In Question 15, 16 and 17, attention was shifted from the thematic discourse to the participants. The researcher was interested in the level or type of training they had received which earned them the job (journalism) they were undertaking, especially conflict reporting. They were also required to identify other editorial responsibilities they had undertaken. The essence was to understand their professional backgrounds which could affect their conduct, especially their ability to analyse and report conflict. Another factor which was considered relevant in determining the quality of news content was the circumstance that led to the deployment of the journalists to conflict news beat – whether it was accidental or desired, which could also define productivity. The engagement about editorial responsibilities was aimed at establishing their career progression in journalism or exposure to journalistic skills.

Figure 6: 18 Word Cloud: Participants' level of journalism training and editorial engagements

Figure 6: 19 Word Tree: Participants' level of journalism training and editorial engagements

The word search included: degree, diploma, conflict journalist, editorial responsibilities and conflict reporting. Of the 26 participants, 19 have acquired either a master's degree, bachelor's degree, higher national diploma or a national diploma in Mass Communication or Journalism. It means that 7 participants have different academic qualifications ranging from English to History, Political Science and Theatre Arts. Based on the minimum standard of a diploma in Mass Communication/Journalism for the practice of journalism in Nigeria, most of the participants have met this criterion.

As may be identified in the Word Cloud, the participants have covered the Jos conflict for a minimum of 5 years (not later than 2010) and other news beats. Many of them desired to become journalists before they ventured into journalism while a few of them joined the profession because there were no preferred employment opportunities to them.

6.6 Summary of Analysis

The interview participants (IP 1-26) offered explanations on their lived experiences as conflict journalists in the city of Jos. The data obtained from the interview has established journalists' role in the nearly two decades of ethno-religious violence.

The respondents identified three major factors that have influenced their work – the residential segregation of the city; pressure from conflict actors, editors and news sources, and their constant witness to violence. These are believed to have affected the way they report the conflict due to limited access to information, internal and external influences and the cumulative trauma emerging from their encounter with violence. The journalists described these as the challenges confronting them but claimed that a number of strategies had been adopted to surmount them. These measures include the reporters' reliance on eye-witness accounts, and a shift from conflict to development-centred events aimed at diverting the attention of editors/conflict actors who demand certain conflict narratives to achieve many interests (e.g., casualty figures). They also involve the media organisations' strategy of assigning reporters to conflict areas dominated by the reporters' religious/ethnic groups to ensure their safety, and enable them to obtain first-hand information about the conflict.

Drawing on this data, the participants have dismissed the ideal of objectivity both in practice and principle. Although the journalists desired objectivity, they consistently demonstrated some degree of involvement in the conflict by using their media to 'defend the religion (Islam)' or resist any attempt to 'blaspheme the faith, the prophet' (IP 20 - FBM);

report attacks on the church while refusing to delve into the issues when 'Christians are at fault' (IP 8 - FBC); 'give someone a voice […] because the person is from my community or from my religion' (IP 12 - HFS); deny the 'settlers' access to voice their opinion because they 'came to settle in their (indigenes') midst and have turned their guns against their hosts' (IP 3 - IEG). This is not a role of mediation but that of advancing a cause which the favoured warring party has initiated. The practice neither suggests peace journalism nor human rights journalism. It is a brand of journalism evolving from this study.

The findings show that journalists have employed different strategies at the stages of selecting and 'moderating' frames (referred to in this study as 'newsroom experience') (see Chapter 6). Some of the strategies include their choice of words to 'water down' or 'downplay' conflict narratives when tension is intense; articulating the views of their affiliate groups in conflict while silencing others; writing the intro/lead that attracts sympathy for their affiliate social groups; writing about alleged killings of members of their affiliate groups without any evidence. The concept of affiliation of the journalists with warring groups is established because they have been a part of, and are believed to align with the ethnic and religious community. As a consequence, much of what they claim to be objective is contradictory. Rather, they have immersed themselves in the conflict to carry on the war on behalf of conflict actors – a situation which suggests that they were participants in the conflict, not onlookers or disinterested observers.

Chapter Seven

Qualitative Content Analysis: The 2001 Conflict

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the contents of two newspapers – the *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch*, and compares the strategies employed by the journalists of both publications in the framing of the 2001 Jos conflict. The analysis follows the chronology of the conflict believed to be the most violent in the history of Jos – the 2001, 2008 and 2010 conflicts (Ishaku, 2012; Taft & Haken, 2015) . Although there were several civil disturbances in Jos in the 1940s, 1990s and after 2010, the three years' episodes analysed in this study were significant because of the spates of violence which resulted in the loss of lives and property during these periods (Krause, 2011). In this chapter, the first conflict is analysed to establish how journalists were implicated in it and the role they played.

In 2001, on September 7, the violence that broke out in the Congo Rusia area of Jos spread to nearly all parts of the city. It became the first major armed conflict in Jos in which lives were lost (Ishaku, 2012; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016). The accounts of this incident in *The Punch* and *Daily/Weekly Trust* have been analysed to show how both newspapers spontaneously responded to it, and to know whose interests they tended to serve in the conflict. Were the journalists objective or goal-oriented at the outset? Did they change their reporting patterns as the conflict prevailed? Did their news frames (based on language use) implicate certain groups identified in the conflict? This entailed examining five succeeding editions of the newspapers that were published after the incident occurred. As U. Bello (2014, p. 72) argues that journalists' reports are largely 'based on other mediated discourses and perspectives from which they create a model of presentation for their audience, conforming to their own values', this analysis focused on how these values and interests were embedded in

the texts. This phase of work offered the researcher the knowledge of the journalists' role performance in the conflict – how their narratives were constructed and the goals they achieved.

As explained in Chapter 5 (the methodology, pp.105-107), the choice of these papers was based on their ranking in Nigeria's Christian South and Muslim North, each of which represents the ideology of its region (ethnic structure) and religion (Egwu, 2001). *The Punch* is one of the leading papers in the 'Lagos-Ibadan axis' – the Christian-dominated South (African Media Development Initiative, 2005; Ralph Afolabi Akinfeleye, 2003; L. Oso, D. Odunlami, & T. Adaja, 2011), while the *Daily/Weekly Trust* emerged in the North to challenge the 'Lagos-Ibadan axis' press which was believed to have relegated the North (comprised of Hausa Fulani Muslim majority) to the background (African Media Development Initiative, 2005; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013). Being a leading publication in the South and, to some extent, Nigeria's most widely read newspaper – with approximately 60,000 to 80,000 daily circulation - *The Punch* is said to be very popular (Zeng & Akinro, 2013). Likewise, the *Daily/Weekly Trust* has gained prominence in the North and it is the largest newspaper in the region having a daily circulation figure of 11,672 (A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013). Based on their relevance in the regions and consequent influence on Christianity and Islam – the religions of most Nigerians (Dowd, 2014; Egwu, 2001, 2015), it became necessary to examine their contents in relation to the Jos conflict involving the Christian 'indigenes' and the Muslim Hausa Fulani 'settler' community.

While the interview data set contained the views of conflict journalists about what their work entailed, the content analysis data set (obtained from the newspapers) showed how they actually performed. This approach to qualitative enquiry, as argued by Schreier (2012), was aimed at knowing what was said and how it was said.

The analysis followed the logic that the use of language is significant in qualitative content analysis (QCA), especially when the data consists of newspaper reports, editorials, commentaries, amongst others (González-Carriedo, 2014). Newspaper journalists who are often the major language users make choices of words, phrases or sentences from a variety of codes to construct reality. Such a construction emanates from the ideology of these journalists or their media. It is a process which produces narratives that express a less complex situation or a complex one that requires some form of interpretation (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005; Van Dijk, 2012). Thus, the qualitative content analyst requires an overarching search lens that can systematically identify the properties embedded in the text, to explain them within a given context.

In this analysis of the *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch*, the 'researcher-generated construct' (Saldana, 2016, p. 4) pertained to the writers' linguistic choices – how newspaper narratives about conflict actors ('indigenes' and 'settlers', Christians and Muslims) were constructed and the meanings ascribed to them. It focused on news headlines, leads and the body of news, feature and the editorial because they formed the important portions of the newspaper content (U. Bello, 2014). Throughout the exercise, where a word – noun, verb, adjective or a given expression – suggested that the journalists were 'doing something' beyond telling a story, which may have translated to media logic, the researcher paid attention to it to decipher its meaning (Cottle, 2006). In that sense, the researcher examined the less obvious but problematic constructs in both publications which described the same conflict situation. The essence of this comparative analysis was to understand how the models of objectivity, mediatisation and framing manifested in the newspaper contents given that both publications had distinct goals.

7.2 September 7, 2001 conflict (Samples: September 8/9 – 13, 2001)

7.2.1 *The Daily/Weekly Trust*

Based on the study's inclusion and exclusion criteria for the selection of samples, 5 editions that followed the outbreak of violence were analysed to reveal how the conflict narratives were constructed and transmitted, and the likely conditions that tended to 'put pictures in the heads' of the readers (Lippmann, 1922, p. 3). Both the *Daily Trust* and *Weekly Trust* were in circulation before and after September 7. In particular, the *Weekly Trust* of September 7-13 had been published before the incident occurred hence the exclusion of that edition. The *Weekly Trust* that followed was dated September 14-20. In it, the writers presented the 'facts' about how and why the conflict began. It met the criterion of inclusion being the first *Weekly Trust* that reported the violence. The second, third, fourth, and fifth samples were the *Daily Trust* of September 10, 11, 12 and 13. The newspaper was not in circulation on September 8 and 9. Therefore, the editions that followed were sampled.

Like other newspapers that reported the September 7 Jos violence giving an insight into how it erupted to satisfy readers' curiosity about what had gone wrong in the once 'home of peace', the *Daily/Weekly Trust*, expectedly, informed its readers about the causes of the conflict; those allegedly responsible for it, and the ones who suffered loss. At the outset, the paper drew the attention of its readers to the plight of helpless Hausa Fulani Muslims purportedly attacked by Christian 'indigenes' because both groups had clashed. A reporter, Rabiu Ibrahim (a Hausa Fulani Muslim), in the story entitled 'Jos carnage: How and why it began […]' (R. Ibrahim, 2001), made an attempt to observe the journalistic standard of 'reporting responsibly' (Howard, 2009, 2015), when he acknowledged that 'it is near impossible to ferret a reasonable casualty figure' (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 1, par.1). He may have recognised that there had been sporadic attacks which resulted in many deaths – difficult to count and identify the warring groups that suffered the most. He therefore, summarised the

incident and provided details in the lead which is a routine in journalism (Harcup, 2015; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001; Wheeler, 2005). But the reporter failed to sustain his seeming character of neutrality in the conflict narrative. He adopted the neutral-to-goal-focused strategy which is a transition from somewhat 'neutral' to a 'goal-focused' reporting. Some elements of bias began to manifest because, as a Muslim, he identified his fellow Muslims as the victims of the attack purportedly launched by the Christian 'indigenes'. While he barely ended the writing of the lead, he reported in paragraph 2 that,

> Tears freely flowed on the faces of the Muslim community who had brought the corpses on a trailer after painstaking hours had been spent washing the dead bodies at the Jos Central Mosque (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 1, par.2)

When viewed from an analytical lens, the story above evokes vengeance. It might have sparked off reprisal attacks from the Muslim camp that is disgruntled and saddened by the loss of its members whose corpses 'filled up' a trailer. The bias of the newspaper is imminent as it is unreasonable to assume that a trailer containing corpses of Muslims could be brought into the central mosque from warfare in which Muslims and Christians were major actors. Who identified the corpses before they were loaded on the trailer? Were there traits, such as tribal marks or labels that proved the dead were Muslims?

The reporter further claimed that 'processions of pick-up vans carrying charred bodies of completely burnt humans piled one on top of another, intermittently headed for different burial grounds'. This suggested that there was an onslaught on the Muslims. As such, the impression he had created about Muslims being the victims of the conflict resulting in the flow of tears on the faces of the Muslim community, suggested that the 'burnt humans' may not have included Christians who presumably organised and carried out the attacks.

Some degree of reporter involvement in the conflict is imminent. First, he amplified the voice of his ethnic and religious community rather than his professional community.

Zandberg and Neiger (2005) had observed that when a journalist belongs to any party in conflict, his/her professional conduct would be compromised. This 'belongingness' is embedded in par. 2, as no conflicting party, other than the Muslim community, was presumed to have suffered loss. Second, he reported the incident from an angle that tended to attract sympathy for the Muslims in Jos. This choice of angle and its placement in the body of text is what media scholars refer to as framing (Entman, 1993; Kuypers, 2010; Phillips, 2015). The report silenced the Christian indigenous group as if it never recorded any casualty. The reporter's construction of the Muslim-victim and Christian-aggressor narrative was supplemented by a bottom strip distress alert (WeeklyTrust, 2001, p. 9), in which the Jasawa Development Association - a Hausa Fulani Muslim group – appealed for financial and material support for the victims of the conflict who were taking refuge in various camps across the city. Although the advertorial indicated that the assistance being sought was in aid of 'the needy Nigerians who have suffered untold hardship and deprivation […] as a result of the unfortunate ethnic-religious conflagrations that engulfed Jos', Rabiu Ibrahim's lead story which identified Muslims as the victims suggested that the appeal was to ameliorate the suffering of the Muslim victims. In all this, the reporter employed an implanting strategy of framing which introduced the readers to a new thinking that the alleged attack on the Hausa Fulani Muslim communities was carried out by the Christian 'indigenes'.

Having observed the movement of people from areas perceived to be 'unsafe' to other parts of the city; the reporter envisaged that communities would be separated on religious lines. He wrote that 'what is certain is that very few people will go back to their initial residence as the city has been demarcated along religious lines. Muslims are looking to relocate to areas they dominate and same for Christians' (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.3). His prediction was not contestable as the renewed hostilities that followed the September 7 conflict forced the residents to relocate, and in many instances, sell or abandon their houses

(see Aliyu et al., 2012). As a result of this residential segregation, some areas became densely populated and were turned into slums (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016). This data supports an earlier claim by some interview participants in the previous chapter of this study that communities in Jos had been separated by ethnic and religious boundaries – a situation that was said to have affected their work.

The *Weekly Trust*, in that report, identified news sources it believed were competent to explain the root and immediate causes of the September 7 violence. It interviewed them, either because of their witness to the violence, or on the basis of their political, religious and professional ranks. In one of the interviews, the spokesman of the Gbong Gwom Jos (the chief of Jos), Mr. Sunday Yakubu Dung told *Weekly Trust* that the traditional ruler was deeply pained over the violence that engulfed the city in which many of his subjects had been killed. He said neither himself nor his principal could ascertain the causes of the violence. But he said the public seemed unanimous on the view that the conflict might have sparked off when a certain woman allegedly crossed a barricade at a mosque along Congo Rosia area. The second factor, he noted, was not unconnected with the appointment of a Hausa Fulani Muslim, Muktar Mohammed, as the coordinator of the federal government's National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) for Jos North Local Government Area where there had been contestation over indigeneship status. The NAPEP coordinator's appointment was resisted by the 'indigenes' of Jos – the Afizere, Anaguta and Berom (Ambe-Uva, 2010; Danfulani, 2006; Krause, 2011) who argued that the political position was their exclusive preserve hence no 'settler' deserved it.

The newspaper corroborated Mr. Sunday Yakubu Dung's position on the 'indigene' versus 'settler' tussle over the NAPEP appointment. It stated,

> […] a group calling itself 'indigenous Youth Association of Jos North' issued a press statement denouncing the appointment and called on the government for an

immediate replacement with what they called a 'Jos North indigene'. The action promptly rose tempers of the Hausa Fulani who consider themselves indigenes of the state but who are considered non-indigenes by other ethnic groups, particularly the Berom, Anaguta, Jarawa (Afizere) etc. (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.18)

In literature (e.g., Dowd, 2014; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Rasaq, 2012), the agitation by the Hausa Fulani community to be recognised as an indigenous ethnic group in Jos, and to be integrated into the political life of Plateau State has been unequivocal. Since the 'indigenes' had put up resistance to this integration which 'promptly rose the tempers of the Hausa Fulani' who claimed membership of the area, the controversy was likely to degenerate into large scale conflict.

The *Weekly Trust*'s lead story emerged largely from eye-witness accounts like other reports on conflict because of the hazardous nature of conflict. The reporters adopted a community-aided strategy to support their narratives. Their news sources included those with whom they shared a religious community. The newspaper, for example, interviewed one Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id who was identified simply as a Muslim community leader. Sheikh Sa'id was the newspaper's first eye-witness. He was said to be the cleric who led Muslim worshippers during the Juma'at prayer at the Congo Rusia mosque where a woman purportedly invaded the prayer ground. He held that when the woman attempted to cross over the blocked area,

> […] she was pleaded with to retreat but she insisted. She therefore forced her way and was stopped […].When I saw the situation, I took the microphone appealing for calm [...]. As the woman ran out raining abuses on us, suddenly stones started hitting us, including arrows made of irons. Determined that we must pray, I asked some young men to shield us while we prayed. By the time we got through praying, some of us had been wounded already. I ordered someone to go and inform the police of the attacks on us but the person was instead detained on reaching the police station. This is why we believe the action was pre-planned and the attacks premeditated (Sa'id, 2001, cited in R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.13).

Another eye-witness, Imam Abdullahi Khalil – a lecturer of Religious Studies at the University of Jos, told the *Weekly Trust* that,

> […] that girl who was said to have attempted for the past three weeks to pass through that place came on that fateful day and wanted to pass, and after having been informed, she insisted. But she knew because she lived on the same street that the sermon was going on, and she insisted. And she was allowed to pass and because she had an agenda, she passed and went to the extreme end and then came back and tried to pass again (Khalil, 2001, cited in D. G. Mohammed, 2001, p. 3).

Both accounts were linked to a certain 'stubborn' female non-Muslim (in the interviewees' words – 'woman', 'girl') who resisted a practice that had been condoned – the mounting of barricade around mosques during Juma'at prayers. Sheikh Sa'id argued that the barricade was 'normally put up on such days as a result of the fact that the mosque cannot contain the number of people who come for prayers' (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.12). By barricade, it meant that the whole street where the mosque was situated was blocked throughout the Juma'at prayers, as a result of which passers-by, motorists and even the residents were restricted from moving on the street until the prayers were concluded and the worshippers dispersed. What made this practice 'normal' was a mere construction of the worshippers which was not backed by law (Ishaku, 2012). This might have prompted the action of the woman mentioned in both accounts as she allegedly insisted on her right of way. If she 'attempted for the past three weeks to pass through that place' (Khalil, 2001, cited in D. G. Mohammed, 2001, p. 3, par.3), and was stopped, as Sheikh Sa'id claimed, then her frustration may have resulted in the aggression of that day. She was accused of mobilising non-Muslim youths to attack Muslim worshippers at the mosque and the Muslim community in that area. *Weekly Trust*'s second eye-witness, Abdullahi Khalil, confirmed thus:

> The Christians were burning down people's houses. This I personally saw with my naked eyes […]. The house where the mosque was located belongs to one Alhaji Tijani Abdullahi and he has five houses and his cars and property were all burnt to

ashes. At the opposite, I saw several Muslim houses around the environment that were burnt (Khalil, 2001, cited in D. G. Mohammed, 2001, p. 3).

Based on these narratives, the reporters reinforced the reality which they had embedded in their readers. The missing point in this report is the perspective of the 'other' – the Christian party or the said woman who allegedly caused the conflict. The reporters used 'media logic' favourable to their religious community which portrayed a violent Christian community that organised and carried out the attacks on Muslims.

The reporters' lenses focused on Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id and Imam Abdullahi Khalil (both Muslims), referred to as eye-witnesses, but failed to locate the said woman, referred to as the accused, or any Christian in that area who took part in or witnessed the event as it unfolded. While the reporters seemed to have adhered to the journalistic principle of engaging news sources to testify about the events they witnessed, especially in a conflict situation (Pate, 2011), they lost their sense of balance by denying the conflicting party a voice. Therefore, objectivity was compromised. Although it may be argued that the woman could have been displaced after she committed the 'crime', or even killed by those who opposed what she stood for, the reporters could have investigated and reported about her. Imam Khalil claimed that the woman had paraded herself three times insisting on her right of way, and that 'she lived on the street that the sermon was going on [….]' (Khalil, cited in D. G. Mohammed, 2001, p. 3, par.3). This implies that she was known in the community and had family and neighbours who might have given their side of the story if they were contacted by the reporters.

Research has revealed that the woman or girl referred to in the *Weekly Trust* was one Miss Rhoda Haruna Nyam – a Christian woman who was allegedly denied passage to her residence on the street where the Congo Rusia mosque was situated. It states:

Returning to work after her lunch break, Rhoda stood her ground and insisted on her right of way on the closed street. For her efforts, she was beaten black and blue by the Yan Agaji (or Aid Group) who usually perform police duties at Islamic gatherings. When she ran to her house, they gave her a hot pursuit; they instantly turned riotous beating up her father who came out on hearing the commotion outside and smashed and burned her mother's car parked in front of the house. They went further to set the entire house on fire (Ishaku, 2012, p. 84)

This version of the conflict account was not reported by the *Weekly Trust*. The newspaper claimed that the woman/girl triggered the conflict by 'raining abuses' and mobilising her group to use 'arrows made of irons' on the worshippers, some of who had been wounded (Sa'id, 2001, cited in R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2,par.13). In contrast, Ishaku's (2012) study revealed that the woman insisted on her right of way, as a result of which she was beaten, her father assaulted and their property destroyed. By leaving out this part of the narrative, the journalists made choice of their frames to produce the Muslim-victim and Christian-aggressor reality. Also as a strategy, the *Weekly Trust* engaged with eye-witnesses who described the blocking of roads during Juma'at prayers as a 'normal' practice despite its legal implications and the inconveniences it had caused the residents and other road users. The paper did not inform its readers that the resistance to the blocking of roads along the Congo Rusia area, and some parts of the city where it occurred, did not start with the one that was said to ignite the 2001 violence. For example, the residents of Congo Rusia had written to the Nassarawa Gwong Divisional Police Officer (who supervised the security of Congo Rusia) on February 20, 1996, demanding the non-restriction of movement of people in the area during Juma'at prayers. They also petitioned the Plateau State Commissioner of Police on March 11 and March 20, 1996 over the same matter. Another complaint was sent to the Jos Metropolitan Development Board on June 21, 1996 and January 28, 1997 (Ishaku, 2012). All this effort yielded no result.

The newspaper failed to report that when the Plateau State government realised that the blocking of the roads by religious groups had heightened tension in the city, it invoked Section 254 of the Panel Code of Northern Nigeria of 1963 to stop the practice. The code provides that:

> Whoever voluntarily obstructs any person so as to prevent that person from proceeding in any direction, in which that person has the right to proceed, is said to restrain that person wrongfully ("The Panel Code," 1963).

The government banned any form of restriction of movement of persons by all religious organisations but the order was resisted by the Muslim community (Plateau Indigenous Development Association Network, 2010). Its body, the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) in Jos North Local Government Area had described the government's order as unconstitutional and directed Muslims to maintain the status quo (Ishaku, 2012). JNI's action may have constituted a breach of the law, yet the newspaper was not forthcoming with the information. The woman mentioned in the story had protested the unconstitutionality of the blockage of the road. Rather than dwell on this, the reporters used media logic driven by their membership of religious community to interview eye-witnesses that shared the community's values and goals. This was why the said woman was portrayed in the story as having refused to obey the 'law' – the 'normal' practice of road block.

Another fundamental issue which the *Weekly Trust* reported that needs to be unpacked is the instruction by Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id to some Muslim youths to 'shield' the worshippers at the mosque when the woman and her group allegedly attacked them. He said, 'I asked some young men to shield us while we prayed' (Sa'id, 2001, cited in R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.13). What could the word 'shield' mean in the context of violent conflict? It connotes a defence against an attack. But with what were the young men asked to defend the worshippers who were said to be surrounded by their perceived enemies? How did they

translate the defence order by their superior? Were they told to watch and pray while their attackers hit them with stones and 'arrows made of irons'? Did this 'holy' defence inflict any injury on the opponents? Apparently, much is embedded in this comment which suggests that the reporters' silence on it was an attempt to exonerate the Muslim group and create an impression of self-defence rather than an active role in the conflict.

Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id, as reported by the *Weekly Trust*'s Rabiu Ibrahim, also accused the police of complicity. He alleged that the response of the police to the distress call he put across during the purported attacks on Muslim worshippers suggested that the police and the Christian community had an agenda, that is, a conspiracy to wipe out the Muslims in Jos. The reporter neither gave a voice to the other party in conflict nor sought an explanation from the police authorities over Sheikh Sa'id's claim. Again, it implied a strategy to construct in the minds of readers the notion that the Muslim community in Jos was vulnerable and defenceless.

In contrast, there had been allegations that Mr. M.D. Abubakar, the former Commissioner of Police in Plateau State during the 2001 Jos conflict was on the side of the Muslim community because his activities before, during and after the conflict were said to have pointed to that direction (Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Ishaku, 2012; Plateau Indigenous Development Association Network, 2010). Among others, he was accused of deploying the police to secure mosques before the violence erupted while churches were left unprotected. This action generated suspicion, especially among non-Muslims who believed the Commissioner of Police was not fair to all. However, the *Weekly Trust* did not draw attention of its readers to these allegations which the petitioners brought to the notice of the Niki Tobi-led commission of enquiry that investigated the 2001 conflict. After a thorough investigation into the role of the former Commissioner of Police, the commission resolved as follows:

The commission recommends that for his ignoble role during the September 2001 crisis which led to loss of lives, the former Commissioner of Police, Alhaji M.D Abubakar retire from the police force and in the event of his refusal to do so, he should be dismissed (Commission of Enquiry Report on 2001 Jos crisis, cited in Ishaku, 2012, p. 86).

Given these allegations and the subsequent indictment of the former Commissioner of Police by the probe panel, *Weekly Trust* reporters ought to have raised the concerns of non-Muslims along with those of the Muslim community (as claimed by Sheikh Sa'id) to achieve some level of balance. Their refusal to dwell on this alleged complicity suggests that their news framing was non-objective, goal-oriented (Bell, 1996, 1997; Greenwald, 2014).

7.2.1.1 Evolving issues in the Daily/Weekly Trust – 2001 conflicts

7.2.1.1.1 Appointment of NAPEP coordinator as cause of the conflict

A number of studies (e.g., J. D. Galadima, 2010; Kaigama, 2012) have highlighted that the Jos conflict was multidimensional. It included factors such as religion, ethnicity, economy and politics. The *Daily/Weekly Trust* reports have focused on the religious and ethnic/political dimensions (the Muslim-Christian and settler-indigene identities).

While a Christian woman was said to have prevailed on her right of way during the Muslim Juma'at prayers on September 7, 2001, which purportedly led to the conflict, the appointment of a Hausa Fulani Muslim as coordinator of NAPEP was also said to be a trigger. The 'indigenous' tribes of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom had called on the government that appointed a Muslim 'settler' to head the Jos North NAPEP to reverse it. They argued that the appointee was not an 'indigene' of the area. On September 10, 2001, the *Daily Trust* reported that,

Tension was also said to have heightened as a result of the appointment of Alhaji Mohammed Usman, a Muslim Fulani, as the coordinator and chairman of the National Poverty Eradication Programme (NAPEP) (B. Bello, Odo, & Kwaru, 2001, p. 2).

Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id (the cleric who was a key witness that confirmed the alleged attack on Muslim worshippers at Congo Rusia), again, told *Weekly Trust* that Jos belonged to the Hausa Fulani, not the Afizere, Anaguta and Berom as it was widely held. He argued,

> This is our land. We set it up and even if ten of us remain, we are ready to defend our land […] just because our forefathers came from somewhere to set this place up, and because the town is lumped with other groups to make it a state, even without our consent […]. We don't intend to leave. Perhaps, only our corpses can be taken out (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 4).

Imam Abdullahi Khalil also concurred:

> To say that Muslims are in the minority in Jos is only propaganda [….] Part of the strategy is that they don't want any Muslim to hold any post […] (Khalil, 2001, cited in D. G. Mohammed, 2001, p. 3).

In the first scenario, the reporter established that not only was the crossing of barricade the cause of the September 7, 2001 conflict but also the controversy that trailed the appointment of the NAPEP coordinator. By coding the phrase, '[…] the appointment of Alhaji Mohammed Usman, a Muslim Fulani […]', the reporter implied that the 'indigenes' might have rejected his appointment on the basis of his religious (Muslim) and ethnic (Fulani) identities. The readers of the newspaper were likely to perceive the 'indigenes' as people who compromised merit, but honoured religious and ethnic allegiances.

In the second, the reporter used Sheikh Sa'id's argument that the 'settlers' owned Jos to reinforce the Hausa Fulani Muslim clamour for recognition and identity. Giving Sa'id a voice that 'this is our land […] we are ready to defend our land […]', and ignoring the opposing views of the 'indigenes' who were likely to defend their claim of the ownership of Jos, was the reporter's strategy of promoting the Hausa Fulani cause. The reporter shared the view expressed by Sa'id that the Muslim community (of which the reporter was a part), would not leave the city for the 'indigenes' to occupy, but remain in the land to defend it. Although the statement was credited to Sa'id, the reporter played a role in the Muslim Hausa

Fulani identity struggle by reporting and reinforcing it so that this perspective of reality may constitute the readers' perception. This supports previous research that the journalists' national (ethnic) community often overrides their professional community (Zandberg & Neiger, 2005). By selecting Sa'id's version of the conflict account, paying attention to how Muslims would defend their cause, the reporter engaged in news framing which aimed at shaping the judgments of the newspaper readers. In that situation, the reporter adopted a shared-value strategy of reporting – that is, he attached the same meaning to the idea expressed by his news source.

The *Weekly Trust*'s reporter – Rabiu Ibrahim – tried to persuade his readers by advancing an argument which suggested that the presumed Hausa Fulani 'settlers' were the actual owners of Jos. He claimed that in 1912, a colonial official had referred to Jos town as a Hausa Fulani settlement based on a certain gazette of Plateau province. He wrote that the colonial official was said to have declared:

> […] the Hausa Fulani inhabited what is presently known as Jos before the coming of the colonialists and before the Hausas, Jos was an unoccupied virgin land. The Hausas have been there since the beginning of the century. No Berom had a house in the heartland of Jos […] as close as 1950; there were only 10,207 people in Jos town out of which 10,000 were Hausas (Ames, 1912, cited in R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.28)

What could have struck the readers in the above text? The claim that out of 10,207 inhabitants of Jos, only 207 were non-Hausas may have been coded to reinforce the Hausa Fulani position that they had occupied the area before the 'indigenes' and other ethnic groups. As such, why should those who first settled in an area and became hosts to other ethnic groups be regarded as 'settlers' in their own land? Why should they be denied their rightful place? The reporter's goal was to lend support to the Hausa Fulani agitation for recognition as 'indigenes' and to dismiss the claim by the Afizere, Anaguta and Berom (AAB) that Jos was their heritage. Yet studies have recognised the AAB as the 'indigenes' of

Jos (L. Adamu, 2008; Ambe-Uva, 2010; Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Krause, 2011). Furthermore, the reports of the commissions of enquiry into the Jos conflicts made it clear that the Hausa Fulani were not 'indigenes' of Jos (Danfulani, 2006).

Also in this report, *Weekly Trust*'s Rabiu Ibrahim showed some level of desperation to influence his readers' perception. He held that the chronology of the rulers of Jos indicated that most of them were Hausa Fulani (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.29). The reporter made reference to the number of electoral wards in Jos, most of which had been identified by Hausa names (p.2, par.30). By this he meant that the city was owned and dominated by Hausa Fulani. But recent research has argued that the creation of Jos North Local Government Area and its electoral wards was weighted in favour of the Hausa Fulani. The study explained that it was a grand plan by the Ibrahim Babangida-led military government to grant autonomy to the Hausa Fulani community of Jos, and to take possession of the area from their owners (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016).

As the controversy over the appointment of NAPEP coordinator raged on, according to the *Weekly Trust*, 'indigenes' allegedly warned that if the government failed to replace the appointee with an 'indigene', it would be resisted. The report said that some 'indigenes' went to the extent of threatening Mr. Muhktar not to resume at the NAPEP office. Despite the prevailing circumstances in the local government council, the *Weekly Trust* claimed that it made effort to reach the chairman of the council, Mr. Frank Tardy, but it was not successful (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.26). From this account, however, it is necessary to interrogate the reporter's claim that the chairman of Jos North LGA (the administrative and chief security officer of the area where violence had erupted) chose to 'remain inconspicuous' (p. 2, par. 26). Had he abdicated from discharging his duties as the chairman? Had he fled the city? Neither the chairman nor the woman who allegedly crossed the barricade at the Congo Rusia

mosque could be reached for comments on their roles. Not even the chairman's aide or the woman's family was identified and interviewed for the story despite the relevance of their office and role.

It would seem that the reporter - a Hausa Fulani – chose to interact with members of his ethnic community who could tell the Hausa Fulani story (e.g., Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id and Imam Abdullahi Khalil). While these Hausa Fulani eye-witnesses were accessible, the chairman of Jos North LGA – Mr. Frank Tardy and the woman at the Congo Rusia mosque, Miss Rhoda Haruna Nyam (both Christian 'indigenes') were said to be 'inconspicuous' . This suggests that the choice of eye-witnesses was aimed at giving the Muslim Hausa Fulani perspective of the Jos conflict narrative, which included the origins of the Jos area said to have been inhabited by the Hausas, and the alleged invasion of the mosque by a Christian woman. The chairman and the 'law-abiding' Christian woman were ignored by the reporter because both personalities could have provided an insight into the conflict from a different perspective, thereby allowing the readers to make their judgements. Therefore, the framing of the news was driven by a goal – the desire to reinforce the Muslim Hausa Fulani identity in Jos.

7.2.1.1.2 Other pointers to the direction of news
On September 10, 2001, a team of the *Daily Trust* reporters (B. Bello et al., 2001) wrote that there had been calm in Jos 'after the violent religious crisis rocked the city over the weekend' (p.1, par.1). The reporters' description of the conflict as a 'religious crisis' may have resulted from their observation of how Christian and Muslim residents engaged each other in the battle field. Having linked the violence to the controversy over the alleged denial of a woman's right of way during a Juma'at prayer, the reporters pointed out that the leadership of a church had issued a communique on August 8 which 'condemned the blocking of major

streets during the Muslim Juma'at prayers, describing it as unacceptable' (B. Bello et al., 2001, p. 2).

This suggests that since the church (an assembly of Christians) had condemned the action by Muslims on August 8, prior to September 7 (the day the violence broke out), and because it involved a Christian woman who allegedly invaded a Muslim territory, the conflict could have been planned and executed by Christians. The reporters' use of the word 'unacceptable' to describe the decision of the leadership of the church implied that the Christians would no longer condone the continued blocking of the streets by the Muslims. It meant that the Christians would resist it and could do 'anything' (including a possible attack on the Muslim worshippers) to ensure that all the residents of Jos had their right of way.

The reporters, in fairness, also drew the attention of their readers to a claim that the Jasawa Development Association had issued a statement, prior to a scheduled local government election in Jos North, which called on voters to elect a Muslim Hausa Fulani as the chairman of the council (B. Bello et al., 2001, p. 2). But the report exonerated the group as its national secretary was said to have denied the allegation.

Although the reporters seemed to be objective by presenting both sides (the Christian woman who allegedly ignited the violence at the mosque and the Muslim Jasawa group that purportedly instigated the Muslim voters against their Christian counterparts), the information they conveyed was that the Christians were the aggressors because they remained indicted while the Muslims offered a defence. The reporters did not give a voice to the Christian group to concede or refute the allegation labelled against it as they did to the Muslim group. It, therefore, suggests that the reporters' framing decision was driven by their desire to portray an aggressive Christian group against a victimised Muslim group – which

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was the scenario previously described by Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id and Imam Abdullahi Khalil.

7.2.1.1.3 The irony of interreligious dialogue: A message-laden strategy

The journalists employed the message-laden strategy by constructing frames that were loaded with other information. The *Daily Trust*'s report of September 11, 2001 entitled 'Muslim body urges dialogue over Jos crisis' signalled an end to the five-day violence in the city. It showed that a party in the conflict was ready to initiate and sustain dialogue with the rival group in order to restore peace in the area. Given that the call for dialogue was made by a renowned Muslim group – the Assembly of Muslims in Nigeria (AMIN) (B. Bello et al., 2001, p. 3), the initiative may have been perceived by readers as having carried much weight.

But beyond its lead, the story dwelt on a sensitive issue – the Sharia, an Islamic legal system that had been adopted by 12 of the 19 northern states of Nigeria which had generated much criticism among some Nigerians, especially non-Muslims of the north. Plateau State, of which Jos is its capital, was one of the states that resisted the introduction of the Islamic law (Danfulani, 2006; Ishaku, 2012). While AMIN claimed to have supported peace building efforts by advocating for dialogue between warring groups, its wake-up call to states yet to adopt Sharia to do so was a possible trigger of conflict. Although it did not identify the states that were being lured into implementing this law, the embedding of the Sharia component in the story on 'dialogue over Jos crisis' pointed to the direction that Muslims in Plateau State should rise to the occasion to defend their religious rights. AMIN stated in the report:

> We congratulate the states that are implementing the Sharia and call on those in the process to double up so that a full scale Sharia could be implemented to cover all walks of life (Odo, 2001, p. 3).

How sincere was AMIN about dialogue between groups that had been engaged in violence resulting from religious and ethnic identity crisis, yet it called for 'full scale Sharia […] to

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cover all walks of life'? This metaphor suggests that they would stop at nothing in realising the goal of the Muslims to introduce Sharia in all the states. As documented in literature, the *Daily/Weekly Trust* emerged to level up the dominance of the 'Ibadan-Axis' Christian south in the Nigerian media landscape (African Media Development Initiative, 2005). Since Sharia adoption was, and still is, a programme of the core northern states where Islam has a strong hold, this newspaper tended to facilitate the realisation of that goal.

7.2.1.1.4 The killing of Muslims: The implanting and reinforcement strategies

Like the story above in which the less obvious communication on Sharia law was embedded in the main component – the interreligious dialogue, the *Daily Trust*, in a systematic way, informed its readers that the people killed in the 2001 Jos conflict were Muslims (Dan-Halilu, 2001, p. 4). The headline of the story read: 'JNI condemns Jos killings'. As the headline suggested, a reader was expected to have a grasp of the position of JNI (Jama'atu Nasril Islam –an umbrella body of all Islamic organisations) which supposedly condemned the killings of humans in Jos – irrespective of race, ethnicity or religion. In contrast, the reporter constructed the news in a way that non-Muslim casualties were excluded. The report read:

> The Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), has condemned the recent killing of Muslims in Jos, Plateau State capital […]. The JNI has in strong terms condemned this unfortunate situation where worshippers should be followed to their place of worship and brutally killed, maimed and butchered while praying (Dan-Halilu, 2001, p. 4).

The JNI story above has many implications. First, the headline is deceptive as it portrayed the organisation as neutral arbiter concerned about human lives. Yet, in the body of news, it claimed that only Muslims were killed. The lead of the story pointed to the direction the JNI was heading for – the purported killing of Muslims in Jos. The headline ought to be explicit and accurate. The information in the lead suggested the following headline: 'JNI condemns killings of Muslims in Jos', rather than 'JNI condemns Jos killings' which seemed to have

included Muslims and non-Muslims. Second, 'the incidence happening in Jos which resulted in large number of people killed', again, contradicted JNI's claim that only Muslims were killed in the Jos conflict (par.1). The term 'people' was used in the succeeding paragraph to improve the narrative which side-lined non-Muslim victims at the outset.

Third, the worshippers being referred to could be said to be Muslims (because JNI, in the lead, was categorical about Muslims being killed), even though there was no evidence that showed Muslims had been 'brutally killed, maimed and butchered while praying' as the group alleged (Dan-Halilu, 2001, p. 4, par.3). What was consistent in the report about the alleged attack on Muslims during the September 7 ethno-religious violence was the claim by Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id who was said to have led the Juma'at prayers at the mosque where the violence purportedly broke out (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.13). As the Imam of the mosque, he claimed to have called for calm despite the alleged attack on his congregation, and yet directed a group to 'shield' them (par. 13). In his version of the conflict narrative, the worshippers were neither 'killed' nor 'butchered', but that before the Juma'at prayers ended, some of them 'had been wounded already' (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.13). Fourth, JNI's call for unity was ironical. It drew the attention of Muslims to what it termed as 'uncalled-for killings' (p.4), suggesting that they were victims of the conflict hence they should rise up in self-defence.

Figure 7.2. 1 The six strategies adopted by the Daily/Weekly Trust journalists during the September 7, 2001 Jos conflict.

7.2.2 *The Punch*: September 7, 2001 conflict (September 8-12, 2001)

At the outset, *The Punch* adopted a strategy of silence in the coverage of the September 7, 2001 conflict. Unlike other national dailies that made the outbreak of violence in Jos their 'breaking news' - because it was the first armed conflict in the city (Krause, 2011; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016) - *The Punch* did not report it when it should. It remained silent on September 8, a day after the violence broke out; when the day's paper was expected to report it. But whether it was an act of omission – because its reporters were not on the ground and could not report it based on hearsay, or commission – because it wanted to achieve a goal, the reason may have been unclear to its readers. Phillips (2015) has made the point that the decision to report or ignore any event or subject lies with the news media and the journalists. Therefore, if *The Punch* or its reporters chose to ignore what was considered to be

newsworthy because of the Muslim-Christian or 'indigene-settler' clash, the purpose for which this was conceived was likely to manifest in the contents of the paper as the violence spread.

On September 9, *The Punch* broke its silence. Festus Owete and Augustine Madu-West reported that relative peace had returned to the city after violence erupted on September 7. The reporters dwelt on the reaction of President Olusegun Obasanjo who was said to have condemned the violence and described it as a 'national disgrace' (Owete & Madu-West, 2001, p. 1, par.3). They reported that the violence broke out after the Juma'at prayers (par. 3), but did not link it to the alleged rift between a Christian woman who demanded her right of way, and some Muslim worshippers at the Congo Rusia mosque as it was widely reported by the *Daily/Weekly Trust* (see, for example, R. Ibrahim, 2001; D. G. Mohammed, 2001). *The Punch* report claimed that the fracas was

> [...] between mainly minority Muslim ethnic Hausa youths and people from the Christian ethnic Berom indigenous majority, following weeks of simmering tensions [...]. The spark for the clashes was the appointment of a minority Hausa man as coordinator of a government run Poverty Alleviation Programme, infuriating the Berom people (Owete & Madu-West, 2001, pp. 1-5, pars.11-12).

The report established one side of the lingering argument over indigene-settler dichotomy. It identified the Muslim Hausa Fulani as the minority 'settler' community and the Christian Berom community (which included the Afizere and Anaguta ethnic groups because they were often classified as one) as the 'indigenous' community. The reporters recognised that the 'indigenes' reserved the rights of ownership of their land hence they needed a voice that could make this position known. This 'reality' may have been constructed based on the reporters' religious relationship with the 'indigenes'. Thus, they employed the strategy that tended to 'put pictures' in the heads of their readers about the position of the Christian indigenes. It was, probably, a well-thought out strategy to, first, inculcate in the readers the

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idea of the rights of the indigenes in Jos. Since the Jos conflict had just occurred, the reporters focused on providing context that would shape the attitudes of their readers. Another possibility was that, after introducing the readers to this reality, the strategy that followed was to reinforce it.

Also, the reporters tried to establish the ethnic and religious relationships that seemed to have existed among the conflicting parties. Their description of the parties as 'minority Muslim ethnic Hausa youths and people from the Christian ethnic Berom indigenous majority' (par. 11), was another dimension that established these identities. In that sense, the Muslim readers who were not Hausa Fulani but professed Islam were likely to express the sentiments of the 'settlers'. Likewise, those who practiced Christianity, and read the report, may have shared the views of the 'indigenes'. Given this analogy, the reporters' claim that 'at least five churches and one mosque had been burned' (Owete & Madu-West, 2001, pp. 1-5, par.17), may have inflamed passions among the indigenous and non-indigenous Christians whose loss was said to be greater.

The reporters' implanting strategy also manifested in paragraph 12.They claimed that the appointment of a 'settler' as co-ordinator of the federal government's poverty alleviation programme in Jos North LGA – the position which was considered the preserve of the 'indigenes' ignited the violence. Their report corroborated one of the versions credited to some sources (see, for example, R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2; Kwaru, 2001, p. 2). Their choice of this account suggested that the indigenes' rights had been denied, as a result of which conflict between the 'settlers' and 'indigenes' ensued.

On September 10, *The Punch*'s Augustine Madu-West, Senan John Murray and Seka Ibrahim reported that the conflict was linked to the appointment of the NAPEP coordinator. They wrote:

The immediate cause of the tension was the appointment by the Federal Government of a man from the Muslim minority to run a state anti-poverty programme (Madu-West et al., 2001, pp. 1-5, par.12).

This position was recounted by the reporters to reinforce the narrative that had been constructed about the NAPEP coordinator's appointment. While the causes of the conflict were said to be multidimensional (Kaigama, 2012), the reporters seemed to have ruled out other factors. They framed their story in such a way that suggested that the appointment of the Hausa Fulani 'settler' for the poverty alleviation programme triggered the violence. Their report also suggested that the Muslim Hausa Fulani youths were the first to launch an attack on the Christian 'indigenes' who merely responded to it. They wrote that by the second day of the violence, it had become a reprisal attack in which Christians overpowered their Muslim opponents. The report said:

Investigations indicated that almost all mosques, except the central mosque, have been burnt by some Christian youths who were said to be retaliating the previous day's attack on churches (Madu-West et al., 2001, pp. 1-5)

What the reporter termed as 'the previous day's attack on churches' had been confirmed by *The Punch* when it reported that on the first day of the riots, 'at least five churches and one mosque had been burned' (Madu-West et al., 2001, pp. 1-5, par.17). It meant that the Christian group was provoked by the action of the Muslim group that allegedly started the violence. From their report, and that of Owete and Madu-West, the burning down of 'almost all mosques […] in Jos' by the Christian youths was a reprisal attack on Muslims who had burnt 'at least five churches […]' when the fighting began. The reporters' implanting and reinforcing strategies may have created and sustained an impression that the violence which erupted on September 7 was ignited by the Muslim Hausa Fulani 'settlers'. It implied that the 'settlers' resorted to violence and resisted any attempt by the 'indigenes' to influence the federal government on the possible reversal of the appointment of the NAPEP coordinator.

As the violence entered its fourth day, *The Punch* reported that no fewer than 165 people had been killed. It was the first major casualty figure the paper reported after it claimed that five lives were lost on the first day (Owete & Madu-West, 2001, pp. 1-5). The report of the 165 deaths was credited to an official of the Nigerian Red Cross whose duty it was to evacuate the bodies of the victims and provide support for the injured. The paper reported the death toll after it had verified from a competent source whose data included all the bodies deposited in various hospitals in Jos (*ThePunch,* 2001, pp. 1-5, par.3). This suggests that the paper ensured that what it reported was accurate and reliable to conform to journalistic standard (Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013).

The Punch's report on September 12 indicated that normalcy had returned to the city but Christian and Muslim communities remained separated for fear of further attack by either party. In that report, Gbade Ogunwale, Remi Ladgbolu and Soni Daniel wrote that the deputy governor of Plateau State had accused some prominent citizens of the state of unlawful possession of arms that were used by the rioters (Ogunwale, Ladigbolu, et al., 2001). The report read:

> The Deputy Governor of the state, Chief Michael Botmang, also alleged that sophisticated fire-arms were freely used during the riots and raised the suspicion that some prominent citizens of the state may have sponsored the riots and provided some of the weapons used (Ogunwale, Ladigbolu, et al., 2001, p. 48, par.10).

The reporters did not make inferences from the remark of the deputy governor about the suspected sponsors of the riots. If they did, they might have implied that the suspects could have been the masterminds of the burning of 'at least five churches' (likely to be Muslims) and 'almost all mosques in Jos' (likely to be Christians). In the prevailing circumstances, the reporters may have used a strategy of disinterestedness by selecting frames such as 'some prominent citizens' to refer to the suspects who could have been Muslims or Christians, or both. They had a choice to name the said sponsors by insinuating that their roles in the

conflict did not suggest otherwise. But they reported what was said without attaching a different meaning to it which could lead to bias

On September 13, *The Punch* reported that fresh violence had erupted in Jos but it did not give any casualty figure. However, the reporters - Gbade Ogunwale, Stanley Yakubu and Soni Daniel named the affected areas where the attacks were said to have been carried out. They included Dogun Dutse, Angwan Rogo and Congo – the areas believed to be dominated by the Hausa Fulani Muslims (Aliyu et al., 2012; Ishaku, 2012). The report also alleged that the youths attacked some students of the University of Jos in one of their hostels. The reporters claimed to have interviewed a student whom they identified as Jacob, and who alleged that some students numbering between two and three had been killed. They also reported that a resident of Tudun Wada (a Christian-dominated area) allegedly confirmed in a telephone interview that there was another outbreak of violence in the area. The reporters linked the Jos violence to a similar incident in Kano (a predominantly Hausa Fulani Muslim city in Nigeria's North West) where some Muslim youths were alleged to have attacked some churches. They wrote:

> A similar event also occurred in Kano where some Muslim youths, on Tuesday night, torched two churches located at Shagari quarters […]. Kano was also on the boil, the second within 24 hours, when Muslim youths on Monday razed a church in Brigade Quarters […]. The two affected churches: Overcomers Believers Sanctuary Church and Holy Trinity Catholic Church (Ogunwale, Yakubu, et al., 2001).

In that report, two strategies of framing manifested: the message-laden and community-aided strategies. While the reporters may have been eager to report the renewed violence that erupted in the city after relative peace had been reported, they named three areas of Dogon Dutse, Angwan Rogo and Congo as places where the attacks were carried out. Based on the research that communities dominated by Christians or Muslims often took advantage of their numerical strength to attack minority groups in their domains (Aliyu et al., 2012; Nyam &

Ayuba, 2016), the report suggested that the Christian minority in the three areas may have been attacked by the Muslim majority. This message-laden strategy was employed to inform the readers that there was fresh violence in which Christians were attacked.

The reporters' power of 'the choice of who to speak to' (Phillips, 2015, p. 41) as authoritative news sources was applied in their eye-witness accounts. They named Jacob (a Christian) who confirmed the attack on the students, and another, a resident of Tudun Wada (a Christian-dominated area) who gave a situation report on the violence. Such interactions with only Christian sources who may have testified from the point of view of the Christian group, suggested that the reporters adopted a community-aided strategy to construct their narrative. This is because the reporters belonged to the Christian religious community. Furthermore, their goal of linking the Jos violence to that of Kano where Muslim youths purportedly attacked Christians suggested that a similar incident occurred in Jos whereby suspected Muslim youths unleashed terror on their Christian neighbours in Dogon Dutse, Angwan Rogo and Congo areas.
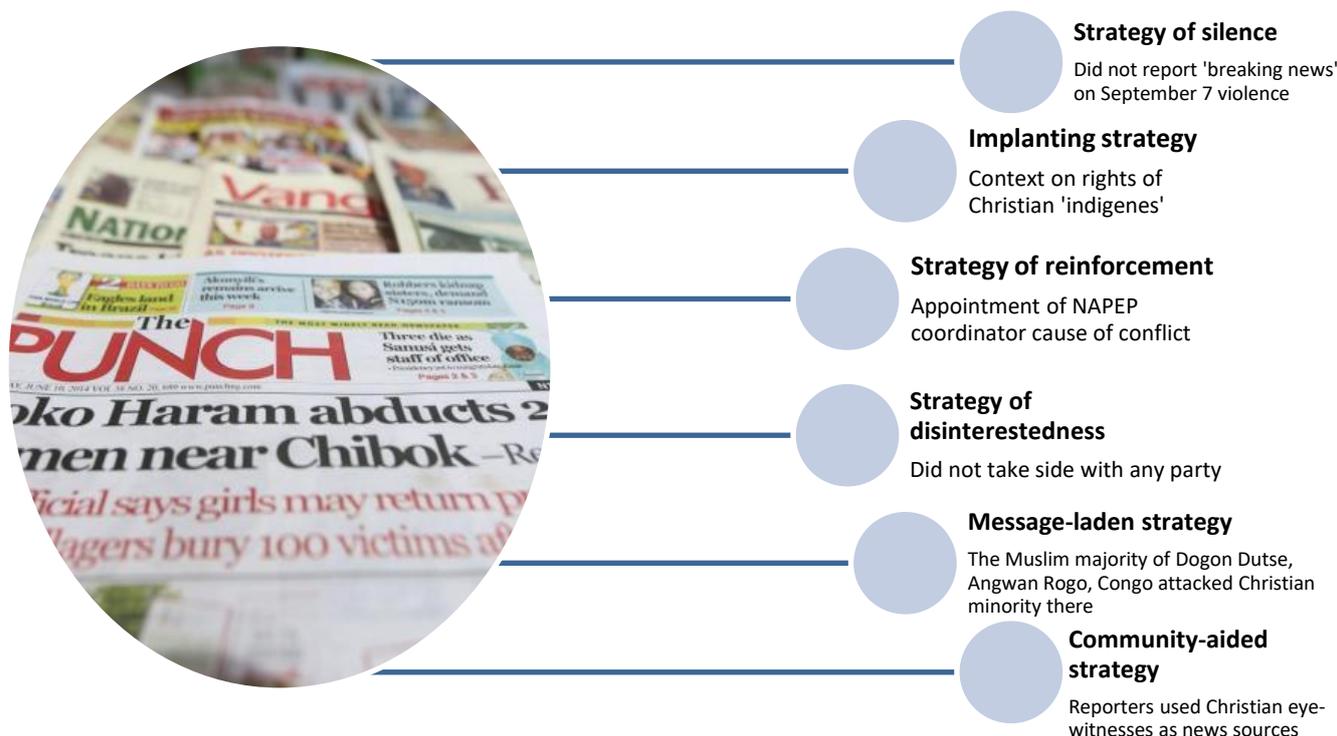
Figure 7.2. 2 The six strategies adopted by The Punch journalists during the September 7, 2001 Jos conflict. Source: The researcher.

7.2.3 Summary of Analysis

The *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch* reported the September 7, 2001 conflict between the Hausa Fulani Muslim community and the 'indigenous' ethnic groups. The *Daily/Weekly Trust* gave more attention to the conflict through a variety of contents in which the journalists employed six strategies of reporting. They included the implanting strategy, community-aided strategy, reinforcement strategy, shared-value strategy, message-laden strategy and strategy of deception.

As the first armed conflict in the history of Jos, the journalists' narratives were aimed at introducing the readers to the idea that an attack had been launched on the Hausa Fulani 'settler' community by the Christian 'indigenes'. They held that the violence was ignited by a Christian woman who disrupted a weekly Juma'at prayer at a mosque in Congo Rusia. In

many instances, they adopted a community-aided strategy by identifying news sources from their ethnic/religious community and obtaining from them information for their news. Another strategy was their use of language to reinforce the claim that the attack was targeted at the 'settler' community. Some reporters of the *Daily/Weekly Trust* showed, in their narratives, some elements which suggested that they shared the view that Jos belonged to the Hausa Fulani, not the 'indigenes'. Also, in a number of reports, they coded messages that were less obvious yet important in achieving set goals (message-laden strategy and the strategy of deception).

For the journalists of *The Punch*, six strategies also manifested in their contents – the strategy of silence, the implanting strategy, reinforcement strategy, the strategy of disinterestedness, the message-laden strategy and community-aided strategy. The newspaper failed to report the violence in its edition that followed the outbreak. It subsequently broke this silence when it gave an update on the incident and tried to influence the readers' perceptions by providing context on the rights of the 'indigenes'. As part of this implanting strategy, the journalists reported that the conflict resulted from the appointment of a 'settler' as the co-ordinator of the state poverty alleviation programme. It was followed by a reinforcement strategy to suggest that the controversy that trailed the appointment of the coordinator was responsible for the violence.

Some reporters showed some degree of disinterestedness in the conflict as they made effort not to take side with any conflicting party. Thereafter, the message-laden strategy manifested in a number of the reports. For example, the naming of areas where the attacks were said to have been carried out - Dogon Dutse, Angwan Rogo and Congo - suggested that Christians were the victims in the three Muslim-dominated areas. Like the *Daily/Weekly Trust*, the reporters of *The Punch* adopted the community-aided strategy by interviewing

Christian eye-witnesses as news sources that may have provided the desired data for their news.

Chapter Eight

Qualitative Content Analysis: The 2008 and 2010 Conflicts

8.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the qualitative content analysis of the *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch* focussing on the 2008 and 2010 conflicts. The criteria for selecting the samples of the newspapers and the content category (that is, linguistic choices) used in Chapter 7, also, applied to this analysis.

There was another round of violent conflict in 2008. It was said to be a fall-out of the disagreement between a political party that was presumed to have won the Jos North Local Government Council chairmanship election and a rival party. The major contestants in the election included a Christian 'indigene' and a Muslim Hausa Fulani 'settler'. While the residents awaited the announcement of the election results, supporters of one of the political parties took to the streets protesting alleged irregularities in the electoral process because there were indications that the candidate of the rival party was heading for victory (Ishaku, 2012).

In analysing the newspaper coverage of the 2008 conflict, the researcher focused on how the conflict environment – such as the journalists' lack of access to conflict areas – had impacted their work. This is because the city had been split between Christian and Muslim communities and journalists, like other residents, were affected by that segregation. The researcher, therefore, examined the journalists' linguistic choices to understand the framing process and establish their role performance in the conflict – whether their reports and writings reinforced the conflict or supported peacebuilding efforts (Tenenboim-Weinblatt et al., 2016).

This chapter concludes with the analysis of the 2010 conflict. That violence was also said to have resulted in the death of some residents as the Hausa Fulani Muslims and the indigenous Christian ethnic groups clashed along the Nassarawa Gwong area (Ishaku, 2012; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016). The Plateau State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Gregory Ayanting, had alleged that the hostilities were triggered by some Muslim youths who attacked Christian worshippers on their way to church on a Sunday morning. But the report was dismissed by the Hausa Fulani community that claimed the conflict began when some Christian youths attacked the nearly 200 Muslim youths who allegedly invaded a Christian-dominated area to rebuild a house owned by a Muslim which had been destroyed in previous conflict (J. D. Galadima, 2010; Ishaku, 2012).

Like the previous conflict, the newspaper journalists (most of whom were Christians or Muslims) were implicated in this controversy. They chose the angles from which they constructed news about the conflict. At this stage of the analysis, the researcher examined the transition from 2001 to 2010 to know whether the journalists were consistent in their approaches to constructing the news and other contents, or their patterns changed as the violence became 'sophisticated' (Okoro & Chukwuma, 2012). The representations of these accounts by the *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch* were at the heart of this analysis. It revealed that the reporters/writers employed different strategies to construct the conflict narratives. Based on the analysis, a number of the researcher-generated constructs were used to explain the conditions which suggested the strategies that manifested in the journalists' conflict narratives. These include the implanting strategy, reinforcement strategy, community-aided strategy, message-laden strategy, neutral-to-goal-focused strategy, and shared-value strategy, strategy of deception, strategy of disinterestedness, the blame-game strategy, and strategy of silence, among others. Some of these strategies manifested in the

contents of both publications across the three 'violent conflict years' while others emerged as the events unfolded.

8.2 November 28, 2008 conflict (Samples: November 29 – December 3, 2008)

There was another major outbreak in Jos on November 28, 2008 which was believed to be more vicious than the one that occurred in 2001 and others that followed intermittently. It was linked to the protests by rival youth groups (especially party faithful) that trailed the November 27 local government council elections in Plateau State. 10 editions of the *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch* (5 each) (November 29 – December 3, 2008) were sampled for analysis.

8.2.1 **The** *Daily/Weekly Trust*

The headline of the *Weekly Trust*'s first report on the 2008 Jos violence read: 'Plateau: Scores killed in council polls violence'. Expectedly, the number of casualties was of essence as the reporters described it as 'many' suggesting that the protests turned violent and a large number of people lost their lives. In contrast, the police had put the number of persons killed at four which implied that not 'many' deaths were recorded as the reporters claimed. But they seemed to have understood that in recognising conflict as a news value, their readers would be interested in a significant number of deaths (Harcup, 2015; Hartley, 2013). From the four deaths reported by the police, they linked another report of 20 deaths to a news agency and over 70 to a source who pleaded to be anonymous. The reporters wrote:

> A text message sent to *Weekly Trust* hotline by a community leader who sought not to be identified said he counted 70 dead bodies brought to a place of worship to be prepared for burial. He said many of the corpses carried bullet wounds (Agbese, Lalo, Mohammed, & Bashir, 2008, p. 2, par.4).

The transition from the official four deaths to 70 (which was said to have been sent via a text message, and from an unidentified source), suggested that the reporters wanted to justify their

description of 'many' deaths. The huge number of persons killed in the violence was the report's selling point which accounted for the use of the adjective 'many' as the first word in the story.

The reporters were desperate to paint a picture of war in Jos by quoting a figure of 70 deaths which was not attributed to a credible source. It is a possibility that the said community leader who allegedly counted the 70 bodies never existed. As such, the reporters may have decided that the quoted number was adequate to describe the 'many' people killed. If the said community leader actually sent a text message, which they regarded as credible to attract readership, then their community-aided strategy of reporting may have been employed. The source was said to have counted the 70 corpses at a place of worship. Going by previous report (R. Ibrahim, 2001), and the reports of other conflicts in which different officials allegedly counted corpses of Muslims at the Jos Central Mosque (A. Mohammed, 2010a, 2010b), the source may have been a leader of the Muslim community who had consistently released casualty figures to *Daily/Weekly Trust* reporters for their news. The reporters used a strategy of deception, which involved the framing of non-existing casualty figure, or the community-aided strategy that enabled them to obtain the desired casualty figure from their ethnic/religious community for their report.

As the violence entered its second day, the *Sunday Trust* reported that the death toll had risen from 70 (as confirmed in previous report by a source via a text message) to 400. The paper wrote:

> Our reporter, Mahmud Lalo, in Jos, yesterday, said he counted close to 400 bodies deposited at the Jos Central Mosque [….] Our reporter's account corresponded with that of another reporter for *Radio France International (RFI)* in Jos, Aminu Manu, who told *Agence France Presse (AFP)* that he personally counted about 378 bodies at the mosque (J. N. Musa et al., 2008a, p. 1, pars.4 & 6).

The newspaper editors' craftsmanship manifested in the headline derived from Mahmud Lalo's eye-witness account. It read: 'Jos mayhem: Death toll hits 400'. The reporter claimed to have counted this number of deaths at the Jos Central Mosque. The reporting strategy adopted in this narrative is twofold – the strategy of reinforcement and community-aided strategy. First, a visit to the Jos Central Mosque to count the corpses of the victims had become significant and a routine. Even the famous hospitals with the state-of-the-art facilities, where many corpses had been deposited and the injured treated, did not receive the attention of the *Daily Trust* reporters as the Central Mosque. Once violence occurred they moved to the mosque and obtained casualty figures which the newspaper often reported as the death toll for the entire city. For example, on the first day of the violence, the reporters claimed they got a text message from an unidentified source who had counted 70 corpses at a certain place of worship. By the second day, the number had increased to 400, also found at a place of worship. The journalists did not report about casualty figures in the hospitals where the corpses of victims were said to be deposited. It suggests that the bodies found in the mosque were those of Muslims who worshipped there. By implication, each time a casualty figure emerged from the mosque it represented the number of deaths in the Jos violence. The 400 bodies allegedly found in the mosque formed the headline and the content of the report. By this, the journalists employed the strategy of reinforcement so that the readers may continually believe that the Muslims were being killed. Second, the *Daily Trust*, being the voice of the Hausa Fulani Muslims (African Media Development Initiative, 2005) used its community to generate and confirm information on the violence. The figure emerged from the Central Mosque and the report was corroborated by Aminu Manu, who shared community membership with the journalists.

A portion of the report dedicated to the victims' experiences of the conflict (J. N. Musa et al., 2008b) showed that the reporters maintained their strategy of reinforcement.

They dwelt on the plight of the Muslim victims to suggest that the attack was carried out by the Christians and targeted at the Muslim communities. Apart from identifying two Christian victims – Jennifer and Priscilla – one of who complained of hunger due to the restriction of movement in the city (par.13), and the other who allegedly escaped being killed (par.19), the journalists, in the 27-paragraph report, narrated how Muslims in their hundreds were allegedly killed or attacked. They wrote:

> One of the most pronounced of the victims of the violence in Jos was the killing of one Alhaji Mohammadu Mai Gwanjo and 20 members of his family, who were said to have been burnt to death inside their house in Rikkos, Jos (J. N. Musa et al., 2008b, p. 4, par.1)

> Another source, a former councillor in Jos, told our reporter in a telephone interview that over 150 dead bodies were yesterday evening brought to the Jos Central Mosque from Rikkos, Dutse Uku, Dogon Dutse (J. N. Musa et al., 2008b, p. 4, par.4).

The two paragraphs quoted above pointed to the direction that Muslims were heavily attacked in the two-day orgy of violence. The reporters were immersed in their report because, rather than present their story to allow the readers make their judgment on the intensity of the attack, they described Alhaji Mai Gwanjo's experience as 'one of the most pronounced'. Paragraph 4 suggested that 150 corpses were taken to the Central Mosque from Christian-dominated areas where the Muslims were killed in cold blood.

On December 1, 2008, the *Daily Trust* reported that a mass burial for victims of the attack whose corpses had been assembled at the Jos Central Mosque took place. The paper held that by November 30, when the burial rites were performed, the number had risen to 426. The reporters' narrative suggested that all the victims were Muslims. They were said to have been taken to Rusau Muslim cemetery after a large number of Muslim faithful congregated to pray for their deceased brothers and sisters, and to pay their last respects. In that report entitled, '426 victims get mass burial', the reporters – Mahmud Lalo and Ahmed

Mohammed – wrote that an official of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam, Alhaji Sabo Shuaibu, had told them that,

> […] the burial could not be held immediately because the Muslim community was waiting for all the corpses of victims to be gathered [….] 424 corpses had been washed, dressed and lined up for burial but that as they were digging the mass grave at Rusau, some Fulani men brought in two more corpses of their brothers that were killed on Saturday which raised the toll to 426 (Lalo & Mohammed, 2008c, p. 1, pars 5 & 7).

Between November 28 and 30, when the violence broke out and the burial of the 426 victims took place, the *Daily Trust* reporters were blind to the losses suffered by the 'indigenes' or the Christian communities with whom the Muslims clashed. They did not report any attack allegedly perpetrated by the Muslim or the Hausa Fulani group. The journalistic principle of reporting 'both sides' (Blaagaard, 2013) did not guide their practice. The reporters' ethnic/religious community influenced their decision to concentrate on the Muslims' wellbeing. In that sense, their media logic meant a call for attention that would attract sympathy for the Muslims who were said to have suffered from the alleged attack by Christians.

The reporters applied this logic by employing the strategies of deception and reinforcement. The deceptive strategy pertained to how they constructed a one-sided narrative that portrayed the Muslims as non-participants in the violence, and that the alleged attackers did not suffer any loss. All the deaths recorded in their story involved Muslims whose bodies were said to have been brought to the Central Mosque for funeral prayer. Based on their account, funeral rites for victims of the violence may not have taken place in churches across the city. Yet studies have revealed that Christians recorded higher casualties in areas dominated by Muslims and vice versa (Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; Ishaku, 2012; Krause, 2011). Mahmud Lalo and Ahmed Mohammed focused on Muslim casualty in order to reinforce the

alleged Muslim onslaught. This was sustained through a confirmatory narrative and head-count of the victims by community leaders and officials of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam.

Four days after the violence broke out; the *Daily Trust* sampled the opinions of some residents on how it started. For the first time, on December 2, the paper reported what it called the 'two sides' (A. Mohammed, Lalo, & Jimoh, 2008, p. 1), suggesting that its reporters' deceptive and reinforcement strategies which characterised previous reports would give way for objectivity. Based on the new approach to reporting the 'other side' the *Daily Trust*'s Andrew Agbese reported that Christians in Plateau State were unhappy with the way individuals and groups were announcing unverified casualty figures to inflame passions. He quoted the state chairman of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), Most Rev. Ignatius Kaigama as saying:

> I am quite upset by the kind of figures being bundled about as the number of casualties; this can only fuel the crisis and cannot help in the search for lasting solution to the problem. So we refused to be dragged into the issues of casualties for now, but would wait till all the necessary work had been done by the relevant agencies before we can comment (Agbese, 2008, p. 3, par.4).

Although the CAN report may have indicted the *Daily Trust* reporters and their sources, because they had consistently reported casualty figures since the conflict began, it expressed the view of Christians who had been silenced in the newspaper. But despite the clarity of the statement by the CAN chairman – that CAN was opposed to the arbitrary and unauthorised release of casualty figures because 'nobody can say for certain how many people lost their lives in the Jos crisis' (Agbese, 2008, p. 3, par.1), the report was manipulated. The editors adopted a message-laden strategy in the writing of the headline. The headline read: 'We are still compiling figures, says CAN'. It did not suggest the story. Rather, another 'message' was embedded in the headline which implied that CAN's casualty figures were merely being

delayed (perhaps, due to factors such as inefficiency, poor record keeping) and would be released when the problems were remedied.

The *Daily Trust* reporters suspended the strategies of deception and reinforcement to create an impression that they recognised 'two sides' of a story. The strategies were reintroduced in the reporting of two stories: '1000 cars burnt on Zaria road', and 'Five students killed in Albayan Secondary School'. Mahmud Lalo and Ahmed Mohammed 'deceived' their readers that 'over 1000 brand new cars in various shops were burnt down by rioters along Zaria road in Jos' (Lalo & Mohammed, 2008a, p. 3, par.1). In contrast, there were no shops or warehouses in which 'brand new cars' had been assembled for sale along Zaria road as alleged. What existed were units of used cars that were displayed for sale, most of which went up in flames during the violence. The reporters decided on a figure of 1000 cars to suggest that members of the Hausa Fulani community, among who were the owners of the burnt cars, had lost many lives and property in the violence.

While the killing of five students of Albayan Secondary School may have been carried out by a group of rioters as reported (Lalo & Mohammed, 2008b, p. 3), the journalists' narrative suggested that the perpetrators were Christians because they were at war with the Muslims. The report also alleged that the rioters had set ablaze another school owned by a Muslim, Al' Imam Primary and Secondary School within the vicinity. The report focused on the alleged attack of Muslims by the Christians.

Again, the *Daily Trust* of December 3, 2008 contained reports that articulated the position of the Hausa Fulani 'settler' communities that they be recognised as 'indigenes' of Jos. (see, for example, DailyTrust, 2008; Haruna, 2008). From the newspaper editorial on the front page, to Mohammed Haruna's *Wednesday Column* on the back page, the writers were unanimous on what they believed was an attempt by the Christian 'indigenes' and the

government of Plateau State to oust the Hausa Fulani Muslims. These articles, and two news reports (including the lead story) accused Governor Jonah Jang of poor handling of the conflict and for aiding and abetting the alleged attack on the 'settlers'. The lead story, 'Yar'Adua refuses to see Jang' (Olajide, 2008, pp. 1-5), and the other, 'Jos mayhem: Cleric wants Jang sanctioned' (L. Ibrahim, 2008, p. 9), alleged that the governor and his government were complicit, an action which the reporters believed accounted for the president's refusal to see him when the governor called on him. In the first instance, the writers and the reporters employed the blame-game strategy of framing to make the point that the governor and other accomplices were behind the attack. Also, the strategy was adopted to confirm earlier reports by the *Daily Trust* that 426 Muslims had been killed within two days of the violence (Lalo & Mohammed, 2008c, pp. 1-5), and over 1000 'brand new cars' which belonged to some 'settlers' were burnt by Christian rioters (Lalo & Mohammed, 2008a, p. 3).

But the *Daily Trust* previously reported that the governor had said 'the crisis started at Ali- Kazaure in Jos North Local Government Area, where there was a pre-planned move to disrupt the peaceful conduct of the election […] some people started attacking shops, places of worship and innocent citizens' (A. Mohammed et al., 2008, pp. 1-5, par.2). Based on the governor's account, he was not to blame. For him, the government, which he led, had put in place machinery that would check any eventual breach of the peace before, during and after the local government council elections. Where the violence started did not quite matter but the motive behind it. The governor's concept of 'some people' is implied. It suggested that a group of individuals was responsible for the attack. These individuals could have been politicians - because the issue pertained to the conduct of elections, or the Hausa Fulani 'settlers' or the 'indigenes' – who had clashed in 2001 and were ready to confront each other once there was any form of provocation.

One of the versions that stood out in the 'two sides' report by Ahmed Mohammed, Mahmud Lalo and Abbas Jimoh was credited to an agent of the Hausa Fulani/Muslim-dominated All Nigerian People's Party (ANPP). The agent held that:

> After the election, we were at the ward collation centre in Gada Biyu counting the votes. When the electoral officers saw that the ANPP candidate passed the PDP candidate with over 30,000 votes, they said they will wait for another result from some wards that will be brought in before they will announce the result. This led to argument between the party agents and the electoral officials, because there were hundreds of youths waiting to protect the votes (A. Mohammed et al., 2008, p. 1, par.4).

The reporters' reinforcement strategy was introduced in their narrative as they presented the ANPP agent's account which faulted the electoral process and claimed that the party's candidate was leading in the vote count. Neither the PDP agent nor its official was interviewed by the reporters to get the side of the party that was a major actor in the conflict. The reporters had claimed that the state chairman and secretary of the PDP could not be reached for comments. Were other party officials at the local government level, and the party's agents at the ward collation centre where the ANPP agent was interviewed, not noticed by the reporters?

A different version of how the 2008 conflict began has been documented in literature. It stated:

> […] things took an ugly turn in Jos North in the early hours of November 28, when information emerging from the collation centre suggested that the candidate of the People's Democratic Party (PDP), Barrister Timothy Gyang Buba, was heading for a decisive victory over the candidate for the All Nigerian People's Party, Alhaji Baba, the candidate supported by the Muslim Hausa Fulani settlers […]. As rumours of Baba's defeat made the rounds in the small hours of the day, mobs of Muslim youths began a violent protest attacking Christian homes and churches (Ishaku, 2012, p. 90)

Based on the version of the ANPP agent and that of Ishaku as quoted above, Governor Jang's earlier analogy of 'some people' may have included the 'hundreds of youths waiting

outside the collation centre to protect the votes'(A. Mohammed et al., 2008, p. 1, par.4). To put it simply, Ishaku (2012) described them as 'mobs of Muslim youths [who] began a violent protest attacking Christian homes and churches' (par. 90). The allegations emerging from the two sides suggested that the ANPP had mobilised hundreds of youths to stage a violent protest should its candidate lose the Jos North chairmanship seat (Ishaku, 2012). Likewise, the PDP was bent on rigging the election results as the party was alleged to have connived with the electoral officers to turn out more results from polling wards that were non-existent (A. Mohammed et al., 2008). The contest meant a lot for both the Hausa Fulani 'settler' community and the 'indigenes' because it was a test of their political might (Nyam & Ayuba, 2016). The victory of the ANPP was assumed to be victory for the Hausa Fulani Muslims hence their status as 'indigenes' was no longer to be contested. The 'indigenes', on their part, wanted the PDP candidate to emerge as an evidence of their identity as the owners of Jos.

Despite this controversy, the *Daily Trust* took a position. Its position corroborated that of the Hausa Fulani 'settlers' who preferred to be recognised as 'indigenes' and to be accorded all political rights and privileges in the state. In its editorial of December 3, 2008, the newspaper wrote:

> There is an unhealthy feeling in many parts of Plateau State that a Christian-majority state's prized capital city is numerically dominated by a Hausa Muslim community, known in Nigerian parlance as 'settlers' [….] A desire to oust any community, no matter its perceived faults from any part of Nigeria or to deny it some political rights cannot be the agenda of any responsible, patriotic and law-abiding politician or public officer. Unfortunately, there is reason to suspect that some officials of the Plateau State government harbour such an agenda as evidenced by the crude effort to rig election results (DailyTrust, 2008, p. 56).

The *Daily Trust*'s strategy of reinforcement has manifested in the above editorial. First, the paper informed its readers that Jos was largely occupied by the Hausa Fulani Muslims yet they were being regarded as 'settlers'. This suggests that there was no rationale for the

minority ethnic groups to deny the Hausa Fulani majority community the right to 'indigeneship'. However, research has shown that previous census figures of Jos indicated that the Christian population was higher compared to that of the Muslims (Danfulani, 2006). Second, it took the side of the ANPP (the party of the Hausa Fulani Muslim candidate) that the PDP, the Jang-led government of Plateau State and the electoral officers had collaborated to rig the election results in favour of the 'indigenous' Christian candidate. It did not interrogate the action of the hundreds of ANPP supporters who had invaded the collation centre to 'protect the votes' of their candidate while the counting was in progress. The editorial did not also ask how the youths protected the votes when the alleged attempt to rig the election results was discovered. This suggests, therefore, that the goal of the newspaper was to demonstrate that the Hausa Fulani cause was legitimate and just.

1
- **Strategy of 'inventing' casualty figures**
- Many people were killed
- 426 victims got mass burial

2
- **Community-aided strategy**
- Community leader confirmed 70 deaths via text message
- Counting of corpses of victims at the Jos Central Mosque
- Christian victims had minority voice

3
- **Strategy of deception**
- Anonymous community leader may be non-existent
- 1000 cars burnt on Zaria road
- 'Jos is numerically dominated by Hausa Fulani

4
- **Strategy of reinforcement**
- 70; 400; 426 suspected Muslims killed within two days of violence

5
- **The blame-game strategy**
- President Yar'Adua refused to see Governor Jang over his role in conflict
- Muslim cleric wants Jang sanctioned

Figure 8.2. 1 The five strategies adopted by the Daily/Weekly Trust journalists during the November 28, 2008 Jos conflict. Source: The researcher.

8.2.2 The Punch

The *Saturday Punch* on November 29, 2008, broke the news about the violence that resulted from a protest by youths alleging an attempt by some persons and groups to rig the November 27 local government election in Jos North. In the beginning, the report by Jude Owuamanam focused on the state government's response in the wake of the violence which was the imposition of a dusk-to-dawn curfew on the city.

The reporter paid attention to the experiences of victims such as the shooting of some army generals and the killing of eight students of the University of Jos. He put the casualty figure at 50 but this number was not verified as there was no evidence that supported his claim. The making-up of figures of casualty by conflict journalists was confirmed by some reporters and editors who were interviewed for this research (see, for example, IP 3 – IEG, p.118; IP 9, p.130).

Jude Owuamanam maintained a neutral position by describing the protesters as 'youths' who took to the streets, and that over '50 people' were reportedly killed – no identification of casualty with a certain ethnic or religious group. But there was a sudden departure from the framing of this narrative. He wrote:

> As early as 5. 30 am, the ANPP supporters had allegedly poured onto the streets chanting war songs. In the ensuing confusion, churches were burnt around Sarkin Mangu, close to old Jos North Local Government secretariat (Owuamanam, 2008b, p. 7, par.9)

> As the riot spread, Igbo traders, especially those carrying out their business around Massalacin Juma'a, poured onto the streets to defend their shops. They also mobilised to defend the St. Augustine's Major Seminary in Katako and Our Lady of Fatima Church, around Alikazaure area (par.13).

Having established that some youth groups were involved in the protest, the reporter soon identified the ANPP supporters as the protesters. Since their protest was against the presumed victory of their opponent – the Christian candidate and an 'indigene' – those who participated

in it may have been Hausa Fulani Muslims. It implied that Muslims took to the streets 'chanting war songs' and attacking Christians wherever they were found. This data supports the claim by Ishaku (2012, p. 90) that before the results of the elections were announced , 'mobs of Muslim youths began a violent protest attacking Christian homes and churches'. Ishaku also pointed out that 'soon enough, Christian youths picked up the gauntlet and, by afternoon, total anarchy reigned in the city' (2012, p. 90). They were said to have put up a self-defence which neither Ishaku nor Owuamanam could define. For example, Owuamanam (2008b, p. 7) admitted that Christians, especially Igbos, 'mobilised to defend' their investments and their churches which were allegedly under attack. What was the Christians' understanding of defence at warfare? Were they expected to watch and pray while some form of divine protection accompanied them? This could not have been the case. The Christians may have responded in the manner they were confronted, or worse.

Jude Owuamanam's neutral-to-goal-focused strategy enabled him to attract readership in the first instance because he attempted to describe the event rather than those involved. Soon after, he exposed the alleged culprits thereby exonerating the Christian community to which he belonged.

On the second day of the violence, the death toll, according to *The Punch* of November 30, had risen to 300 (Owuamanam, 2008c, p. 8). The newspaper had reported that over 50 people were killed when the violence erupted. Unlike the *Daily Trust'*s reporters who either claimed to have counted the bodies of victims (mostly at the Jos Central Mosque), or relied on officials of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam for casualty figures, the reporter of *The Punch* did not attribute his source. Although he seemed to have made his discovery at the various hospitals and the Jos Central Mosque, as named in the report, the figures remained contestable because how they were arrived at was unknown.

Another report on the Jos conflict in the November 30 edition of *The Punch* was the press conference by the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN). In that report, CAN was said to have condemned the attack and called for its investigation. Jude Owuamanam employed the reinforcement strategy of framing to explain the position of CAN on the spates of violence in the city. He drew the attention of the readers to the concern by CAN that Christians had become the target of attack. The lead-in paragraphs expressed this concern as the reporter quoted the state chairman of CAN, Most Rev. Ignatius Kaigama. CAN said:

> We were greatly taken aback by the turn of events in Jos. We thought it was a political issue, but from all indications, it is not so. We were surprised at the way some of our churches were attacked and some of our faithful and clergy killed. The attacks were carefully planned and executed [....] why were churches and clergies attacked and killed? (Owuamanam, 2008a, p. 9, pars. 3-4)

From the remark of the CAN chairman, which may have contained other issues, the reporter selected a portion on which he laid emphasis in the report to support the claim that Christians were under attack. He assembled what may be regarded as the message that was intended for the readers, which was beyond the condemnation of violence as suggested in the headline. Having reported the position of CAN (the condemnation of attack) in the lead, Jude Owuamanam did not substantiate it in the proceeding paragraphs. Rather, he moved to the 'issue' – '[…] the way some of our churches were attacked and some of our faithful and clergy killed' (p.9, par. 3). The reporter combined a message-laden strategy (communication that is loaded with other information – that is, 'condemnation of violence' and the 'alleged attack on Christians') with the reinforcement strategy (laying emphasis on the alleged attack on Christians to remind the readers that what was claimed might be true). This suggests that the reporter's framing was driven by a Christian solidarity.

The reporter further demonstrated bias in paragraph 8 when he reinforced the alleged attack. After the press conference which had been addressed by the CAN chairman, he also interviewed the youth leader of the association who said that 'the whole riot was a well-orchestrated plan by the Muslims to bring about the Hausa Fulani hegemony' (Owuamanam, 2008a, p. 9, par. 8). In the end, the readers may have decoded the message that the violence, which was perceived to be political because of the protests that followed the local government elections in Jos North, was an attempt by the Hausa Fulani Muslims to attack Christians.

By Monday, December 1, the violence was said to have taken another dimension as the arrest of some suspected terrorists was made (Owuamanam & Olatunji, 2008, p. 2). In that report, Jude Owuamanam and Segun Olatunji wrote that the Chief of Army Staff and a set of military troops had been deployed to the city to contain the situation. Although the reporters gave an account of the renewed violence, the dimension of 'mercenaries' that invaded the city suggested that a jihad (an Islamic term for 'holy' war), was soon to come.

The Punch's report of December 2 may have made an impression on the readers about the turn of events in the restive city of Jos. Despite the heavy presence of the military led by the Chief of Army Staff, the paper reported that the deputy speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly was almost lynched by some angry youths at the Jos Central Mosque where a former minister and a federal lawmaker were said to be taking refuge (Obe, Owuamanam, & Chiedozie, 2008, p. 2). The reporters' reinforcement strategy was applied to create an impression of Jos as a 'war zone'. This is because if a high profile politician could escape an attack and a former minister could take refuge in a mosque for fear of attack on his residence, then the city may have been unsafe for habitation. This kind of report may have accounted for the widespread rumour that the residents of Jos had fled and the city had become a shadow itself (Aliyu et al., 2012). Such news may have led to the threat to

withdraw from Jos all the graduates who were undertaking the mandatory National Youth Service Corps programme and the indigenes of some states to their places of origin (see, for example, Owuamanam & Olatunji, 2010b).

The *Punch*, on December 3, like the *Daily Trust*, reported Governor Jonah Jang's lack of access to President Yar'Adua when the former visited the Aso Rock villa to brief the president on the violence that had erupted in Jos. The *Daily Trust* had alleged that the president 'refused to see Jang' because he was said to have been angered by the role Jang played in the Jos conflict (Olajide, 2008, p. 1). The *Daily Trust*'s report suggested that Jang was ridiculed by the president because of the former's action. It said while Jang's colleagues from Imo and Kaduna states – Ikedi Ohakim and Namadi Sambo took turns to see the president, Jang was denied access to him on the same day.

The *Daily Trust*'s allegation suggested that President Yar'Adua, like the Hausa Fulani 'settler' community, was disappointed with Jang because he may have been the mastermind of the alleged Hausa Fulani Muslim onslaught in Jos. The reporter chose to use the word 'refused' to suggest that Yar'Adua did not want to see Jang, which was an indication that the president had endorsed the Hausa Fulani's allegation against Jang. The reporter's strategy of reinforcement was to confirm the allegation of complicity levelled against Jang. *The Punch*'s report provided a perspective which the *Daily Trust* silenced in its narrative. *The Punch* wrote that Jang

> […] arrived in the villa when Yar'Adua was presenting the 2009 budget at the National Assembly, but waited until he returned […].The governor could not see the president as he was directed to confer with Vice President Goodluck Jonathan (Chiedozie, Olatunji, Owuamanam, Falola, & Affe, 2008, p. 8, pars. 2-3).

The Punch explained the circumstances which led to Jang's inability to see the president. First, if the president was not discharging another official function (the presentation of budget) at the National Assembly, Jang might have gained access to him. Second, the

president may have had a long day after the presentation of the budget, and decided to delegate his responsibility to the vice president which suggested that Jang was attended to. The reporters of *The Punch* did not see the president's action as a refusal to see the governor but a placement of national priority above the state, and/or a delegation of office.

Strategy of 'inventing' casualty figures 50 and 300 unconfirmed deaths	Neutral-to-goal-focused strategy *From description of protesters as 'youths' to ANPP supporters' who are mostly Hausa Fulani Muslims*
	The Punch journalist
Strategy of reinforcement "Some of our churches were attacked and some of our faithful and clergy killed"	Message-laden strategy CAN's condemnation of violence produced 'new' information – the alleged attack on Christians

Figure 8.2. 2 The four strategies adopted by The Punch journalists during the November 28, Jos conflict. Source: The researcher.

8.2.3 Summary of Analysis

The *Daily Trust* and *The Punch* newspapers reported the 2008 violence which was said to have claimed many lives. The death toll attracted much attention of both newspapers. The reporters 'invented' casualty figures without authentication because they seemed to have realised that their readers would be interested in the number of deaths. The *Daily Trust* claimed that 70 lives were lost on the first day, and when the violence entered its third day, a total of 426 bodies had been assembled for mass burial. *The Punch*, on the other hand, alleged that 50 deaths were recorded on the first day. Thereafter, the paper maintained a 300-casualty figure. These figures were either 'invented' by sources linked to their religious communities or reporters who produced them by a simple estimation.

Some of the reports of the *Daily Trust* showed that the reporters adopted the community-aided strategy and the strategy of deception. In the first instance, the death toll of 70 emerged from an anonymous community leader via a text message. The second number, 400, and the third, 426, were released by sources at the Jos Central Mosque. At various times when interviews were conducted among the victims, the Christians had a minority voice. There were some elements of deception in the narratives. For example, the said anonymous community leader may not have existed hence the casualty figure that was said to emerge from that leader could have been false. The 1000 'brand new cars' allegedly burnt along Zaria road was not substantiated. That Jos was 'numerically dominated by Hausa Fulani community' was a contradiction of previous census figures (see, for example, Danfulani, 2006).

The *Daily Trust* reporters, in some reports, used the reinforcement strategy and the blame-game strategy. The reports suggested that the hundreds of deaths comprised of Hausa Fulani Muslims implying that the attack was planned and executed by Christians. The blame-game strategists either accused the governor and his government of complicity or blamed the conflict on the 'indigenes' and Christians who resisted the emergence of a Hausa Fulani Muslim as the chairman of Jos North Local Government Area.

The Punch adopted the neutral-to-goal-focused strategy in one of its reports. The reporter described the protesters as 'youths' who resisted an attempt to rig the local council election in Jos North, but his goal of identifying the alleged culprits later manifested in the story. He named the protesters as the supporters of the ANPP (a party dominated by the Hausa Fulani Muslims). This means that the neutral term 'youths' referred to 'Muslim youths' (goal-focused) who allegedly ignited the violence. By this construction, his Christian community that dominated the opposition party was exonerated. Some reporters of *The Punch* also maintained a reinforcement strategy which either exonerated Christians from the

alleged conspiracy against Muslims or portrayed them as victims of the attack. For example, a report emphasised CAN's claim that 'some of our churches were attacked and some of our faithful and clergy killed'.

The message-laden strategy was employed by *The Punch*'s journalist who reported CAN's position on the violence. He used a story to tell another story. CAN's condemnation of violence (as contained in the lead) produced 'new' information – the alleged attack on Christians.

8.3 January 17, 2010 Conflict (Samples: January 18 -23)

In 2010, another round of violence erupted in Jos on January 17. The newspaper samples included January 18 – 23. The sample day was extended to January 23 because both papers, on that day, reported the violence with greater depth. The papers revealed the untold story by engaging with actors linked to the violence.

8.3.1 *The Punch*

*The Punch'*s story on the January 17 violence showed that the reporters – Jude Owuamanam and Olusola Fabiyi – adopted the conflict sensitive reporting strategy theorised by Ross Howard which requires journalists to tell the story without identifying those responsible for, or are victims of the conflict to avert further violence (Howard, 2009, 2015; Singh, 2013). In their report, they alleged that 20 people had been killed in the renewed hostilities but did not name the group that suffered the loss (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2). They narrated the causes of the conflict thus:

> In the first instance, the crisis was said to have started after a disagreement between some youths involved in a football match in the Dutse Uku area of Nassarawa Gwong in Jos North. The disagreement was said to have escalated and attracted rival youth gangs. It eventually snowballed into a full-blown crisis as all sorts of weapons were allegedly used. The youths thereafter went into rampage, alleging killing and burning houses (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2, pars. 9-10).

The story continued:

> Another report said there had been simmering crises in the area over the refusal of either religious sect to allow each other to reconstruct the houses destroyed during the November 28, 2008 crisis in the area (p. 2, par. 12).

The reporters seemed to be 'sensitive' to the situation at hand as they frequently coded words that neither identified the aggressors nor the victims of the conflict. The use of phrases such as 'some youths', 'rival youth gangs', 'the youths […] went on rampage' suggests that the reporters preferred to construct frames that would tell the story about the renewed violence in the area without referring to the actors as Muslim or Christian youths, even though they were aware that young Muslims and Christians were involved. In that sense, all the conflicting parties allegedly went on rampage and took part in the violence which led to loss of lives and property. This confirms the interview data in this research that some journalists – reporters and editors – chose to withhold the identity of aggressors and victims of the Jos conflict to reduce the escalation of violence (see, for example, IP 22).

In the first version, the reporters informed their readers that there was a breakdown of law and order in a certain area in Jos North – Dutse Uku. They held that a football match in which youths were involved was the factor that generated a heated debate leading to a violent pitching of camps. In the violence, 20 people were reportedly killed, who could either be members of one of the rival groups or both. The readers, who might have comprised of Muslims and Christians, or even non-believers, were not likely to respond to the violence in Dutse Uku in a violent manner as no group was reported as having recorded greater loss than the other. The reporters wrote that 'the area […] is populated by Christians and Muslims' (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2, par. 11), so that Christians elsewhere would not assume that their members had been overpowered by the Muslim majority in that community, or vice versa, thereby inflaming passions. The reporters' framing of the above phrase was intended

to console the readers that both sides had suffered loss. It suggests that all parties in the conflict were affected.

The same strategy was adopted in the second narrative. Rather than state in categorical terms that a particular religious group had resisted the rebuilding of houses of members of a rival group, the reporters alleged that both parties in the conflict had exhibited the same attitude towards each other hence none was exonerated. The report said the violence broke out because of '[…] the refusal of either religious sect to allow each other to reconstruct the houses destroyed […] in the area' (p. 2, par.12). It stated further, '[…] if a Christian wanted to rebuild his house, the Muslim youths would mobilise to stop him, and vice versa' (p. 2, par. 13). By this expression, both groups were indicted. The reporters, most likely, constructed this narrative as another strategy to avoid heating up the already tense situation. But while these reporters had a way with words suggesting that they were 'neutral' and acting in the public interest, they showed allegiance to their Christian religious community in the latter part of the report. They wrote that,

> […] the problem was said to have reached a boiling point when one Alhaji Kabiru was disallowed from embarking on the reconstruction of his house in Dutse Uku. The Muslim youths were said to have mobilised and attacked everybody they saw (p. 2, par. 14). In the free-for-all machetes and all types of weapons were allegedly used (p. 2, par. 15).

In the above narrative, what ignited the conflict was the refusal of Alhaji Kabiru to rebuild his house. The reporters mentioned in passing that the said Alhaji 'was disallowed […]', but by whom? Since their earlier account revealed that both the Christian and Muslim youths had consistently resisted the rebuilding of the houses of their opponents in Dutse Uku, and given that one Alhaji (a title conferred on a Muslim man who performed hajj) was denied this right, it suggests that the action to stop him was carried out by the Christian youths. The reporters'

frames did not include the identity of the group that stopped the reconstruction. Their media logic, driven by their religious community, was used to shield the Christian youths.

Rather than name the Christian youths as the first aggressors (for stopping Alhaji from reconstructing his house, an action which could have been resisted by Muslim youths), the report alleged that the 'Muslim youths mobilised and attacked everyone they saw' (p.2, par. 13). By implication, the Muslim youths purportedly ignited the violence. The reporters also silenced the views of Muslims in their report but devoted significant portions to the 'facts' that emerged from Christians who belonged to their religious community. For example, they reported that the Plateau State Commissioner of Police, Mr. Gregory Anyanting –a Christian, had, in a statement, alleged that,

> Just this morning, there was the breach of the peace when some Muslim youths in the early hours of the morning, without any provocation whatsoever, started attacking some worshippers in Nassarawa Gwong area, especially around St. Michael's Catholic Church (p. 2, par. 28).

The report concluded with another allegation by a group – the Plateau State Christian Elders' Consultative Forum. It said,

> In very strong terms, we hereby condemn today's attack on Christians in Jos […] in which several persons have been reported injured or dead. The attack coming in today, Sunday, January 17, 2010, after the normal Christian services in churches was premeditated, wicked, deliberate and terrifying (p. 2. Pars. 31-32).

How the story began and ended is complex. The journalists' reporting strategies characterised by 'media logic' showed a transition from somewhat 'objective' to 'non-objective' or goal-focused practice. At the outset, the reporters were concerned about supporting peace building efforts by avoiding the blame-game theory which dominates conflict reporting. Thereafter, they made their way into the realm of journalism of attachment (Bell, 1996, 1997; Greenwald, 2014). They tried to 'garnish' their report with tales favourable to the Christians. Both the statements credited to the Police Commissioner and the

Plateau State Christian Elders' Forum suggested that the Muslims organised and carried out the attack on Christians. The reporters' news framing showed that the Christians were innocent and the Muslims guilty.

In a separate report on January 19, *The Punch*'s Jude Owuamanam and Segun Olatunji wrote about the threat by the National Youth Service Corps (NYSC) to withdraw graduates posted to Plateau State for the mandatory national service if the government failed to provide security for them. The corps members had been evacuated from areas that were believed to be prone to violence and lodged in 'safe' areas. As they did in their previous story where they reported that the Christian Elders' Consultative Forum claimed that Christians had been attacked, Owuamanam and Olatunji incorporated the views of two Muslim groups into the NYSC report. Both the Jama'atu Nasril Islam and the Jos North Muslim Umma dismissed an earlier claim by the Commissioner of Police, Mr. Gregory Anyanting, that the violence was ignited by some Muslim youths. The report stated that the Muslim Umma had declared that 'Muslims had lost confidence in the ability of the commissioner to protect them' (Owuamanam & Olatunji, 2010b, p. 6, par. 14). Here, it would seem that the reporters realised that Christian views dominated their first report on the violence in Dutse Uku hence they reported the Muslim's side of the story. Perhaps, the intention of the writers was to project a self-image that suggested they were fair to all the conflicting parties.

On January 20, a casualty figure began to emerge. As at Wednesday, three days after the violence erupted, Jos had been 'grounded' as *The Punch*'s headline captured (Owuamanam et al., 2010). The newspaper reported that an agency report had quoted the Chief Imam of the Jos Central Mosque, Alhaji Balarabe Dawud as saying: 'We received 156 dead bodies this morning and another 36 this afternoon, in total, we have 192 dead bodies' (Owuamanam et al., 2010, p. 2, par. 23). The reporters' inclusion of the agency report, again suggested that they desired to construct a balanced narrative which is the hallmark of

journalistic objectivity (Maras, 2013). The claim by Alhaji Dawud, though not substantiated, suggested that the 192 deaths did not include Christians because by counting scores of deaths assembled at the Central Mosque, they might have been identified as Muslims killed in the attack. This is because a *Weekly Trust* report had alleged that 'tears freely flowed on the faces of the Muslim community who had brought the corpses on a trailer after painstaking hours had been spent washing the dead bodies at the Jos Central Mosque' (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 1, par.2).

In the same edition of *The Punch* (January 20), the reporters – Olusola Fabiyi and Jude Owuamanam – reintroduced a reporting strategy of connecting somewhat related information of distinct dimensions on the Jos conflict. Their report, 'PDP asks Jang to tackle problem' opened with the expression of concern by the People's Democratic Party (PDP) over the continued violence in Jos. The party, to which Governor David Jang of Plateau State belonged, had urged him to find a lasting solution to the problem. It seemed like a party affair that had no link with readers who were non-party members. However, the reporters 'imported' into the story an earlier call by the president of the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN) that,

> Christian community in the North should always defend themselves in the event of any unwanted violent attack by opponents of the religion (Fabiyi & Owuamanam, 2010, p. 8, par. 16).

The reporters imported this component of the story to reinforce the belief that Christians could put up a defence whenever they were attacked by their opponents. Like Sheikh Al-Hassan Sa'id who had ordered some Muslim youths to 'shield' the worshippers while they prayed at the Congo Russia mosque (R. Ibrahim, 2001, p. 2, par.13), this concept of defence implied that they could fight their opponents and, possibly, use arms to defend themselves. Rather than stand aloof, they were told to 'do something' in self-defence. But with what were

they asked to defend themselves? The action of reinforcing the culture of self-defence in the readers showed that the reporters were 'doing something' to shape the attitudes of their readers, particularly Christians, towards the Jos conflict. It, therefore, suggests the mediatisation of conflict (Cottle, 2006). The same strategy was employed by *The Punch*'s John Ameh in his report entitled, 'Reps intervene after Onovo's, SSS' briefings' (Ameh, 2010). In the 13-paragragh report, having informed his readers that the House of Representatives had resolved to intervene in the Jos conflict, concluded that the House Committee which investigated the conflict was alleged to have taken side with the Muslim community. The report added that,

> A member of the House from Plateau State, Mr. Bitrus Kaze, had also accused the committee of exhibiting bias by allegedly visiting and commiserating with Muslim communities and avoiding Christian victims (Ameh, 2010, p. 8, par.12).

The implication of the inclusion of this allegation in the report was to influence the readers' perception about the lawmakers' response to the conflict, which was likely to make the readers cast doubts on the integrity of the committee that would intervene in the conflict. Letting the 'facts' bare, that is, the alleged committee's solidarity with the Muslim community was a possible influence on Christian readers who were likely to boycott the committee's intervention programme due to lack of trust in the political leadership that constituted it (Ishaku, 2012). Again, the lead of the story provided some disturbing information about the composition of the House Committee which was headed by the Deputy Speaker, Alhaji Usman Nafada – a Muslim. The order in which the facts were assembled, from the identification of the team leader – who was not a Christian – to the alleged committee's alliance with the Muslim community, it suggested that the reporters' framing of the story was to achieve a certain goal.

In the heat of the conflict, *The Punch*'s reporters identified three personalities whom they regarded as 'prominent indigenes of Plateau State' (Owuamanam & Olatunji, 2010a, p. 12, par. 1). They included a former head of state, Gen. Yakubu Gowon and two former governors, Chief Joshua Dariye and Ambassador Fidelis Tapgun. In separate interviews, they condemned the renewed violence in Jos. Their prominence in the state was not contestable, given that they occupied senior public offices at different times, but their recognition as 'indigenes' may have been received with condescension by the Hausa Fulani because the reporters' categorization of 'indigenes' did not include them. Those mentioned in the report belonged to the ethnic groups that were regarded as 'indigenes' – a position which the Hausa Fulani community had contested over the years (Crisis Group Africa Report, 2012; Danfulani, 2006; Krause, 2011). The three 'indigenes' were also Christians. The exclusion of the Hausa Fulani Muslims in the report which identified 'prominent indigenes of Plateau State' was the reporters' affirmation that they (Hausa Fulani Muslims) were 'settlers' as documented in literature (Ambe-Uva, 2010; Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011; Plateau Indigenous Development Association Network, 2010). The controversy over the non-inclusion of the Hausa Fulani in the political realm of the state and their settler status in Jos had been, and still is, a major cause of the Jos conflict (A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Rasaq, 2012).

The selection of three 'prominent indigenes' for an opinion poll suggested an endorsement of the native/foreigner dichotomy that prevailed in the state. If a certain Mallam (a title associated with Hausa Fulani) was named as one of the samples for the poll, and the four persons regarded as 'prominent indigenes', then the reporters may have recognised the Hausa Fulani as 'indigenes'. In that sense, *The Punch* helped in reinforcing the argument that the Hausa Fulani Muslims were not indigenes of Jos and, to a large extent, the whole of Plateau State.

Furthermore, in a two-page story entitled, 'Plateau: The war this time', Jude Owuamanam made a description of the recurring violence in Plateau State and how the issue of 'indigenes' and 'settlers' had remained a problem. He wrote that,

> Since September 7, 2001, when an ethno-religious crisis erupted between the indigenes and the Hausa/Fulani settler communities, a state popularly referred to as Home of Peace and Tourism has known no peace [....] At the centre of these crises is the desire of the largely Hausa/Fulani settler community to be accorded full rights as indigenes of Plateau State (Owuamanam, 2010b, p. 48, pars. 1-2).

Owuamanam, in the above introduction, was blunt on the issue in contention. He distinguished between 'the indigenes and the Hausa/Fulani settler communities', and claimed that the conflict had persisted because the latter wanted 'to be accorded full rights as indigenes of Plateau State'. He meant that the Hausa Fulani were not 'indigenes' but desired to be recognised as such. The reporter wanted to inform his readers that the conflict in Jos was triggered by the Hausa Fulani who refused to recognise their status as 'settlers', like other settler groups, and were bent on having a share of what they never possessed. The rights and privileges accorded the 'indigenes' are contained in the Nigerian Federal Character policy document. It recognises the local communities from where Nigerians originate (Alubo, 2009; Egwu, 2001, 2015), as a result of which they (indigenes) enjoy certain privileges such as political appointments, admissions into universities and colleges, while others outside these communities (settlers) are exempted (Danfulani, 2006).

Given the reporter's definition of the context – the 'indigenes' versus the Hausa Fulani 'settlers' – the readers were likely to think along the path that the 'settlers' had invaded the land rightfully owned by the 'indigenes'. The implication is that unless the 'settlers' stopped their agitation and recognised that Jos belonged to the 'indigenes', the conflict would persist.

On Saturday, January 23, *The Punch* published an interview which it conducted with one Alhaji Kabiru Mohammed who had been named in previous reports as the man allegedly stopped from reconstructing his house in Dutse Uku. The paper also featured one Michael Atsi Izang, the village head of Agadang Izar in the Dutse Uku area in the report. The reporter's goal, it would seem, was to get different perspectives of the conflict accounts as both interviewees were linked to each ethnic/religious community in conflict. Kabiru, a Muslim, belonged to the Hausa Fulani 'settler' group while Michael was a Christian 'indigene'. The idea of reporting all the parties in dispute is at the heart of journalistic objectivity research (Cunningham, 2003; Muñoz-Torres, 2012; Wahl-Jorgensen, 2013). The reporter began his narrative with Kabiru's account. He (Kabiru) held that:

> By weekend, I had reached the level where I was going to do the decking. The residents of my area had earlier volunteered to help me when I would come to do the decking. Therefore, yesterday (Sunday) some people came to the site to help in doing the decking [….] Before I knew it, a mob had gathered at the site where I was renovating my house and demanded that we should stop work [….] They said that they didn't want any Muslim to come back to that area again (Owuamanam, 2010a, pp. 8-9).

From this account, Kabiru tried to prove his innocence which, probably, met the expectations of the reporter, especially in a conflict situation where the person interviewed was said to be the accused. The reporter then chose to lay it bare. The said Kabiru suddenly realised that the house he was rebuilding had reached a level that would require a large number of persons to mobilise to site. Those in his neighbourhood, that is, 'the residents of my (*his*) area had volunteered to help me (*him*)'. Perhaps, all the neighbours, or a fraction of them, volunteered to join Kabiru at the site – a place outside the neighbourhood. A group of persons (suspected to be non-Muslims) later appeared and insisted that the work be stopped because they would no longer allow Muslims to live in that area. In the same interview, Michael Izang gave his own side:

I was in the church when I heard people shouting near my house. It was later that I heard that one Hausa man came to reconstruct his house. I asked whether there were many people. They said that they were more than 150 [….] If a man comes on a Sunday with such number of people to reconstruct a three-bedroom bungalow and not a church as BBC reported, then something must be wrong (Owuamanam, 2010a, p. 9).

Michael did not witness the initial clash between the Muslim and the Christian youths but he claimed to have been briefed by eye-witnesses after he left the church where he had joined other worshippers at a Sunday service. His subjects (for he was a village head) who witnessed the incident had confirmed to him that a Hausa man led about 150 people to invade the area. He wondered why the man would mobilise such a huge crowd to reconstruct a three-bedroom bungalow on a Sunday when Christians were in their churches praying. He reasoned that if Kabiru and his group of 'volunteers' chose a Sunday on which to resume work on a building that had been destroyed in the wake of previous conflict, given that many residents would be in their churches, portended a threat to the area. It suggested that they had not come to reconstruct the house as claimed but to attack those who lived in that area.

The two accounts that emerged from Kabiru and Michael have established that the reconstruction of a house in Dutse Uku triggered the conflict between rival youth groups. In these narratives, the reporter-involvement was less obvious as he tried to overcome the dilemma confronting some journalists who often give a voice to one party while they silence the other. He could have interviewed one group and left the other, or devoted much space to one and a little space to the other. He brought to the fore the opinions of both parties so that the readers may pass their judgment.

Figure 8.3. 1 The three strategies adopted by The Punch journalists during the January 17, 2010 Jos conflict. Source: The researcher.

Content of the figure:

Neutral-to-goal-focused strategy
- Christians and Muslim youths clashed
- Reported possible causes of conflict
- Muslim youths mobilised and attacked everybody they saw
- Muslim youths started attacking Christian worshippers
- Christian elders condemned attack on Christians in Jos

Implanting strategy
- Christians urged to defend themselves against opponents
- House Committee visited and commiserated with Muslims and avoided Christians

Reinforcement strategy
- Recognition of Christian elders as indigenes
- The violence erupted between the indigenes and the Hausa Fulani settler communities

8.3.2 The *Weekly/Daily Trust* - (Samples: January 18 -23)

The *Daily Trust*'s reporters – Andrew Agbese, Mahmud Lalo and Mishahu Bashir – corroborated the report of *The Punch* that the January 17 violence occurred as a result of disagreement between rival groups over house reconstruction. While *The Punch* recounted that the disagreement began during a football match in Dutse Uku area, and later at the site where Alhaji Kabiru was said to have mobilised some youths to rebuild his house, the *Daily Trust* focused on the latter. *The Punch* had alleged that before the incident involving Alhaji Kabiru, there had been 'the refusal of either religious sect to allow each other to reconstruct

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the houses destroyed during the November 28, 2008 crisis in the area' (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2, par.13). *The Daily Trust* also confirmed that it happened 'after an argument on the rebuilding of homes destroyed in the November 28 clashes' (Agbese, Lalo, & Bashir, 2010, p. 1, par.3). The *Daily Trust* reporters provided additional information (which was not contained in *The Punch* report) about the state of the Alhaji when a group allegedly stopped him from rebuilding his house. They wrote:

> The Alhaji was allegedly beaten by the youths. This drew the attention of some rival youths who came over, leading to a fight between Christian and Muslim youths [….] (Agbese, Lalo, et al., 2010, p. 5, par.7)

In all the accounts reported by *The Punch* there was no mention of physical assault on Alhaji Kabiru. What was reported –including the interview he granted – was the stoppage of the reconstruction of his house (Owuamanam, 2010a, pp. 8-9), which resulted in a clash between Christian and Muslim youths (Agbese, Lalo, et al., 2010; Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010). The reporters narrated their story in a way that would make the readers to believe that the Christian youths did not only stop the Alhaji's work but assaulted him physically. It showed the youths' seeming desperation to stop any Muslim from returning to Dutse Uku as alleged by Alhaji Kabiru (Owuamanam, 2010a, pp. 8-9).

In the *Daily Trust* report, Agbese, Lalo, et al. (2010, p. 1, par.4) introduced casualty figures which were credited to an official of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI), Hajiya Khadija Gambo Hawaja. She claimed that 'there were 10 corpses lying at the Central Mosque, and 16 people were taken to the hospital with gunshot wounds […,] over 20 corpses lying at Anguwan Duala'. The reporters used the casualty figures given by an official of a Muslim group (JNI), who was not the custodian of information on violent conflict instead of the army or the police, the Red Cross or persons directly engaged with the conflict actors. They also wrote in paragraph 5 that 'a correspondent for the Reuters news agency counted 12 bodies at

the Jos University Teaching Hospital and the Central Mosque […]'. Paragraphs 14 -15 stated that,

> At the Murna hospital, our reporter saw some casualties receiving treatment, among them seven-year –old Ibrahim Abdullaziz who was wounded in the eye [….] A number of corpses were also seen on the ground in the hospital (Agbese, Lalo, et al., 2010, pp. 1-5, pars.14-15).

There could be two dimensions to this reporting technique. First, the reporters chased up on news sources that could quote number of deaths in Muslim enclaves to create an impression that Muslims were killed by their opponents – Christians. For example, '10 corpses […] at the Central Mosque' and 'over 20 corpses […] at Anguwan Duala' were said to have been recorded by a JNI official. Were Christians not killed in the violence? Who among the reporters contacted an official of the Christian Association of Nigeria - the corresponding body for the Christian community - to verify the number of deaths they recorded from the Christian side (if such an official had information as the JNI source claimed)? Even an agency reporter was said to have counted a dozen corpses at the Jos University Teaching Hospital and the Central Mosque. Had the mosque become a mortuary? Who identified the Muslim corpses and assembled them in the mosque? Were the bodies taken to the mosque for a farewell session or burial? Why were the reporters not at major Christian centres such as the COCIN headquarters, ECWA headquarters and the Bishops' courts to establish the conditions of the perceived Christian victims who may have taken refuge there, or whose bodies may have been deposited there?

Second, the *Daily Trust* reporters did not visit the famous Christian health centres in Jos – the Our Lady of Apostles' Hospital, Bingham University Teaching Hospital and the Vom Christian Hospital, where they could ascertain the number of victims who sustained different degrees of injury as a result of the violence. What struck the reporters most was the plight of a seven-year-old Ibrahim Abdullaziz (a Muslim) whose eye was allegedly wounded.

The boy and other injured persons – who were likely to be Muslims because they were receiving treatment at a hospital owned by a Muslim – caught their attention beyond the plight of the victims in other hospitals.

The reporters had set a goal which tended to serve the interests of their owners – the Hausa Fulani Muslim cause (African Media Development Initiative, 2005). By focusing on Muslim casualties rather than all those who were affected, they aligned with their religious/ethnic community. As such, the headline of their report, 'Many killed in Jos violence', suggested that the term 'many' described a large number of Muslims. It did not include Christians with whom they clashed.

By Tuesday, January 19, the *Daily Trust* was assertive on the immediate causes of the violence in Dutse Uku area. The paper narrated how the conflict began and, for the first time, it identified one Alhaji Kabiru Mohammed as the man at the heart of the controversy. In that report, Mahmud Lalo and Mishahu Bashir wrote this lead:

> The crisis that engulfed the Plateau State capital of Jos on Sunday started at Dutse Uku […] when Christian youths tried to stop a Muslim man from renovating his house that was destroyed in the November 2008 riot, according to Alhaji Kabiru Mohammed, the man at the centre of the storm (Lalo & Bashir, 2010, p. 1, par.1)

The reporters in this narrative made a distinction between the 'bad guys' from the 'good guys' (Ruigrok, 2008). They claimed that the 'Christian youths tried to stop a Muslim man […]' which suggested that Christian youths (the aggressors), without any provocation, interfered with the affairs of the Muslim man (the victim) whose religious community was on hand to defend his rights. The reporters declared that the action of the Christian youths ignited the violence. They did not employ *The Punch*'s strategy of moderation such as 'the disagreement […] attracted rival youth gangs' (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2, par.10). Neither the Christian nor Muslim group was named as the aggressor. Although the reporters of the *Daily Trust* seemed to have adopted the theory of 'telling it as it is' (Bell, 1997;

Blaagaard, 2013), in order to separate good from evil , their framing which indicted Christian youths was likely driven by personal bias. Like most reports in their preliminary stages, the reporters used the term 'alleged' to describe the roles of conflict actors because the initial causes of the conflict were in the realm of conjecture. The absence of such legal terminologies in the lead of the *Daily Trust* report suggested that the reporters had a goal – that is, to portray the Hausa man and his group as the 'good guys'.

Evidently, two reports of the *Daily Trust* (January 19, 2010) were used for the purpose of achieving balance. In one, 'JNI says 27 dead, 300 in hospital', Ahmed Mohammed reported that the Jos North chapter of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) claimed that 26 Muslims (not 27 as captured in the headline) died in Dutse Uku violence while over 300 of them sustained different degrees of injury (A. Mohammed, 2010b, p. 2). In another, 'Christian elders condemn Jos crisis', Abbas Jimoh wrote that a group known as the Plateau State Christian Elders' Consultative Forum had condemned […] the attack on churches by some Muslim youths in Jos, describing it as an act of terrorism' (A. Jimoh, 2010, p. 5). The first report which emerged from the Muslim bloc focused on Muslim casualty and the second report indicted Muslim youths for attack on churches.

The newspaper tried to provide a level playing ground for conflicting parties as it offered them the platform on which they expressed their frustrations. JNI's alleged 27 deaths comprised of Muslims who were presumed to have been killed by Christians (because Christians were their opponents). In that report, no government agency, the police or official of the Red Cross confirmed the casualty figure released by the JNI. The reporter relied on JNI for information on casualty which the group may have come up with in order to attract sympathy for the Muslims. The strategy was employed by the reporter to instigate the readers, especially Muslims, who might be willing to 'defend' their faith against their opponents.

For a newspaper that had been accused of 'Islamising' its contents through its reports, editorials and commentaries (J. D. Galadima, 2010), it was, perhaps, uncommon to read about allegations of attack on Christians by the Muslims in Jos. For example, the Christian Elders' Consultative Forum stated in the report,

> In very strong terms, we hereby condemn Sunday's attack on Christians in Jos, the capital of Plateau State in which several persons have been reported injured or dead. Our fellow brothers and sisters were just coming out of churches in Nassarawa area of Jos when some Muslim youths pounced on them with cutlasses and other dangerous weapons [….] We call on our Muslim brothers and sisters to see this as the last of such provocation on the Christians in the state. Enough is enough (A. Jimoh, 2010, p. 5, pars.3-5).

Although *Daily Trust* did not give prominence to the story as it occupied a single column on the top right corner of the page, compared to the report on 27 deaths alleged by JNI which ran across four columns and placed in the centre of the page, the paper ensured that both parties were given a voice. This suggests that by placing the stories side-by-side, *Daily Trust* employed a strategy which created the impression that it was an inclusive and balanced newspaper.

A similar technique manifested in two other stories on Page 2 (January 19, 2010). Both headlines - 'Jos crisis: Imam, deputy speaker appeal for calm' and 'CAN, ACF condemn crisis' shared a common goal. In the first story, Andrew Agbese reported that the Chief Imam of the Jos Central Mosque and deputy speaker of the Plateau State House of Assembly urged Muslims to remain law abiding. In the second report, Ibraheem Musa and Ismail Mudashir wrote that the Christian Association of Nigeria and the Arewa Consultative Forum sued for peace among religious groups. This, again, was an indication that conflicting groups could be reported in the newspaper.

The lead story of the *Daily Trust* on January 20, 2010 was entitled, 'Black day in Jos: Scores killed in new fighting'. In a simple language, Mahmud Lalo gave an account of the

recurring violence for which he neither accused the Muslims nor Christians. The renewed hostilities were said to have emerged from the violence that erupted in Dutse Uku area the previous day. Mahmud Lalo wrote:

> It was not clear as to what caused yesterday's brutal escalation, though some sources said it may have been caused by some communities' anger at the losses in lives and property that they suffered during the crisis' first round on Sunday (Lalo, 2010, pp. 1-5, par.3).

The reporter implied that communities (including Christians and Muslims) suffered losses, as a result of which they vented their anger by engaging in fresh violence. He realised that it was not his responsibility to recount the losses suffered by either party, or to quote casualty figures from unauthorised sources as some reporters had done. This strategy is what conflict sensitive journalists and responsible conflict reporters have advocated (see Howard, 2009, 2015; Singh, 2013). The reporter's narrative could be perceived as neutral because the fact that fresh violence occurred and all parties were affected had been established. This was the reporter's understanding of media logic – mediatisation. His strategy of news framing was driven by this logic.

The Jama'atu Nasril Islam (JNI) took the second head-count of Muslim casualties on January 20. Ahmed Mohammed who reported in previous edition that 27 Muslims had been killed, again, told his readers that JNI confirmed 138 deaths between January 17 and 19. The reporter continued to liaise with JNI for an update on the death toll of Muslims. All the figures were released by those he identified as officials of the JNI, Malam Danjuma Khalid and Hajiya Gambo Hawaja – who was said to be the chairperson of the Women Welfare Committee of the group (A. Mohammed, 2010a, p. 2). The reporter held that he contacted the programme coordinator of the Christian Stefanus Foundation, Engr. Mark Lipdo who said 'they were not able to count the number of the dead as at Monday because it was too early to do so' (A. Mohammed, 2010a, p. 2, par.3). From Sunday to Tuesday (as at press time), no

official casualty figure had emerged from the government or the police except the JNI. JNI's patronage by the reporter may have been influenced by his commitment to ethnic/religious community. The counting was mostly reported at the Jos Central Mosque where Muslim corpses had allegedly piled up. The reporter's strategy was to reinforce the notion that the alleged attack on the 'settler' Hausa Fulani community was premeditated.

In the same edition of the *Daily Trust* (January 20, 2010), while there seemed to be a blend of reports in which Christian and Muslim leaders and organisations implored the citizens to live in peace, and the ones that appeared inciting, a column which was almost devoted to the Jos conflict introduced the readers to a fairly new argument. Unlike Yahaya Ibrahim who wrote that a bishop (head of a Christian bloc) had called on religious leaders to guard against hate messages in their sermons (Y. Ibrahim, 2010, p. 2), Mohammed Haruna's report may have provoked the 'indigenous' Christians, the governor and the government of Plateau State. The headline of his 18-paragraph story, 'Jang, the media and the genocide on the Plateau this time' was a reflection of its content. He accused Governor Jang and the indigenous ethnic groups, the security and some sections of the media of complicity. He wrote this about them:

> This time, however, they seemed hell bent on finishing what they started on November 28, 2008. As at the time of this writing hundreds of so-called settlers have been murdered in cold blood in many cases allegedly by the police who are supposed to put out the fire. Thousands more have had to take refuge in army barracks and police stations [….] As usual, the so-called settlers have been blamed by the preponderance of the media for starting it all (H. Mohammed, 2010, p. 64, par.9)

The pronoun 'they', as used in the writer's text, comprised of all people and institutions that allegedly planned and carried out the attack on the 'settler' communities. At the outset, he claimed that the governor was the mastermind of the attack, and that he, along with his accomplices, carried out 'the genocide that has been perpetrated against Muslims in Jos and its environs [….]' (H. Mohammed, 2010, p. 64, par.7). But there was no judicial process

instituted against the governor and, to date, neither him nor an official of his government has been tried for genocide (Ishaku, 2012). Perhaps, the writer's allegation against the governor was because he belonged to the 'wrong' religion and ethnic group. The governor was a Christian and an 'indigene', which implied that he was, by virtue of his faith and ethnic extraction, a perceived enemy of the Hausa Fulani 'settler'/Muslim community of which Mohammed Haruna was a member.

The writer meant that his kith and kin had been killed in their hundreds since 2008. His allegations were weighty yet they occupied the newspaper's back page. The writer's strategy of framing seemed to have stemmed from his belief and understanding of the issues at stake, or his loyalty to ethnic/religious community. But importantly, the newspaper editors may have shared the writer's view by a mere endorsement of the story and giving it a place of prominence. The column became the paper's selling point. The data which emerged from the interviews conducted in this research showed that some readers had consistently accused newspapers of using their columns to inflame the Jos conflict (IP 12 – HFS). It means that the strategy which the editors employed was to engage reporters who were dedicated to such war of words, especially on matters that pertained to faith and social order.

The *Daily Trust* reports of January 22 contained embedded elements which conveyed certain information not coded in the headlines. The lead of each story expressed the thrust of the news but its body carried with it another message. In one of the reports, 'Jos crisis caused by impunity – Atiku', the reporter used the inverted pyramid news writing style in which the ideas were organised in descending order beginning with the most important to the least element (Harcup, 2013, 2015; Wheeler, 2005). Atiku, a former vice president of Nigeria, blamed the recurring Jos violence on its poor handling by those in authority of power. But in paragraph 4, the reporter drew the attention of his readers to a statement credited to the

former vice president which may have reinforced the resolve of the Hausa Fulani 'settler' community to defend their rights over Jos territory. He wrote:

> Atiku also condemned the indigene-settler dichotomy in the state saying, 'all Nigerians must feel at home wherever they are in the country. Indigene-stranger dichotomy is alien to the constitution' (Olaniyi, 2010, p. 8, par.4).

Muideen Olaniyi chose to use Atiku's statement which dismissed the 'indigene-settler' tradition of the natives but upheld the Hausa Fulani agitation for membership of Jos community thereby signalling victory for the 'settlers'. The reporter's narrative suggested that Jos, like other cities in Nigeria, belonged to all people who desired to live there. As such, there was no basis for separating 'indigenes' from 'settlers'. As the former vice president was quoted as saying the 'indigene-stranger dichotomy is alien to the constitution' of Nigeria, the reporter failed to point out that every Nigerian is, first and foremost, a member of a local community and, second, a citizen of Nigeria (Alubo, 2009; Egwu, 2015). Those who are not part of that community are often regarded as 'outsiders', 'foreigners' or 'strangers'. Muideen Olaniyi's implanting strategy tended to encourage the Hausa Fulani readers to sustain their struggle for recognition as full members of Jos community, not strangers as the 'indigenes' had labelled them. The reporter's role performance was, therefore, non-objective.

A headline of another story on January 22 read, 'Jos: Jonathan orders army into crisis-prone areas'. The reporter, Habeeb Pindiga, informed *Daily Trust* readers, in the first instance, that the army had been ordered by the vice president to take over the security of Jos following the spates of violence there. He said the violence had recorded over 400 deaths in one week, yet there was no evidence of this. Of the 14 paragraphs, 12 contained the text of the vice president's speech. One paragraph, the first, contained the declaration of the vice president's order (the lead) and another paragraph provided the context – the origin of the conflict.

Rather than summarise the two or three causes of the conflict which had been reported since it occurred on January 17, Habeeb Pindigaa recognised only one, perhaps, to influence the readers' perception. Both *The Punch* and *Daily Trust* had given the different versions based on eye-witnesses' accounts. They included a disagreement between rival groups during a football march, the attack on Christian worshippers by some Muslim youths in the Nassarawa Gwong area as alleged by the Commissioner of Police, and the stoppage of a Hausa man to rebuild his house by some youths (Agbese, Lalo, et al., 2010; Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010). In paragraph 3, Habeeb Pindiga wrote:

> […] violence between Muslims and Christians broke out in Jos on Sunday, when a group of Christian youths allegedly tried to stop a Muslim man from rebuilding his home that was destroyed in the November 28 clashes (Pindiga, 2010, p. 8, par.3).

Like Muideen Olaniyi who used Atiku's story to introduce the issue of the constitution on the full rights of the citizens living in all parts of Nigeria, Habeeb Pindiga embedded the 'Muslim man's version' which suggested an endorsement of it over other accounts. The second component of the report – that seemed essential in the framing process – rode on the main story from which the headline emerged. The reporter used the phrase, '[…] a group of Christian youths allegedly tried to stop a Muslim man […]', to show an action of aggression perpetrated by the Christian group. His strategy of framing produced two components of reality: the vice president's order to the army to take over security in Jos and the alleged attack on the Hausa man as the trigger of the conflict. It also suggested that he was interested in identifying the Christian youths as the aggressors.

The back page of the *Daily Trust* of January 22 contained a story by Adamu Adamu in which he accused Governor Jonah Jang and the Plateau State Commissioner of Police of complicity. He, particularly, dismissed the claim by the commissioner that some Muslim youths attacked Christian worshippers in Nassarawa Gwong area. He wrote that,

[…] since Christians don't go to church armed, the commissioner of police may wish to tell the nation where they got the guns with which they defended themselves to account for the bullet wounds on the bodies found. Or, is he insinuating that the arms used have all this while been hidden in the church? (A. Adamu, 2010, p. 56, par.3).

The writer reasoned that if the Christian worshippers whom the commissioner had exonerated from the attack were innocent as claimed, and were simply caught up in it, they would not have been in possession of arms with which they defended themselves against the militant Muslim youths. What remained unclear was whether the worshippers were seen with and used such weapons for self-defence. As far as the writer was concerned, if bullet wounds were found on the bodies of the victims resulting from the purported attack by Christians then the victims could have been Muslims. This is because Christians who allegedly used weapons might have utilised them on their opponents. Adamu Adamu portrayed the Commissioner of Police as a partial law enforcement officer because his comment after the first round of violence suggested it. But a number of citizens, apart from the Hausa Fulani who refuted the allegation because they were accused of launching the attack, regarded the commissioner's report as authentic having ordered a preliminary investigation into it (J. D. Galadima, 2010; Ishaku, 2012). Furthermore, it was the commissioner's statutory duty to make an official statement on any breach of security within the state police command. His report did not augur well with the Muslim community as its members petitioned the Inspector General of Police demanding his dismissal from the service. Ishaku (2012) wrote that instead of rewarding the commissioner for his resilience and courage, the police headquarters ordered his deployment and subsequent retirement. The action by the police authorities suggested that the Muslim community might have influenced it.

In his writing, Adamu Adamu handed down a warning to those who were 'playing with fire' (a reflection of the title of his article). He implied that the alleged attack on

Muslims and the 'settler' community must stop; otherwise there would be resistance and a reprisal. For example, he wrote:

> In the absence of government or faced with the inaction of government or a government of inaction , it is to be feared that the ethnic and religious kith and kin of Plateau Muslims in neighbouring states may attempt to mount a revenge attack. This is no longer a possibility; it is a probability now (A. Adamu, 2010, p. 56, par.14).

The writer might have expressed the views of the editors to put in check the activities of the government and the indigenous communities, as well as some security operatives who were allegedly conspiring to eliminate Muslims and the Hausa Fulani in Jos. The editors' strategy of engaging columnists of the Hausa Fulani extraction, and of the Muslim bloc, may have been the case here. Adamu Adamu's article was a build-up on Mohammed Haruna's. Both writers wrote from the point of view of the Hausa Fulani Muslims (their ethnic/religious community) who had been allegedly oppressed by the 'indigenes', and had sought a means to be heard.

There was a slightly different approach to reporting as the conflict entered the sixth day. In the *Weekly Trust* of January 23, 2010, three journalists who had previously reported the violence as it spread to nearly all parts of the city, did not seem to be in a hurry for breaking news. Unlike their earlier accounts that silenced possible causes of the violence other than the one believed to have involved a Hausa man (Kabiru Mohammed) and some youths, the reporters informed their readers that the causes were multidimensional. They did not also describe it as an attack on the Muslims and the Hausa Fulani community whose death toll was said to have increased by the day. The somewhat provocative contents that dominated previous reports were absent. Perhaps, the reporters became more sensible than they were because new facts emerged beyond the halting of the rebuilding of a house. They accommodated other versions in their feature article. The reporters – Andrew Agbese, Ahmed Mohammed and Mahmud Lalo – recognised, first, the version which held that the conflict

started during a football match between a Christian-dominated team and a Muslim-dominated team. Second, they said it may have erupted when some youths allegedly attacked Kabiru Mohammed and those who volunteered to rebuild his house. Third, that Kabiru took advantage of the absence of the Christian neighbour by encroaching into the neighbour's land. Fourth, that some Muslim youths, without provocation, launched an attack on Christian worshippers in Nassarawa Gwong.

The reporters realised that they had the obligation to let their readers know what the possible causes of the violence were since the incident was still being investigated. This approach had been theorised by D'Angelo and Kuypers (2010) who argued that the audiences could determine their reality by making judgment on what might constitute reality, especially when faced with many accounts. But what constituted the reporters' reality soon manifested. They used a strategy of framing that suggested to their readers that the violence erupted as a result of the halting of the reconstruction of Kabiru Mohammed's house in Dutse Uku area. Having enumerated the possible causes as they were widely held, the reporters further narrated how they undertook their investigations:

> Efforts to locate the scene of the football match and those who participated by our correspondents failed as none of the persons interviewed was able to point at a particular field or the location where the match was said to have been played. In the version that attributed the crisis to efforts to rebuild a house, our correspondent was able to identify and speak with one of the major characters, Malam Kabiru who confirmed that indeed the crisis emanated from his effort to rebuild his house [….] Efforts by our correspondent to identify the Jarawa man however failed as even Malam Kabiru does not know his name (Agbese, Mohammed, & Lalo, 2010, p. 2, pars.10-11).

From the above narrative, the reporters intended to dismiss the claim that linked the conflict to a football match. The location of the field of the football match could have been traced as previous reports (e.g., Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2, par.9) and some people believed to be residents of Dutse Uku, had given a clue on where the match was said to have held. If the

reporters wanted to initiate an investigative process to determine the veracity or otherwise of this account, they could have moved into the area, identified some residents and interacted with them to know whether a football match of some sort had taken place. It was expected, notwithstanding, that no player or 'those who participated' in the match would be found on the field of play or anywhere near it given the circumstances that prevailed. Perhaps, those whom the reporters claimed to have interviewed were likely the wrong samples as a number of them may have been hand-picked to provide the responses desired by the reporters.

In the second scenario, *Daily Trust*'s correspondent 'was able to identify and speak with one of the major characters, Malam Kabiru'. Again, it was a strategy to reinforce the belief that the Christian youths who allegedly stopped Malam Kabiru and his fellow Muslims from rebuilding a house led to the clash. In that sense, the Christian youths were to blame for igniting the religious violence. To put simply, Christians organised and launched an attack on the Muslims in Jos. All the 'efforts' made by *Daily Trust*'s reporters to get the 'other side' of the story were unsuccessful. Thus, they suppressed the views of those who could have affirmed or dispelled the claim that an argument ensued at a football match. The second character in the house reconstruction story, the Jarawa man (also known as Bajari), a Christian and an indigene, was also invisible. Yet, he was said to have lived in the community and allegedly mobilised the Christian youths in that community to resist any attempt by Muslim residents to return to the area (Lalo & Bashir, 2010, p. 5; Owuamanam, 2010a, p. 8). Who could believe that his whereabouts were unknown yet he exerted such an influence on the youths who allegedly carried out the attack on their perceived enemies? Was there no one in the area who could comment on the role played by the Jarawa man in the event where he was not found? These questions suggest that the journalists were 'doing something' with the conflict narratives (Cottle, 2006). Their strategies were goal-oriented.

Finally, the reporters tried to dismiss the official report by the Commissioner of Police which alleged that some Muslim youths had attacked Christian worshippers in Nassarawa Gwong area. They interviewed an official of the youth wing of the Jama'atu Nasril Islam, Ahmed Garba, who claimed that 'it was the statement by the commissioner that escalated the crisis saying it on one side alarmed those who thought they would find neutrality in the intervention by the security agencies' (Agbese, Mohammed, et al., 2010, p. 2, par.18). The reporters used Garba's statement in their report to create an impression that the Police Commissioner was biased despite his claim that what he had reported was based on the preliminary investigation by the state police command. The framing of this narrative suggested that the commissioner took side with the Christian community of which he was a part.

Message-laden strategy
- Additional information that Alhaji Kabiru was beaten by Christian youths.
- 'Many' (Muslims) killed in Jos violence.

Blame-game strategy
- Christian youths tried to stop a Muslim man
- Christian elders condemned attack on Christians

Community-aided strategy
- JNI, Muslim Umma as news source
- Efforts to speak with the 'other side' failed.

Neutral-to-goal-focused strategy
- It was not clear what caused yesterday's brutal escalation.
- The genocide that has been perpetrated against Muslims in Jos

Implanting strategy
- Indigene-stranger dichotomy is alien to the constitution

8.4 Summary of Analysis

The analysis shows that the newspapers' coverage of the January 2010 Jos conflict was adequate. Both papers reported the violence on the first day after it erupted on January 17, giving an update on the Christian-Muslim or the 'indigene-settler' clash as the days went by. The papers were unanimous on where the conflicting groups had the initial clash – Dutse – Uku area of Jos. But their narratives varied as the journalists employed different strategies to unravel the causes of violence and the roles which the conflict actors performed.

The Punch reporters adopted a tripartite system – the neutral-to-goal-focused strategy, the implanting strategy and the reinforcement strategy. As shown in Figure 8.3.1, these strategies were employed at different levels. First, some reporters used words/phrases to establish the context – that violence in which Christians and Muslims were involved took place in Dutse Uku. In the first instance, they hid the identities of the aggressors and the victims, and attempted to maintain a neutral position by reporting the possible causes of the conflict. Thereafter, there was a transition from 'neutrality' to a 'goal-focused' framing which pointed to the direction that the violence was ignited by Muslims. The reporters had a goal that manifested. In those narratives, they reported that 'Muslim youths were said to have mobilised and attacked everybody they saw', 'Muslim youths started attacking Christian worshippers'

Some of the reporters used the implanting strategy (e.g., the reports on PDP, House of Reps) in which different subjects were 'implanted' into the advertised stories. In the PDP report, readers were reminded about an earlier call on Christians in the North to defend themselves against the opponents of their faith. The House of Representatives' story showed how a previous committee had 'visited and commiserated with Muslims and avoided

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Christians'. These were the reporters' strategy of inciting Christians against the Muslims. There was the strategy of reinforcement. *The Punch* reporters, in some instances, showed the distinction between Christian indigenes and the Muslim settler communities to reinforce the belief that the 'settlers' were not owners of Jos.

For *Daily Trust*, the reporters employed five strategies. These include: The message-laden strategy, community-aided strategy, the blame-game strategy, the implanting strategy and neutral-to-goal-focused strategy (see Figure 8.3.2). In the message-laden technique, the reporters loaded their stories with additional information which emerged to show that the Muslims were attacked. For example, in all the accounts, it was only in the *Daily Trust* report that Alhaji Kabiru Mohammed was said to have been beaten by Christian youths. Also, the use of language that 'many were killed in Jos violence' referred to 'many Muslims' who lost their lives in the attack.

Some reporters adopted the community-aided strategy. They used members of their ethnic and religious community (e.g., the officials of the JNI, Muslim Umma) as news sources. These sources produced 'up-to-date' casualty figures of Muslims which the journalists used for their reports. Furthermore, the reporters claimed, in some instances, that effort to speak with sources from the 'other side' failed. Others consistently blamed Christians for the violence while some reported that Christian elders accused Muslims of carrying out the attack. It was a blame-game situation. The *Daily Trust* reporters also adopted the neutral-to-goal-focused strategy. After a sustained narrative about the conflict actors, they took a position on those whom they believed were the aggressors. For example, while a report claimed that 'it was not clear what caused yesterday's brutal escalation' (neutral position), another described the violence as 'the genocide that has been perpetrated against Muslims in Jos' (goal-focused).

Like *The Punch*, they also incorporated other subjects in their reports. For example, the Atiku report carried with it the subject of 'indigenes' and 'settlers'. The reporters wanted to re-echo the former vice president's remark that 'indigene-stranger dichotomy is alien to the constitution' – which was the position of the Hausa Fulani 'settlers'.

8.5 Conclusion

The analysis shows that the journalists employed different strategies that produced the narratives which constituted the readers' reality. During the sampled years – 2001, 2008 and 2010 – when the conflicts were said to be vicious – the dominant features included the role performance of the reporters/writers which identified them as 'Christian' or 'Muslim' journalists. All the strategies used in the framing of the contents showed a reporter-involvement in the conflict which suggested that they were participants.

In all, the *Daily/Weekly Trust* paid more attention to the conflict by the volume of its reports and the interests they served. Nearly all the reporters/writers were Muslims and their goal driven by the support for a change of identity from a Hausa Fulani 'settler' community to an 'indigenous' one. *The Punch*, also dominated by Christian reporters, was inconsistent. It created an impression of neutrality in some of its reports but pursued its goal of reinforcing the identity of the Christian ethnic groups of Afizere, Anaguta and Berom as the 'indigenes' of Jos.

Chapter Nine

Discussion of the Findings, Conclusion and Recommendations

9.1 Introduction

As a starting point, this research recognised that journalists demonstrated professional ineptitude by taking sides with social groups in the Jos conflict (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012). It was based on these previous studies, which have been frequently cited in this research, that conflict reporting in Jos was considered problematic. This subject could not be ignored as the goal of this research was to expand the literature by addressing the problem through an extensive study of the journalists' strategies of framing aimed at understanding how the Jos conflict narratives emerged. While journalists are generally believed to adopt various strategies of framing conflict narratives (D. Barker, 2007; Cottle, 2006; Seib, 2013), there is no research showing how these journalistic strategies were employed in the Jos conflict. Thus, the current study emerged to fill this gap in literature.

What the researcher perceived as the highest standard of practice – reporting the news as the journalist observed it – a tradition which had been entrenched in journalism (Maras, 2013; Schudson, 2001; Schulz et al., 2012), was contestable. The researcher's experience as a reporter – how he observed the newsroom routines during the early years of the Jos conflict - showed that many journalists were not objective as they claimed.

In many respects, this study set out to advance journalistic strategies research focusing on the re-orientation of journalists in Jos and, by extension, other parts of Nigeria ravaged by ethnic and/or religious violence. Since this area of scholarship had been ignored,

it was important to explore it. There was a commitment to conduct the research thoroughly by interacting with the journalists about their experiences of the conflict, and analysing their stories in selected newspapers that gained prominence across the North and South regions over the years. The study was drawn on the five factors that underpin social research – crisis, gap filling, importance, commitment and depth (Shank et al., 2014). Although these factors have manifested in this research, the focus was on depth and gap filling (the analytical depth of journalistic strategies research and gap filling of existing literature). This has helped to define the research objectives.

Based on the rationale for conducting this research as outlined above, there was the need to investigate how journalists took sides with conflicting parties in Jos, as established by J. D. Galadima (2010), A. O. Musa and Ferguson (2013) and (Rasaq, 2012), in relation to the most cited violent conflict in Jos which occurred in 2001, 2008 and 2010. The research was aimed at identifying and understanding the linguistic choices of the journalists and the interests they served. In the light of this, the following research objectives emerged:

- To examine the factors that influenced the practices of journalists who reported the violent conflict in Jos;
- To establish the extent to which journalists' exposure to violence influenced their framing of news on the conflict;
- To explore the strategies journalists employed in the framing of news on the conflict;
- To recommend ways by which journalists can contribute to peacebuilding efforts in Jos

The first, second, and third objectives were achieved by formulating three research questions which reflected the key thematic elements (factors that influenced journalistic practices, effects of journalists' exposure to violence on news framing, and the journalists' strategies of

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reporting the Jos conflict). The questions were answered through interview and qualitative content analysis methods and the correlation of both data sets. The fourth objective, in particular, was achieved by analysing the findings of the data sets from which a new thinking towards a solutions – review journalism evolved. In Section 9.2 of this chapter, the findings have been discussed in connected stages showing how the research questions were answered and the objectives of the research were achieved.

This chapter has also highlighted the limitations of the research, the experience and the lessons learnt. It provided the summary of the thesis and made some recommendations.

9.2 Discussion of the Findings

The analysis of data in chapters 6, 7 and 8 (the interview data analysis and the qualitative content analysis) was aimed at explaining the journalists' perceptions about their experiences of reporting conflict and what manifested in their conflict narratives. The analysis of both data sets produced answers to the research questions posed by the researcher. As explained in Chapter 5 (see p. 103), the interview and qualitative content analysis methods were employed for the purpose of complementarity (Schreier, 2012) – the former focussing on the perceptions of the journalists and the latter examining their reports with greater depth (Denscombe, 2010; Silverman, 2013). Throughout the analysis, the researcher provided the step-by-step approaches to identifying the data sets and the meanings ascribed to them – a process recognised by Goldberg and Allen (2015) as an 'analytical journey' (p.10). For the interview data analysis, the researcher adopted the framework developed by Saldana (2016) which required the investigator to pay attention to relevant portions of the data that would respond to the research questions. In qualitative content analysis, the focus was on the linguistic choices of journalists pertaining to the framing of news headlines, leads and the body of text, and how these choices constitute 'explicit' and 'inferred' communication (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

In this section, the researcher endeavoured to correlate the findings in order to show how they responded to the research questions. Qualitative researchers tend to agree that this process is critical in qualitative data management (Frost et al., 2010; Saldana, 2015, 2016). In that regard, the findings of this study have been integrated as recommended by Saldana (2016) who described the process as code weaving – allowing the researcher to identify outcomes that interrelate or differ so that the phenomena being studied may be understood. In doing this, Saldana (2016) urges the qualitative researcher to 'search for evidence in the data that supports […] summary statements, and/or disconfirming evidence that suggests a revision of those statements' (p.276). This section establishes this correlation focussing on evidences in the interview and content analysis data.

9.2.1 RQ1: What factors influenced the practices of journalists who reported the violent conflict in Jos?

At the outset, the researcher recognised that probing the participants' strategies of reporting conflict required the formulation of 'what' and 'how' questions to gain a deeper understanding about their attitudes (Goldberg & Allen, 2015). The 'what' in RQ1, interrogated the factors that influenced the practices of the conflict journalists. The response to this question was located in the interview and QCA data. The journalists identified three main factors that inhibited their practice: the residential segregation in their work environment ('indigenous' Christian ethnic groups on one side and the 'settler' Hausa Fulani Muslims on the other), pressure from conflict actors, editors and news sources (those who interfered with editorial independence), and the constant witness to violence (everyday encounter with violence which made journalists vulnerable or participants in the conflict rather than disinterested observers). The data showed that many journalists took side with conflicting parties that belonged to their ethnic and/or religious communities, either because

such communities harboured them, or the media they worked for, and their news sources, prevailed on them to report the conflict in a particular way.

It revealed that their membership of ethnic/religious community had greater influence on them over their membership of professional community. That is, they were, first and foremost, Hausa Fulani Muslims and indigenous Christians, and then journalists. These identities influenced their role performance – what journalists actually did (e.g., their news construction about 'us' and 'them'), rather than what they thought they could do (Thomas Hanitzsch & Vos, 2017; Hellmueller & Mellado, 2015; Phillips, 2015). Based on the interview data as shown in Figure 6.3 – the NVivo Word Tree depicting participants' views about the factors that influenced their work – and how these manifested in the contents of the *Daily/Weekly Trust* and *The Punch* (see, for example, Dan-Halilu, 2001, p. 4; Madu-West et al., 2001, pp. 1-5, par.17), it is evident that the journalists' role conception and role performance were influenced by their ethnic/religious community. This correlation of data, used as a methodological strategy (Saldana, 2015, 2016) established the journalists' role conception (what they claimed to have influenced their work – the interview data) and their role performance (what they actually produced – the QCA data) with corresponding outcomes. Particularly, in the data, the journalists' reliance on ethnic and/or religious community for news interfered with their editorial independence. Their membership of this community defined their news tastes as manifested in their conflict narratives.

Although studies have revealed that people who perpetually observed violence were likely to be traumatised and their actions were being influenced by that exposure to violence (Keats & Buchanan, 2013; Obilom & Thacher, 2008; Rasaq, 2012), the manner in which Jos had been split between Muslim 'settlers' and Christian 'indigenes' had a greater influence on reporting. The residential segregation of Jos has been studied (Aliyu et al., 2012; Nyam &

Ayuba, 2016) but its influence on conflict reporting in the area has emerged from this research. Since borders had been created between 'them' and 'others' and the journalists were required to report about the conflict across the city, including 'unsafe' areas, they resorted to writing of false reports alleging attacks on members of their affiliate groups in territories dominated by 'others'. This was to portray their perceived enemies as the aggressors (see, for example, IP 5; IP 12- HFS; IP 13; IP 14; IP 26 on residential segregation). This also manifested in some reports which were analysed as the reporters did not provide evidence about their claims other than identifying news sources within their ethnic/religious community (see, for example, R. Ibrahim, 2001; Lalo & Mohammed, 2008c; Owuamanam & Olatunji, 2008).

By describing their work as challenging, the journalists recognised that there was pressure from their ethnic and/or religious community in which they found safety to make them support the community's goal of reinforcing and/or dispelling the indigene-settler dichotomy. As cited earlier, IP 19 stated that 'if you are a Muslim, your coverage begins and ends in your community and mosques. If you are a Christian, you are confined to Christian-dominated areas and churches. Again, you are either an indigene or a foreigner. This is how we have played along'. The QCA data confirmed how they 'played along'. For example, there was pressure from the Imams and Sheikhs as well as the Jama'atu Nasril Islam which manifested in the *Daily/Weekly Trust* reports that portrayed the Christian 'indigenes' as cruel and uncivil (see, for example, R. Ibrahim, 2001; D. G. Mohammed, 2001).

The data showed that hundreds of bodies of victims were regularly brought to the central mosque after which they were given a mass burial. The report was consistent with the *Daily/Weekly Trust* because its reporters (mostly Hausa Fulani Muslims) made the Jos Central Mosque their news beat, or a hub, where they produced casualty figures of presumed Muslim victims. The indigenous Christian journalists could not go to the central mosque to

count the bodies of the victims as doing so was endangering their lives. Therefore, casualty figures were manipulated by reporters at the central mosque giving a false picture of the violence.

Likewise, *The Punch* reported the position of the Christian Elders' Consultative Forum that 'we condemn today's attack on Christians in Jos […] in which several persons have been reported injured and dead' (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010, p. 2, par.11). This constituted news for *The Punch* audiences because the reporters, like their *Daily /Weekly Trust* counterparts, wanted to emphasise the claim that their fellow Christians in Jos had been attacked. Since the alleged attack on Christians was frequently linked to Hausa Fulani Muslims, the readers could easily identify the aggressors as the Muslims.

From the foregoing, the interview and QCA data answered Research Question 1, which interrogated the factors that influenced the practices of conflict journalists in Jos. The factors included the residential segregation of Jos (the main finding), the pressure from the media themselves and their sources, and journalists' continued encounter with violence. The journalists were often 'outside' the conflict region of the 'other' group (the community which excluded them), and yet reported the 'inside' story of the 'other' without substantial evidence.
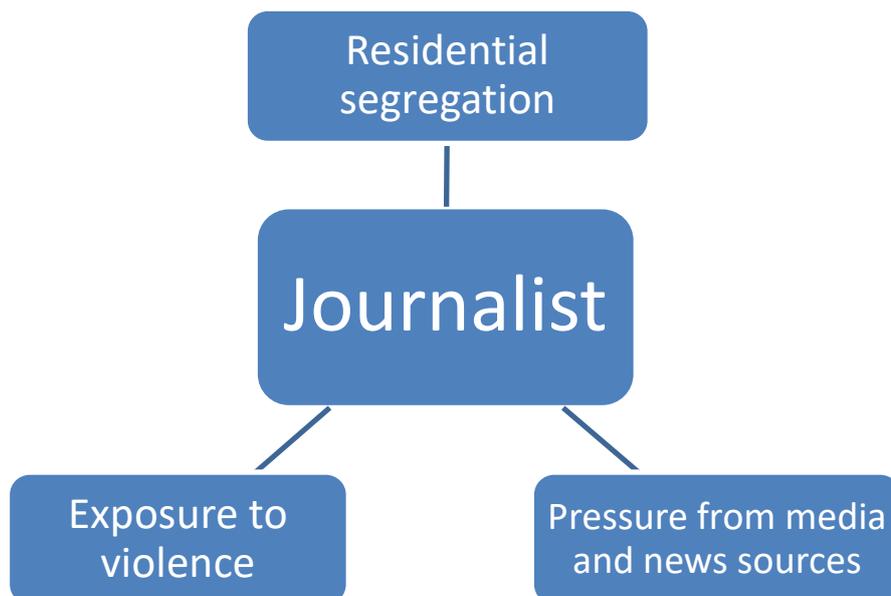
Figure 9. 1 Factors that influenced journalists who reported the Jos conflict. Source: The researcher

9.2.2 RQ2: How have journalists' experiences of violence affected their framing of news on the conflict?

Based on the analysis of the interview and QCA data sets, the journalists' lack of access to information due to residential segregation and the pressure from their organisations and news sources had impacted on their work. The communities in which the journalists lived and the pressure they faced within and outside their organisations largely influenced the way they constructed their conflict narratives.

The analysis of data on their experiences of violence was twofold: the 'fieldwork' and 'newsroom' experiences. The first referred to how they witnessed acts of violence (the clash between rival groups), while the second pertained to the actual news construction –how they made choices of words and organised them to describe what they witnessed. The interview data supported the data in literature that conflict sensitive reporting remained crucial in preventing and managing conflict (Howard, 2009, 2015; Lynch & Galtung, 2010; Singh, 2013). Most of the participants claimed that they ensured that what they reported did not

escalate violence or heighten tension among the communities (see, for example, IP 5; IP 6; IP 22).

A major challenge associated with journalists' fieldwork experiences was the fear of attack on them by some conflict actors who often felt that the journalists would be biased in their reports by portraying them in a bad light. Whenever the journalists were identified at conflict scenes – by the way they dressed because it said a lot about their cultures and faiths, or if they were heavily accented speakers who could be 'indigenes' or 'settlers' - they would not be spared (see, IP I3; IP 26). They believed that the journalists' reports on the conflict might not be objective hence the attack. A certain rival group of a particular ethnic or religious identity could express this frustration by physically attacking the journalists whose personal and organisational identities might have suggested that they belonged to the 'other' group (IP 9; IP 12 – HFS; IP 13; IP 20 –FBM). Another experience of the fieldwork was the trauma inherent in reporting the violence as some of the participants lamented the human cruelty which they had to contend (IP 1; IP 11). This data has confirmed existing research that constant witness to violence could lead to trauma (Keats & Buchanan, 2013; Obilom & Thacher, 2008; B. Zelizer & Allan, 2011).

The analysis of both data sets revealed that the fieldwork experience and newsroom experience were interrelated – the former 'midwifed' the latter, and both had a great impact on news contents. Having observed violence in which 'their own' ethnic/religious communities were participants (fieldwork), many journalists disregarded their much acclaimed standard of objectivity during news construction (newsroom activity). They were non-objective. They pursued the goals of their communities. In their newsrooms, the journalists identified news angles from which they wrote their stories focussing on the meaning they attached to the fieldwork. As documented in literature that 'truth can change' (Stolley, 2010, p. 267), the narratives which emerged from the newsroom often changed the

'truth' obtained from fieldwork. For example, when constructing conflict narratives, IP 8 – FBC, IP 10 and IP 22 endeavoured to 'moderate' the contents in order to achieve certain goals – one of which was to prevent further spread of the violence. Another goal was to attract the audience through the portrayal of an aggressive settler community and a victimised indigenous group, or vice versa.

In the QCA data, the journalists' fieldwork - which involved the observation of the clash between the 'settler' community and the 'indigenes' - provided the platform on which they framed the news. They ascribed different meanings to their observations and chose to report the conflict based on shared values with their communities; as a result of which truth about the conflict was produced 'in layers' or 'wrapped in rhetoric' (Stolley, 2010, p. 267). The fieldwork of the *Daily/Weekly Trust* journalists focused on the plight of the Hausa Fulani Muslims as they consistently observed how the bodies of Muslim victims were brought to the Jos Central Mosque (Agbese, Mohammed, et al., 2010; R. Ibrahim, 2001; J. N. Musa et al., 2008a, 2008b). In this 'field' where they allegedly counted a number of Muslim deaths, they relied on the Jama'atu Nasril Islam, the Imams and Sheikhs for information about ongoing attacks on Muslims from which they framed their news (R. Ibrahim, 2001; A. Mohammed, 2010a, 2010b; A. Mohammed et al., 2008). Likewise, the lenses of *The Punch* journalists captured, mainly, the burning of Christian churches and shops by alleged Muslim attackers (Owuamanam, 2008a, 2008b). In their reports emerging from field observation, they considered Christians' role in the conflict as a mere reaction to Muslims' attacks which they (Christians) carried out in self-defence (Madu-West et al., 2001; Owuamanam, 2010a). By framing the conflict narratives 'in layers' - each of which portrayed one rival group as the aggressor, and the other as the victim - the journalists failed to translate their standard of objectivity in practice.

It means that the journalists' encounter with violence – what they observed at the scene of the Muslim/Christian or indigene/settler clash and their allegiance to ethnic/religious/professional community under which they gained protection - determined the way news on the conflict was framed. Framing as a journalistic system of inclusion and exclusion of the elements of news (Entman, 1993; Phillips, 2015; Ryan, Carragee, & Meinhofer, 2001), was shaped by these factors. They adopted various strategies of framing to present the multifaceted conflict accounts which may have formed their audiences' perceptions. Framing, based on this data, is a journalistic decision that is non-objective, and it is influenced by an interest. The frames are derived from a variety of ideas for the purpose of achieving a goal. This confirms the central argument around framing theory (as discussed in Chapter 4), which involves a deliberate choice of words to construct reality (Hong, 2013; Vincze, 2014; Yoon & Gwangho, 2002). As such, this study argues that framing is the journalist's perspective of reality driven by purpose, or his/her disposition of closed-mindedness.

Figure 9. 2 How journalists' experience of violence affected their framing of news. Source: The researcher

As shown in Figure 9.2, the journalists' experiences comprised of fieldwork and newsroom engagements. In the field, they observed violence involving their communities, and were faced with pressure from internal (editors, proprietors) and external (social groups) actors. Their experience in the newsroom involved framing – ascribing meaning to what they observed in the field and choosing angles of news which described the intended message derived from the field experience. From the analysis of the data sets, 'truth' about the conflict came in layers and the audiences, as consumers of this commodity, were fed with a variety of truths.

9.2.3 RQ3: What strategies did journalists employ in reporting the Jos conflict?

A key objective of this research was to discover how the Jos conflict narratives evolved from journalistic strategies. As discussed in Chapter 1 (p.6), journalists have unique ways of engaging with conflict narratives (D. Barker, 2007; Magen, 2015; Perrin, 2011; Robinson, 2015). This research question was, therefore, formulated to probe the practices of journalists who reported the conflict.

The interview data showed that many journalists (e.g., IP 4; IP 6; IP 22) employed the strategy of moderation which implied that certain portions of their reports that seemed to indict some social groups in conflict, or pose a threat to peace in the city were reassessed, modified or eliminated. They believed that doing so would reduce human suffering resulting from the violence. Their view is grounded in conflict sensitive reporting literature which argues that journalists should demonstrate restraint by ensuring that media contents on conflicts were safe for consumption by their audiences (S. T. Lee, 2010; Pintak, 2014; Singh, 2013). It means that journalists were required to be sensitive to their society by reporting responsibly.

This strategy of moderation, for some participants, had contributed to the escalation of violence because, rather than expose the culprits of violence so that sanctions may be meted out to them they were being shielded under journalistic moderation. Like Shaw (2016) who proposed a human rights journalism which identifies with the victims of conflict, the journalists said whenever they reported the Jos conflict, they ensured that the perpetrators were exposed. For example, IP 15 revealed that 'in my writings, I condemn people who know that this place is not theirs but they are still fighting over it'. IP 22 concurred, 'I am fully attached to the story I write […]. There is no doubt that I take side with the indigenes who

have suffered in the hands of their visitors'. These participants named the alleged culprits – 'settlers', and identified the 'indigenes' as the victims.

From the QCA data, a number of journalistic strategies emerged which entailed moderation of some sort suggesting the journalists' neutrality, or support for a certain social group in conflict. The analysis showed that the journalists' affiliation with ethnic and/or religious communities, influenced by residential segregation and other factors, made them to adopt strategies which produced conflict narratives that supported the goals of these communities.

First, there was an implanting strategy which they used whenever violent conflict occurred. Their aim was to introduce the readers to the conflict environment and draw their attention to what they perceived as the causes of the conflict so that their readers may think alike and act based on that orientation. This was crucial for the attainment of the goals set by the conflicting parties as they grappled with identity crisis in Jos. During the first armed conflict in 2001, the *Daily/Weekly Trust* 'implanted' in its readers the notion that the September 7 violence was caused by a Christian woman who invaded a Muslim territory when worshippers had congregated for the Juma'at prayer (Dan-Halilu, 2001; R. Ibrahim, 2001). This suggested that the Christian community of which the said woman shared membership might have planned and carried out the alleged attack on Muslims. On the other side of the divide, *The Punch* preferred its readers to know that the violence was a fall-out of the protest by the 'indigenes' who demanded the reversal of the appointment of a 'settler' as the coordinator of the Federal Government poverty alleviation programme (Madu-West et al., 2001). It meant that the government failed to recognise the rights of the 'indigenes' who, by all standards, merited the office of coordinator, not the 'settler' whom it appointed. The implanting strategy, again, implied that since the indigenes' rights were denied, their protest was justified.

Second, a community-aided strategy was introduced. In order to substantiate their claims and earn readers' confidence, the journalists identified news sources who shared community membership with them. These individuals and groups provided the information which the journalists relied upon for their news. As Phillips (2015) argued that the choice of news sources rested on the journalists, they interacted with eye-witnesses that endorsed what they set out to achieve. The *Daily/Weekly Trust* used the Hausa Fulani Muslims and Islamic groups as its news sources (see, for example, Agbese, 2010; Agbese, Lalo, et al., 2010; B. Bello et al., 2001; Dan-Halilu, 2001; H. Mohammed, 2010). *The Punch*, on the other hand, engaged Christian eye-witnesses (see, for example, Madu-West et al., 2001; Owete & Madu-West, 2001; Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010; Owuamanam & Olatunji, 2010a).

The third strategy pertained to reinforcement. Throughout the 2001conflict, the journalists maintained two positions. The *Daily/Weekly Trust* blamed the violence on the Christian community through the crossing of the barricade at a mosque by a Christian woman. For *The Punch*, it insisted that the Hausa Fulani Muslims were responsible for the violence because they failed to recognise their status as 'settlers' who lacked political rights and privileges enjoyed by the natives. By 2008 and 2010 when there were spates of violence, the journalists reinforced these causes to make their readers believe that, on the one hand, Christian 'indigenes' were the aggressors and, on the other, the Muslim 'settlers' were to blame for attempting to take possession of what was not theirs. The *Daily/Weekly Trust* reported how Muslims were purportedly killed and their bodies assembled at the central mosque (e.g., Agbese et al., 2008; J. N. Musa et al., 2008a). *The Punch* reported that leaders of Christian community had decried the incessant attacks on their churches, the clergy and members (Owuamanam & Fabiyi, 2010; Owuamanam & Olatunji, 2010b). This strategy of reinforcement was adopted so that the readers may be in agreement with what the journalists perceived to be the reality of the conflict.

Fourth, the message-laden strategy was also employed by the journalists of both newspapers. This strategy allowed the journalists to construct the conflict narratives that conveyed less obvious information intended to give meaning to the readers. Thus, the less obvious message was embedded in the lead message. For example, the *Daily/Weekly Trust* introduced this strategy in the story on 'Muslim body urges dialogue over Jos crisis' (Odo, 2001). While the issue of dialogue between conflicting parties might have attracted readers who supposedly yearned for peace, the story concluded that the Muslim group advocating for dialogue urged Muslims to implement Sharia law in all states – a move which had long been resisted by the indigenous Christians in Jos. It meant that the call for the adoption of the Sharia law was a less obvious message but important to the journalist who framed and 'tied' it to the main story on dialogue. In the same manner, *The Punch* reported a story in which the leadership of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) condemned the Jos violence but it alleged that Christians had been attacked (Owuamanam, 2008c). The news was twofold: the condemnation of attack (the main message) and the alleged attack on Christians (the embedded message).

The fifth strategy of framing emerged – the strategy of 'inventing' casualty figures. As documented in literature that the conditions of victims of conflict often attract media audiences (Naanlang Godfrey Danaan, 2016; Harcup, 2015; Harcup & O'Neill, 2001; Hartley, 2013), the journalists reported huge numbers of deaths without sufficient evidence to show how certain ethnic/religious groups had been attacked. For example, about 400 persons were reportedly killed (J. N. Musa et al., 2008a), and 300 deaths were also recorded (Owuamanam, 2008c). This invention was borne out of the journalists' desperation to attract readership and reinforce the notion that certain groups were the targets of the attacks.

This study also discovered what it termed as the neutral-to-goal-focused strategy of framing which manifested, mainly, in the QCA data. It is double-edged. The journalists, first

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and foremost, endeared their readers by a seeming neutral disposition which is grounded in objectivity theory (Blaagaard, 2013; Muñoz-Torres, 2012; Rosen, 1993; Tong, 2015). They showed capacity to ensure 'fair' news judgment and to sustain it throughout the reporting process. From being neutral they moved to being non-objective and goal-focused thereby providing contexts which they intended for their readers. They tried to attract and sustain their readers' interests by coding words/phrases that did not suggest support for any group in the first instance. The journalists' self-imposed image of neutrality was meant to earn readers' confidence as they (readers) were not likely to recognise any transition in the conflict narratives that would occur. The journalists believed that once their readers were blinded by the initial 'fair' outlook of the story, such readers would fail to see the elements of bias that evolved hence the neutral-to-goal-focused framing. In the end, the actual message which was intended to achieve a goal sufficed.

Some reports in which the neutral-to-goal-focused strategy manifested included the 2008 conflict. It was reported to have been caused by some 'youths' (neutral) who protested the anticipated victory of the Jos North Local Government chairmanship election by a rival political party (Owuamanam, 2008b). The reporter hid the identity of the protesters in the lead but, subsequently, described them as 'ANPP supporters' (p.7, par.9). The latter part of the narrative suggested that the protest by the Hausa Fulani Muslim-dominated ANPP ignited the violence. This was the goal which the reporter intended to achieve. Similarly, in one of its editions, the *Daily/Weekly Trust* reported that 'it was not clear as to what caused yesterday's brutal escalation ' (Lalo, 2010, pp. 1-5, par.3) (neutral), but later decried the 'genocide that has been perpetrated against Muslims in Jos and its environs' (H. Mohammed, 2010, p. 64, par.7). Although the paper did not blame the violence on any group in the beginning, it accused non-Muslims of attacking Muslims – which was the ultimate goal of the reporter.

The blame-game strategy also manifested in the QCA data. The *Daily/Weekly Trust* either blamed the governor and his government for aiding and abetting the purported attack on the settler community, or the Christian tribes of Jos and the police of complexity (A. Adamu, 2010; R. Ibrahim, 2001; H. Mohammed, 2010; Pindiga, 2010). Other strategies employed by some journalists included the strategy of disinterestedness (Ogunwale, Ladigbolu, et al., 2001) and the strategy of deception (R. Ibrahim, 2001; Lalo & Mohammed, 2008a).

9.3 Contribution of the Study

9.3.1 First journalistic strategies research on Jos conflict

The contribution of this study is twofold. First, the study provides a contextual narrative of journalistic strategies employed in the Jos conflict to address the growing poverty of literature on the subject. It is the first research that interrogates journalistic practices in the study area from an analytical point of view paying attention to the less obvious but important strategies utilised by journalists in constructing conflict narratives. The research recognises that substantial part of previous studies focused on the socio-cultural, political, religious and historical dimensions of the conflict (e.g., Adebanwi, 2004; S. G. Best & Hoomlong, 2011; Shedrack Gaya Best & Rakodi, 2011; Danfulani, 2006; Gofwen & Ishaku, 2006; J. Jimoh, 2011; Krause, 2011; Okidu, 2011; Ostien, 2009). Others examined the relationship between media and conflict (e.g., L. Adamu, 2008; Ambe-Uva, 2010; J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012). These studies have ignored the critical aspect of framing – journalistic strategies (journalists' approaches to news construction) – the basis on which the authors ought to have established how journalists' selection of frames or their linguistic choices ignited violence in Jos. As such, this study attempts to fill this gap in literature implying that an addition to existing work on journalistic strategies, or framing research, is crucial to sustaining academic exploits in conflict journalism in Jos.

One way to measure the impact of research, as M. S. Reed (2016) argues, is by identifying people or institutions that would benefit from it. Reed points out that while research output could be useful to unidentified publics because it is accessible, its specific users or beneficiaries should be identified. In this regard, the beneficiaries of this study shall include undergraduate and postgraduate researchers in the universities and colleges, and scholars generally, who may be desirous of advancing conflict reporting research as the current study is the first empirical work done on journalistic strategies in Jos. Others are the journalists themselves and those who control the media. On the basis of the findings of this research and its recommendations, journalists and media owners may understand their role in ethnic/religious conflict and strive to work for peace.

Although this study examines journalistic strategies in the Jos conflict, its output could be explained in a wider context (which includes other parts of Nigeria), in the sense that journalists – like other citizens who are identified by ethnic and/or religious community - report conflict under similar circumstances. Studies reveal that ethnicity and religion are the major factors that define the identity of most Nigerians (Alubo, 2009; Danfulani, 2006; Egwu, 2001, 2015). As such, since these factors manifested in the current research, its contribution can help to explain journalistic strategies in conflict across the country.

Therefore, this research heralds a new perspective in journalistic parlance of handling conflict in Nigeria as it provides an insight into how conflict narratives evolve. It includes the strategies journalists employ in reporting conflict which have tended to shape the perceptions of people about conflict in Nigeria. Studies have revealed that the media have contributed to the escalation of conflict in Nigeria (Albert, 2002; H. S. Galadima, 2011; J. D. Galadima, 2010; Golwa, 2011; Golwa & Ochogwu, 2011; E. Ojo, 2003; Pate, 2011; Tejumaiye & Adelabu, 2011). Thus, the journalists and proprietors of media organisations in Jos – especially radio and television stations, and the bureau chiefs of the chains of local, regional,

national and faith-based newspapers – will benefit from this research. It will be a source of data on improving conflict reporting. The study examines the influence media owners have on the journalists because the owners' interests in conflict often lead to outright cancellation or exaggeration of reports by editors on the directive of proprietors. It, therefore, explains how their actions can endanger the lives of journalists and impede the efforts of those who work for peace in Jos.

9.3.2 Rethinking mediatisation and solutions journalism

The second component of the contribution of this study is the evidence it provides to explain the perspectives of ongoing debates on mediatisation and solutions journalism. While these topics continue to generate arguments among media scholars, the findings of this research show that they can help to explain journalistic practices in relation to conflict. In essence, this contribution includes new dimensions to understanding the mediatised conflict discourse, and the shift towards solutions journalism emerging to support efforts at reducing violent conflict. The first, known as the neutral-to-goal-focused/pyramid strategy, is characterised by media logics while the other is the solutions-review journalism that focuses on the solution-based process.

9.3.2.1 Advancing the 'mediatised conflict' research

This study makes a significant contribution to the growing research on mediatisation, particularly, 'mediatised conflict' (Cottle, 2006), and explains how enemy frames on the Jos conflict (documented in J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012) have evolved from journalistic strategies.

What constitutes mediatisation remains complex despite ongoing efforts by scholars to find a common ground. The debates by Deacon and Stanyer (2015) and Hepp et al. (2015), as discussed in Chapter 4, have been revisited by Lunt and Livingstone (2016) who proposed

a new thinking that recognises mediatisation as a 'research programme' (p.468). They argued that as a research programme, mediatisation provides the framework for testing theories through empirical methods rather than a stand-alone theory. However, they did not dismiss existing scholarship which recognises mediatisation as a 'high-level societal meta-process concerned with the […] appropriation of media logics by institutions and cultural practices across diverse domains of society' (p. 466). Although Lunt and Livingstone criticised the manner in which media logics are applied to many studies, they referred to these logics as 'affordances, codes, articulations or modalities' (p.466). In the context of current research, these logics are synonymous with journalistic strategies.

The ambiguity surrounding mediatisation has also evoked another thinking as recent research sought to establish whether transformations within phenomena (e.g., conflict, religion, commerce) emerged from media logics which involved 'media as an indispensable part' (Ekström et al., 2016, p. 1102), or through 'non-mediacentric' systems (p.1091). In the end, the authors concurred that what constitutes mediatisation is the meaning the researcher ascribes to media logics.

Journalistic strategies are, therefore, understood in this research as the 'appropriation of media logics' (Lunt & Livingstone, 2016, p. 466) which demonstrates the systematic choices of frames and the functions of these frames in the conflict narrative process. Beyond the findings of previous studies (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012) – which show that the conflict narratives were characterised by enemy frames – the understanding of media logics as manifested in the emergent strategies of the journalists is a contribution to the mediatised conflict literature. A key strategy that advances knowledge in this discipline is the Neutral-to-goal-focused strategy. It may be understood in the light of what Maras (2013) described as the 'invisible frame' (p.14), which portrays the journalist as a neutral arbiter, in the first instance, and then a biased judge whose intent is expressed in a

systematic manner. It means that the journalist is 'doing something' (Cottle, 2006) to achieve a certain goal – a process which suggests that media logics have prevailed.

Thus, mediatisation literature is expanded by this variety of neutral-to-goal-focused logic, or what is described in this study as the pyramid strategy (see Figure 9.3). Unlike the inverted pyramid news style in which the most important elements of the news occupy the first and succeeding paragraphs (Wheeler, 2005), the pyramid strategy involves building a narrative of less important details in the lead, and expanding the sequence with the important elements. The audience does not have the capacity to recognise this process because it is the writer who knows the crux of the story and attaches value to the codes.
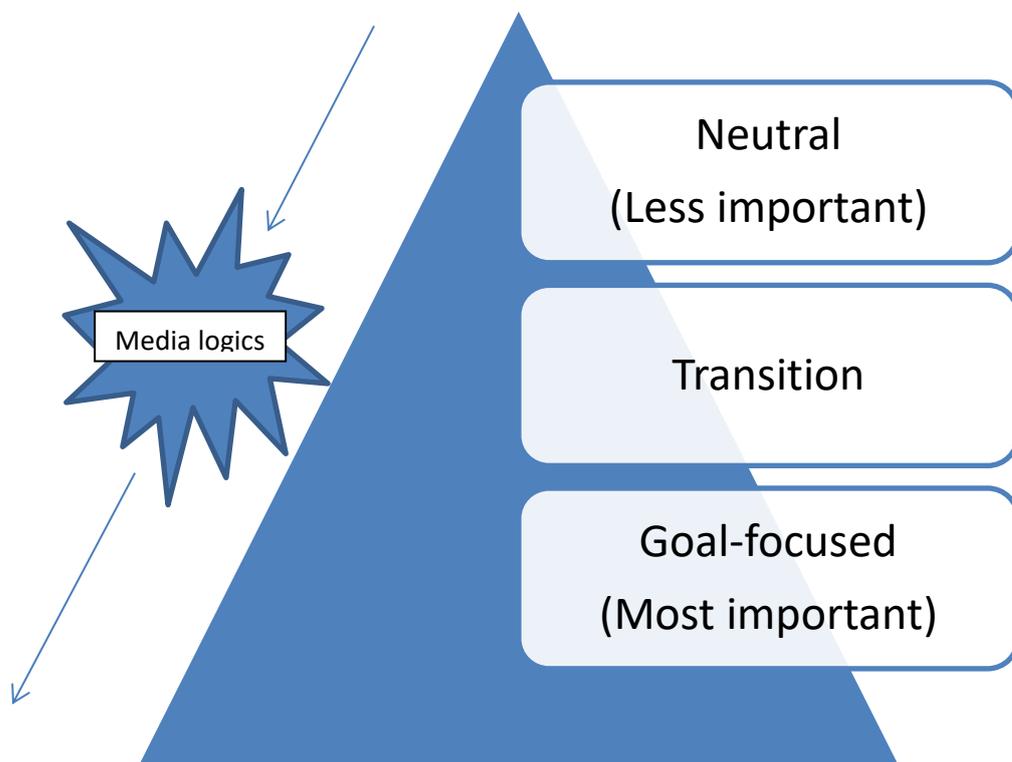
Figure 9. 3 Neutral-to- goal-focused/Pyramid strategy. Source: The researcher.

As illustrated above, the substance of the story is at the bottom of the pyramid. It does not function in the form of the delayed lead associated with the writing of feature articles because the goal is not to create suspense in order to sustain readership interest. The pyramid strategy identifies the topic in the lead but the main substance in the story is embedded.

Ekström et al. (2016) have identified five categories of mediatisation scholars, two of which underpin this study – 'the highly committed mediatisation researchers' and 'those who occasionally apply a theoretically informed version of the concept in empirical analyses' (p.1093). As a 'highly committed' mediatisation study, it is examined through mediatisation lenses situating media logics at the heart of the research. Based on this reasoning, the strategies of conflict journalists have been interpreted within the mediatisation frames – the appropriation of media logics. In the second category, the mediatisation theory (as discussed in Chapter 4), helped to fashion a framework on which the data was analysed.

While the debates on mediatisation continue among scholars in media studies, and across disciplines – especially in the domains of politics, religion, education, and so on, where media logics are said to transform everyday life – the neutral-to-goal-focused strategy of reporting conflict provides the framework for understanding this journalistic process. Existing literature on journalists' framing of hazardous events in Jos (e.g., J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012), and elsewhere (e.g., Daye, 2014; Hove, Paek, & Jwa, 2015) has not made this discovery. A new perspective on mediatised conflict has evolved from this study.

9.3.2.2 Conceptualising solutions-review journalism (SRJ)

Drawn on the data analysed in this study which demonstrates large scale participation by journalists in the conflict resulting in the escalation of violence in Jos, the solutions-review journalism (SRJ) has emerged. It is a modification of solutions journalism which was believed to have started in the 1990s to make journalism problem-solving (Benesch, 1998). By participating in the conflict through a variety of strategies, the journalists were not mere onlookers, bystanders or disinterested fact finders. They immersed themselves in the conflict and, driven by alliance with social groups, produced conflict narratives that pitched one social group against the other. They assumed the positions of the parties on both sides of the

divide, and chose to portray the aggressors as victims of the conflict and vice versa. This data confirms the findings in literature that journalists contributed to the escalation of violence in Jos (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012). Johan Galtung's peace journalism – which is opposed to the negative narratives of conflict in the media, but lays emphasis on how journalists can contribute to peace building efforts, or work towards achieving 'positive peace' (Galtung, 1996, cited in Lynch, 2013a) – is considered as the option for the journalists in the prevailing circumstances. This is because their reports have triggered the rapid response that would proffer 'solutions' to the conflict. As discussed in Chapter 4, peace journalism is a solutions-based approach to social problems (Curry & Hammonds, 2014; Wenzel et al., 2016).

Solutions journalism scholars think beyond reporting the facts; they are concerned about addressing the issues being reported. They do not merely report about social problems as the journalistic objectivity standard demands; they come up with ways by which such problems could be tackled. Solutions journalism emerged because many people realised that what the news media publish or broadcast leaves the audience confused as it does not suggest how phenomena should be understood. For example, a focus group participant (cited in Wenzel et al., 2016, p. 5) claimed that '[…] the only thing they report on are bad things, only negative things […]. They are not showing us how to change the community'. In the current study, both the interview and QCA data sets showed that many journalists – under the guise of objectivity – demonstrated this practice. They allowed their audiences to form opinions about what they read, heard or viewed even though a critical analysis of their reports showed that the 'actual information' was embedded in those articles. Their linguistic choices did not suggest solutions to the conflict. Their strategies ranged from neutral-to-goal, implanting and reinforcement, to community aided approach.

While it may be argued that the strategies employed by journalists in reporting the Jos conflict neither contributed to peace nor offered solutions to the conflict, this study holds that the conflict requires solutions-based journalism. The study moves from the divisive role of the journalists to a progressive one that supports efforts at entrenching and sustaining peace. It means that the programme of 'entrenching and sustaining peace' in communities where such is lacking is engineered by the journalists thereby providing solutions to the conflict. Curry and Hammonds (2014) have stated that 'solutions journalism is a form of explanatory journalism that may serve as a form of watchdog reporting, highlighting effective response to problems in order to spur reform in areas where people or organisations are failing to respond adequately, particularly when better options are available' (p.6). It stimulates development by a sustained engineering programme which entails the framing of stories that show how to solve social problems.

In order to demonstrate how solutions journalism was practiced at its inception, Benesch (1998) reported some narratives of the *US News*, two of which have been cited below:

> College athletes can be better educated if they are given academic scholarships to study after they finish playing on their school teams (p.36)

> If fatty foods were taxed like alcohol and cigarettes, people might consume less of them (p.36)

In the first and second scenarios, the non-solution versions of the reports (which are not captured above) might suggest that the education of college athletes do not go beyond a certain level; and people consume a lot of fatty foods which is a harmful health practice. Thus, 'if they are given academic scholarships to study […]' and 'if fatty foods were taxed like alcohol and cigarettes […]', the problem identified would be solved. The latter statements are the solution versions of the *US News* reports.

What remains crucial to the solutions journalism practice is its ability to influence public response to social problems (Bornstein, 2011). Although the Solutions Journalism Network (SJN) has undertaken the study of the influence of this practice on the US citizens (Curry & Hammonds, 2014), and introduced solutions journalism courses in the universities during the 2015/2016 session (Thier, 2016), it is still unclear how the solutions proffered for the social problems can be measured to establish their effectiveness.

The current research, therefore, has filled this gap by proposing solutions–review journalism that is not only solution-based but evaluation-driven. It believes in the efficacy of evaluation, or review, a phase in the solutions journalism process that is crucial to the achievement of its goals, and yet ignored. Existing literature on solutions journalism (e.g., Bornstein, 2011; Curry & Hammonds, 2014; Thier, 2016; Wenzel et al., 2016) has not articulated the role of review in the process. However, this research argues that solutions-based reporting functions on three levels: non-solution, solution and solution review. The journalist's frames should include a definite social problem as a strategy to attract the audience (which underpins the traditional journalism). It is followed by solutions that work, and then a review of what constitutes solutions.

One of the early contributors to solutions journalism scholarship wrote that 'news people often just point to problems and walk away. Lately they've been trying to find what works' (Benesch, 1998, p. 36). The writer implied that journalists had realised that by mere telling the story without concern for how it could lead to positive change, they were abdicating their social responsibility. Nearly two decades after this declaration, the focus of the solutions journalism scholars has remained on 'what works'. But what works involves 'why and how solutions work' (Thier, 2016, p. 330) . It means that this journalistic practice requires a review process to know how the solutions work.

This essential review domain is not captured in the solutions journalism framework (see Chapter 3). At the heart of the framework is the pre (solution) activity rather than its post (review) process. It dwells on the elements that distinguish solutions journalism frames, such as the causes of the social problem and the selling point of the solutions, among others (Curry & Hammonds, 2014).
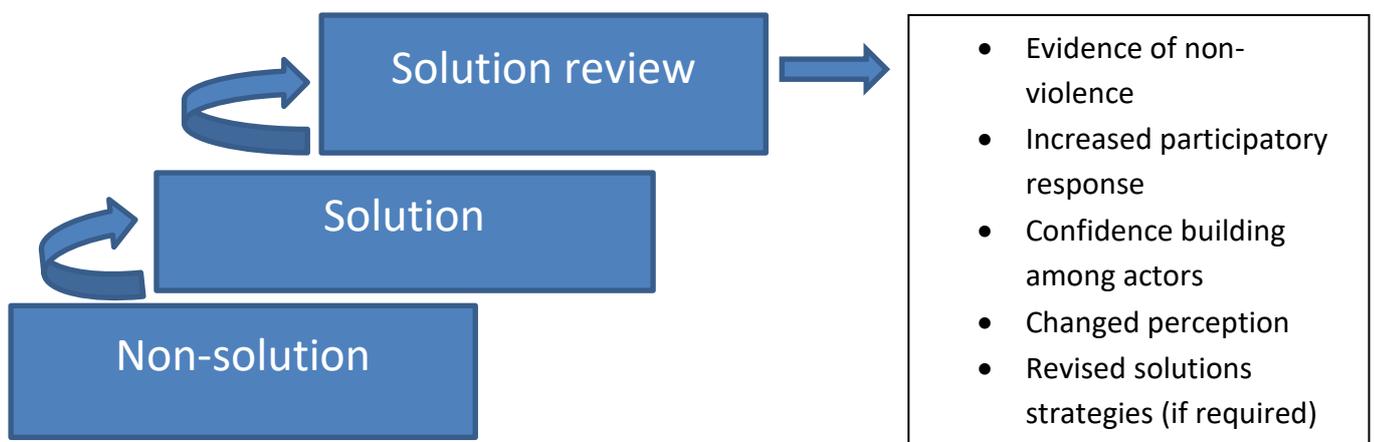
Figure 9. 4 The Solutions-review journalism framework. Source: The researcher

The new thinking in this study broadens the solutions journalism research and makes it even more relevant to conflict reporting. Since the goal of this brand of journalism is to contribute towards solving a problem, the process must be evaluated to know the level of success it has made. Farrell and McDonagh (2012, p. 108) have noted that evaluation, or any form of review, 'assesses the extent to which actual results can be ascribed to the policy or programme'. They argued that 'the success of a programme is determined by the level of impact the programme has by way of participation and how it changes people's attitudes, behaviour and/or benefits society in other ways' (p.108). As such, if the solutions programme is properly reviewed it would create the desired impact on the society.

Therefore, in this study, the solutions-review journalism has emerged to measure outcomes of solutions-based framing of conflict. As a framework for this practice, the journalist must ensure that:

- There is evidence of non-violence or reduction in violence in communities ravaged by conflict as the people's response to solutions stories. The most valuable ingredient of the SRJ model is non-violence. The journalist does not simply bombard the audience with solution contents and walk away; he/she must establish that the violence has reduced to the barest minimum, or it is completely eradicated as a result of the SRJ programme. The stories create some degree of impact on the audience in that the violence ceases and the parties in conflict find a common ground.

- There is increased participatory response by solutions audiences – individuals/groups seeking dialogue and reconciliation. There should be concrete evidence that the solutions audiences have embraced dialogue as a means to end the conflict, and are resolved to sustain peacebuilding efforts. When they initiate and get involved in activities that unite them, as a response to solutions stories, it would be clear to the solutions – review journalist that solutions to the lingering conflict have been proffered.

- Solutions stories advocating for tolerance/peaceful coexistence, for example, influence attitudes resulting in confidence building among parties on both sides of the divide. The solutions stories should rekindle trust in all the conflicting parties in that the parties become sensitive to the feelings, beliefs and the general wellbeing of others. There must be evidence that the aggressive attitudes of the solutions audiences have given way to dialogue, peace and reconciliation.

- Perceptions of solutions audiences change in favour of the solutions proffered. This is achievable through research after the advocacy programme. It involves the evaluation

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of the solutions programme in terms of its impact on the solutions audiences. A perceptions study is conducted to know if solutions stories have changed the attitudes of solutions audiences.

- They (solutions-review journalists) are willing to employ new solutions strategies if the current outcomes fail to meet set targets. The essence of the review process is to establish the effectiveness or otherwise of the solutions programme. Revisiting the process with a view to fashioning out ways of entrenching peace in the conflict area is crucial to the overall success of the SRJ programme.

This five-point framework does not interfere with SJN's solutions journalism framework outlined in Chapter 4. The latter begins where the former stops, as this is an expansion of the existing model. It is a vital segment of solutions journalism. The essential ingredient for solutions-based practice is peace journalism (Galtung, 1973). Its objective of seeking peace among conflicting parties will provide solutions to the protracted ethnic and religious conflict in Jos and, indeed, global conflicts

As this new thinking is emerging at the time of renewed interests in solutions journalism research – especially the introduction of solutions journalism courses in the US academic programme to advance knowledge in the field – the research community in Nigeria and other developing countries will benefit from it. Based on the solutions review journalism framework, a curriculum might be developed by researchers seeking an end to the multidimensional conflicts ravaging Africa through media interventions.

9.4 Limitations of the Study

9.4.1 Focus on the three years' conflict

The research was limited to the Jos conflict which occurred in 2001, 2008 and 2010. The findings provided evidence on journalistic strategies across the three years covered by this

research which implied that the results represented only a fraction of the Jos conflict. But to some extent, the findings can be generalised because the entire conflict (which includes violence that occurred intermittently) is linked to ethnicity and religion - the basis on which the journalists' strategies of reporting the three years' conflict were examined. While it may be argued that the outcome of the current research provided an insight into the strategies of journalists who reported the Jos conflict in a holistic sense because of its inherent features (identifiable in the strings of conflict), it produced evidence on three out of many occurrences. This means that new strategies might be discovered in future research that might explore the topic in relation to other conflict scenarios, including cases that go beyond Nigeria.

Furthermore, the research was not based on the chronology of the conflict but its magnitude and impact. Despite the focus on the three years' conflict regarded as the most violent (Ishaku, 2012; Krause, 2011; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Taft & Haken, 2015), only a particular conflict scenario was investigated extensively in each year. Other incidences that predated or followed the ones sampled were not included to avoid the accumulation of a large volume of data. Although the selection of the cases (the three years' conflict) followed the logic that qualitative research data is value-laden rather than numerical (Denscombe, 2010; Gelling, 2015), the non-inclusion of the series of conflict limited the study to only the cases cited.

9.4.2 Lack of archival materials/ broadcast recordings
The non-availability of archival materials, especially recorded news broadcast, on the conflict of 2001, 2008 and 2010 was one of the limitations of this study. The researcher visited all the radio and television stations in Jos that existed before 2001, and not later than 2010, to obtain news recordings or raw footages on the conflict for this study but found none. After several

attempts had been made through letters to the managements of the organisations and personal contacts, the researcher was unable to access such materials due to poor archival culture in Nigeria. In some of the organisations visited, some officials claimed that, as a policy, their recorded materials were often withdrawn after five years, an indication that only the records on the 2010 conflict were likely to be found because this research was conducted in 2015. Yet there were no such records in their libraries – not even the ones on the conflict between farmers and the Fulani herdsmen that had occurred in some parts of Jos while the research was going on.

The researcher had envisaged that the recorded news broadcast would be included in the news contents to be analysed in order to understand how broadcast journalists made their linguistic choices. While the interview participants were drawn from the print and broadcast media as well as the News Agency of Nigeria (NAN) who reported the three years' conflict, the non-availability of the recorded news broadcast on the conflict necessitated the selection of the two newspapers for the study. The samples of the newspapers were found but not without difficulty, again, due to poor record management. The researcher spent much time travelling across the North and South (covering approximately 2,500 Kilometres) in search of missing samples of the newspapers.

Despite the contacts the researcher made with some of the librarians across the country (through telephone calls and emails) prior to the fieldwork, with the aim of obtaining the newspaper samples, it did not yield a positive result. The researcher flicked through the heaps of 'dumped' papers in the respective library stores (not on the shelves) and recovered a few. Thereafter he continued the search in the private libraries of some politicians and individuals where he found the missing samples. In the light of this, the poor attitude to data management had led to the exclusion of the broadcast news contents for analysis.

Furthermore, the absence of the online versions of newspapers on the three years' conflict made the research cumbersome and frustrating.

9.4.3 Scant attention to interview questions by some participants due to pressure of deadlines

The third limitation of this research is that some journalists did not keep to their interview appointments as they had been assigned to report the clash between local farmers and Fulani herdsmen which occurred in the suburbs of Jos during this research. In some cases, they cancelled such appointments and withdrew from participating in the research due to the pressure of deadline. In other instances, interviews were rescheduled and when they eventually held, the journalists did not pay adequate attention to details as they preferred to summarise their responses in order to perform their routine editorial duties.

The cancellation or rescheduling of appointments affected this study in two ways. First, the participants who cancelled their appointments and withdrew from the research had been purposely selected to share their experiences based on their unique characteristics and roles. It means that the information that could have been generated from them and, possibly, produced useful data for the research was missed out. Although the researcher used the same selection criteria for the replacement of the participants, their perspectives remained unknown. Second, those who rescheduled their appointments but gave scant attention to details because they had editorial commitments did not contribute much to the research. They did not address some of the issues despite attempts by the researcher to probe the topic. Nonetheless, these limitations did not affect the research findings because some insightful interviews and the newspaper reports on the three years covered were obtained.

9.5 The Research Experience and the Lessons Learnt

When the researcher set out to conduct the study, he envisaged that he would gain experience that would help him in future research. He recognised that the research journey would offer

him the opportunity to acquire knowledge beyond the PhD. It began with the study of a wide range of methodology literature to guide the research process. The knowledge gained enabled the researcher to situate the study within philosophical, theoretical and methodological realms. In all this, he drew a number of lessons from the experience which could be deployed in future research.

First and foremost, the researcher knew that he was on a mission to discover information that touched on the sensitivity of reporting conflict involving two ethnic and religious groups with divergent interests. The mission required some bit of caution to engage with the journalists, many of whom had been separated along the divides. Expectedly, the researcher assumed that some of the participants might not open up on their strategies of news construction for fear of being blamed for the escalation of violence in Jos as shown in previous studies (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012). More so, such strategies may have been perceived as the journalists' mastery of the art which they were unlikely to share. Also, the researcher was not unmindful of the tendency of some journalists who professed a certain faith, or belonged to a particular ethnic group other than his, to show a lack of confidence in his ability to conduct the research creditably and objectively.

However, having established rapport with journalists over the years, the researcher was recognised as a member of their professional community because he had previously worked as a journalist in Jos. They believed he was familiar with the subject he was studying; as such, there was nothing to hide, and they felt the need to share with their 'trusted colleague' on how their conflict narratives evolved. During the interviews, most of the journalists explained how and why they took certain reporting decisions. Some of them cited cases in which their strategies of reporting were employed as they frequently 'reminded' the

researcher that the information they shared was familiar to him having been a journalist. Although the researcher gave the impression that he had followed the trends in journalism suggesting that it was a familiar terrain, so that he may gain their confidence, he probed further to know their strategies in great detail.

For the purpose of confidence building in the researcher, two journalists from both sides of the divide (a Muslim 'settler' and a Christian 'indigene') were engaged as research assistants. They comprised of journalists who exerted some degree of influence on their respective religious groups. They led the researcher to the participants and helped to dissipate the suspicion that could have arisen. Whenever they accompanied the researcher to the field, the participants were encouraged to talk about their experiences of the conflict and their strategies of news framing. Some of them were so open that they delved into issues unconnected with the topic. Aware that a good introduction of the research interview helps to sustain the dialogue (M. Davies & Hughes, 2014; Morris, 2015; Roulston, 2014), the researcher recognised the positive role journalists performed in nation building and explained the rationale for investigating their role in the conflict.

The lesson learnt from this experience is to think about potential risks to research and how to overcome them before and/or when they occur. The researcher can also take advantage of opportunities to achieve research goals. For example, in this study, the researcher's recognition as the participants' professional colleague earned him their confidence thereby enabling him to obtain relevant data from them.

It is also important to engage people about whom the participants have a favourable impression to help build researcher confidence. They could be acquaintances of the participants who are believed to be transparent and credible (Holliday, 2016). The two

research assistants in this study provided the support which sustained the cooperation between the researcher and the participants.

Second, in the design of the semi-structured interview guide, the researcher formulated a set of questions knowing that follow-up questions would emerge from the face-to-face interaction. This was to ensure that the research questions were addressed by the interview participants (Morris, 2015; Walliman, 2016). Based on this logic, the interview guide for this research contained 17 questions, all of which were posed to the 26 participants. The researcher did not realise that fewer questions were required to guide the 25-30 minute dialogue which would be sustained by a sequence of follow-up questions. Given the large number of questions and the participants, each interview lasted between 60 and 90 minutes. The follow-up questions for the researcher meant that there would be simple probes that would require straight-to-the-point answers, or short sentences to clarify ambiguous narratives. But they turned out to be what Bolderston (2012) termed as 'planned follow-up questions' and 'spontaneous follow-up questions' (p.70). The planned follow-up questions pertained to enquiries that were well thought-out, which did not reflect in the interview guide but were posed to the participants during the interview as a build-up on the main questions. The spontaneous follow-up questions emerged from the responses of the participants. Both 'follow-ups' featured in all the interviews as a result of which the interviews were long and a large volume of data emerged.

This posed a challenge to the researcher as he grappled with the transcription, organisation and analysis of the large data. Also, the time spent on each interview extended the time allotted to it which implied that it caused the journalists some level of inconvenience because they ought to have rounded off the interviews within 25-30 minutes and resumed their routine duties. The lesson learnt is to reduce interview questions to their essence and

moderate the dialogue by restricting the participants to the specific details that address the research problem.

Another experience of the research was the difficulty of getting some editors to participate in the research. They were willing to be interviewed but seemed to be busy all day. Each time the researcher visited, they were seen performing editorial and administrative roles in their organisations making it difficult to engage them. It took about a week for the researcher to interview a single editor. The lesson is that sufficient time should be given to fieldwork so that delayed interviews could be accommodated. Also, in future research, editors could be approached at the start of work when there is less pressure; that is, before the reporters return from their news beats to file in the day's reports.

9.6 Conclusion

This study is a more robust analysis of reporting conflict in Jos for which journalists have been culpable (J. D. Galadima, 2010; A. O. Musa & Ferguson, 2013; Rasaq, 2012). It interrogated the less obvious strategies employed by the journalists during the city's most cited years of violence (Ishaku, 2012; Krause, 2011; Taft & Haken, 2015). The research was advanced through a series of steps propounded by Saunders et al. (2012), known as the 'Research Onion' paradigm. This process enabled the researcher to examine the strategies of conflict journalists through philosophical lenses (constructivist epistemology, idealist ontology and value-laden axiology). Drawing from these philosophical stances, the qualitative methodology was adopted to help establish how and why journalists employed different strategies in news reporting. In order to achieve this objective, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted among 26 print and broadcast journalists who reported the conflict between the Muslim-dominated 'settlers' and the Christian-dominated 'indigenes'. This was to understand their role in the conflict and the brand of journalism they adopted while carrying out this role. This data was complemented with the one obtained from

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the analysis of two widely read newspapers in Nigeria's Muslim-dominated North (*The Daily Trust*) and Christian-dominated South (*The Punch*) which were purposefully selected aimed at understanding the 'inferred communication' in both publications (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

Based on the findings, the study concludes that journalists participated in the Jos conflict by utilising a number of strategies in their reports to achieve set goals. These strategies manifested in the journalists' linguistic choices, the main being the implanting strategy, the strategy of reinforcement, community-aided strategy, message-laded strategy and the neutral-to-goal-focused/pyramid strategy. They were influenced by the segregation of the Muslim and Christian residents, pressure (internal and external) and the cumulative trauma which resulted from constant witness to violence. As shown in the thesis, the research made two significant contributions to knowledge: It is the first empirical work on which journalistic strategies research on the Jos conflict can be built; it broadened the mediatised conflict discourse and proposed a solutions-review journalism that is problem-solving aimed at reducing human suffering caused by violence.

9.7 Recommendations

Although this study has explored the strategies of journalists in the Jos conflict (being the first empirical work undertaken on this topic) and provided perspectives on the mediatisation of conflict and solutions journalism, the following recommendations have been made to guide future research and/or policy formulation.

1. Each of the journalistic strategies discovered by this study is a potential topic for future research. While the current research has established that a number of strategies were used by journalists in constructing the narratives of the three years' conflict,

further investigation; for example, audience research to understand how these strategies have impacted on Jos residents or mass media audiences across Nigeria could be conducted. The research results can be compared with the findings of this research in order to have a general understanding of the role of journalists in the conflict. For example, if a researcher is interested in investigating audience perceptions about the community-aided strategy established by this study, he/she might understand the extent to which the audiences know that the journalists' news sources comprised of people with whom they share a membership of ethnic or religious community. The outcome might provide evidence on the adoption of the community-aided strategy by the journalists.

2. There should be a progression from the current research which focused on the three years' conflict generally regarded as the most violent (Ishaku, 2012; Krause, 2011; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016; Taft & Haken, 2015) to other years that were seemingly less violent. Since factors (which may include journalistic strategies) could have influenced the severity of the conflict, there might be variations in the findings of the study of the different cases. For example, the strategies of journalists in the conflict that occurred intermittently which were not covered by this research might reveal some new data when investigated. Some of the conflict scenarios may include the alleged ethnic cleansing in Dogon Nahawa and Kuru Karama villages; the bombings of the Jos ultra-modern market, the Terminus market, COCIN headquarters church and St. Finbarr's church.

3. In the future, the multidimensional contexts of the Jos conflict (e.g., economic, cultural and political factors which have influenced the conflict) could be considered in researching journalistic strategies. As studies have shown that the conflict is swayed by many factors (Ambe-Uva, 2010; Kaigama, 2012; Nyam & Ayuba, 2016),

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it might be worth investigating the topic beyond the ethnic and religious contexts of this research. For example, if the research hypothesis is that economy and politics are a driving force in the conflict, the journalistic strategies researcher could investigate the role conception and role performance of the journalists in relation to these variables. This might enhance a deeper exploration of the topic in the areas not addressed by this study.

4. Having established a firm foundation on which journalistic strategies research can be built in relation to the Jos conflict, this study invites researchers of quantitative and mixed methods traditions to investigate journalistic strategies through their methodological lenses. This could be done for the purpose of correlating the findings of the quantitative and mixed methods research with the qualitative results obtained from this study. The topic could also be explored using other qualitative data collection methods (e.g., documents review, observation), or even a different research philosophy (e.g., the positivist epistemology, realist ontology and value-free axiology) in order to identify the points of convergence and divergence in the studies.

5. As the search for remedies to the world's conflicts is gaining momentum across disciplines, journalism and mass communication educators should design curricula/syllabi on the framework of the solutions-review journalism proposed by this study, which they can use to teach would-be journalists this improved tradition of problem-solving journalism. This effort will help to build or rekindle in them the culture of a safe, tranquil and peaceful world through their art and ingenuity.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Ethical Approval

University of Salford
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26 October 2015

Godfrey Danaan
University of Salford

Dear Godfrey

Re: Ethical Approval Application – Journalists Exposure to Violence: A critical analysis of the strategies of reporting ethno-religious conflicts in Jos, Nigeria

I am pleased to inform you that based on the information provided, the Research Ethics Panel have no objections on ethical grounds to your project.

Yours sincerely

Julie Connett

Julie Connett
On Behalf of the Research Ethics Panel

Appendix 2: Participant Interview Guide/Questions

1. What factors influenced the practices of journalists who have reported the conflict in Jos?

2. What sources of pressure have journalists faced in reporting conflict in Jos?

3. In what ways have journalists overcome the pressure faced in reporting the conflict?

4. How would you describe your experience of reporting the conflict?

5. To what extent has your experience of conflicts influenced the way you report the conflict?

6. Do you think that framing the news on the conflict has invariably shaped the perceptions of the audience?

7. How would you explain your role as an 'umpire' in reporting the conflict between the 'indigenes' and 'settlers' or 'Muslims' and 'Christians' in Jos?

8. How have you applied the journalistic standard of objectivity in your news coverage of Jos conflict?

9. In what critical circumstances are you likely to compromise journalistic objectivity?

10. Have you engaged in unprofessional practices 'behind the scene' during the Jos conflict?

11. In what ways can journalists de-escalate violence or promote peace building initiatives in Jos?

12. How would journalists reporting the Jos conflict uphold professional honour?

13. Should regulatory institutions (for example, Nigerian Press Council and the National Broadcasting Commission) develop punitive measures to check the activities of journalists who align with warring groups in Jos?

14. Do media owners and news managers interfere with your duty of reporting the Jos conflict?

15. What level of journalism training have you attained?

16. How did you become a conflict journalist?

17. What editorial responsibilities have you undertaken other than conflict reporting?

Interview Participant Information Sheet

Analysing Strategies of Journalists Reporting Conflicts in Jos

Who I am, my mission

I am a PhD student of the University of Salford, Manchester, United Kingdom. I am conducting research on Journalists' Exposure to Violence: A Critical Analysis of the Strategies of Reporting Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Jos. It has been endorsed by the University Ethics Committee. My aim is to understand how narratives of the conflicts are produced, and the interests they serve. This effort is a modest contribution to the global research community by providing authentic data on this journalistic process.

I would like to interview you in your work environment to share with me your approach to the construction of the news in view of your experience of reporting the conflicts. I am, particularly, interested in the way you report the conflicts on 'indigenes' and 'settlers' or 'Muslims and 'Christians' in the city of Jos.

Will I disclose your identity?

No. I will uphold academic integrity by using the information for this purpose and keeping it confidential. Some portions of the data will be used to establish actuality of analysis in my research. I will not identify you by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. However, where the interviews are not problematic, I would take advantage to get a couple of photographs (e,g., Ariel or rear view) of the subjects and other related images in their environment.

The data will be protected by preserving in the archives (stored electronically via the University of Salford USIR platform) and no one else will have access. Its use will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

Who is organising this research?

It is my research leading to the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) of the University of Salford, Manchester.

How many journalists are participating?

The participants include 14 reporters (each representing a media organisation in Jos), 4 television cameramen (2 each representing private and public television stations) and 8 editors (distributed across 4 print media and 4 broadcast media) who cover the Jos conflicts.

How long will this interview last?

It will take between 25/30 minutes. I won't engage you again unless situation arising from the exercise (for example, clarification of information) warrants it.

Who will conduct the interview?

I will personally interview you if you kindly accept to participate in it.

What if you choose to withdraw?

You are free to take this decision at any stage of the study. It is not mandatory for you to participate.

*My contact details:*Name: Godfrey Danaan*;* Email: g.danaan@edu.salford.ac.uk; Mobile: +447459489030 (United Kingdom) Mobile: +2348035871991 (Nigeria)

University of
Salford
MANCHESTER

Interview Participant Invitation Letter

I would like to interview you about your experience of conflict reporting in Jos for the purpose of scholarship. You have been selected in view of your mastery of the art – the construction of news on the conflicts.

I am a PhD student of the University of Salford, Manchester, conducting this research to contribute to knowledge.

I will uphold academic integrity by using the information for this purpose and keeping it confidential. I will not identify you by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that your confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. However, where the interviews are not problematic, I would take advantage to get a couple of photographs (e,g., Ariel or rear view) of the subjects and other related images in their environment.

The data will be protected by preserving in the archives (stored electronically via the University of Salford USIR platform) and no one else will have access. Its use will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

In view of this important exercise, I invite you to voluntarily participate in it.

You may contact me on my mobile: +2348035871991 (Nigeria), +447459489030 (United Kingdom) or email: g.danaan@edu.salford.ac.uk

Yours faithfully,

Godfrey Danaan

University of Salford MANCHESTER

The Manager,

....

Participation of Journalists in the Research on the Analysis of Strategies of Reporting Ethno-religious Conflicts in Jos

I would like to seek the kind support of your management/editorial board to encourage a journalist in your organisation who is familiar with conflict reporting to voluntarily participate in an academic research on the Jos conflicts.

I am a PhD student of the University of Salford, Manchester, United Kingdom. The research, which I am conducting to understand how narratives of the conflicts are produced and the 'interests' they serve, is entitled: 'Journalists' Exposure to Violence: A Critical Analysis of the Strategies of Reporting Ethno-Religious Conflicts in Jos'.

I would like to interact with the journalist in a - 25/30 minute interview in order to learn about his/her conflict reporting experience for the advancement of knowledge.

I will uphold academic integrity by using the information for this purpose and keeping it confidential. I will not identify the journalist by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that his/her confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure. However, where the interviews are not problematic, I would take advantage to get a couple of photographs (e,g., Ariel or rear view) of the subjects and other related images in their environment.

The data will be protected by preserving in the archives (stored electronically via the University of Salford USIR platform) and no one else will have access. Its use will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.

In view of this important exercise, I humbly request that you identify a suitable journalist in your organisation (involved in conflict reporting) and ask if he/she is willing to participate.

You may contact me on my mobile: +2348035871991 (Nigeria), +447459489030 (United Kingdom) or email: g.danaan@edu.salford.ac.uk

Yours faithfully,

Godfrey Danaan

Interview Participant Consent Form

I, the undersigned, confirm that:

1. I have read and understood the information about the research as provided in the information sheet, and that it is an academic work conducted by Godfrey Danaan, a PhD student of the University of Salford, Manchester.
2. I volunteer to participate in this research as one of approximately 26 participants being interviewed for the research.
3. I understand that I can withdraw at any time without giving reasons and without penalty.
4. I understand that the researcher will not identify me by name in any reports using information obtained from this interview, and that my confidentiality as a participant in this study will remain secure.
5. The use of records and data will be subject to standard data use policies which protect the anonymity of individuals and institutions.
6. I, along with the researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form
7. I have been given my copy of this informed consent form.

Participant

....

Name of Participant   Signature   Date

Researcher

....

Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

Interview Participant Consent Form

1. I want the data destroyed after the research has been concluded.
2. I agree that researchers who may be interested in the data are free to use it.
3. I want my name mentioned in this research.
4. I want my photograph used in this research.

Participant

....

Name of Participant   Signature   Date

Researcher

....

Name of Researcher   Signature   Date

Appendix 8: Sample of the *Daily Trust* newspaper

Oil price free fall: Petrol now N50 a litre

The freefall of crude oil prices in the international market in

Appendix 9: Sample of *The Punch* newspaper

Constitution review: **Reps go to court over status**

• N'Assembly to spend N2.5bn on security

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