Review

Communication and Conflict in Nigeria: What Role for the Media?

Ahmad Muhammad Auwal

Department of Mass Communication, Nasarawa State University, P.M.B 1022, Keffi – Nigeria.
Email: amdauwal@gmail.com

It has been argued over the years that through their information dissemination function, amidst other powers to influence and shape public opinions, the media worsen conflict situations in the society. This study found out that sensational and bias coverage and presentation of news and views on conflict-related issues are among factors undermining the constructive contributions of mass media in conflict management and resolution in Nigeria. The paper concludes that over the years, the Nigerian media acted as key players in political crises and ethno-religious conflicts than as impartial judges. Hence, they have affected negatively, the management of such crises and conflicts in the country. Therefore, the study recommends that the media must learn to portray the diverse realities of the society within which they operate in such a way that it does not promote division and sectarianism. Also, the media should engage in responsible practices in times of conflict. This implies that the media should not carry inaccuracies, distortions, conflict, confusion and errors of facts in their reports.

Keywords: Mass Media, Conflict and Peacebuilding.

INTRODUCTION

The mass media have been accused of worsening crises through biased, unfair and irresponsible coverage and reporting. Through their information dissemination function, amidst other powers to influence and persuade, the media aggravate conflicts and worsen crises situations in the society. Subjectivity, sensationalism and bias in the presentation of news and views are the factors undermining the contributions of the media in conflict management and resolution. According to Best and Obateru (2011, p.35-36), "news media are hardly impartial or totally responsible in their coverage of conflicts or crises such that they have been accused of fueling, rather than dousing crises situations." Sobowale (1983) in Best and Obateru puts this point more succinctly stating that, the effects of the mass media appear, perhaps, to be more potent in conflicts they generate than in their real impact on people and events.

He further argues that "while there is no doubt that they have great potentials to resolve crises, they equally demonstrate ability to create conflicts." The media ought to present balanced and objective reports from the most credible sources possible. Rather than fulfilling this obligation, they seem to delight in taking sides and inflaming conflicts. This is the attitude that prompted some media observers and critics to conclude that most media organizations, particularly the privately-owned are political tool of the reigning political elite. In spites of the arguments that the Nigerian media have not lived up to expectations in conflict management, their role in peace-building efforts cannot be ignored and overemphasized.

The relationship between mass media and conflict has been studied extensively. In most cases, scholars examine the destructive use of media as a powerful instrument for the fueling, rather than dousing conflicts in

the society. Much is unknown about the use of media to prevent intergroup conflict. Although radio and television have long been considered as potential agents of social advancement and national integration, academic knowledge about the involvement of media in conflict resolution has remained deficient. Mass media could contribute in conflict management and resolution. However, they could play a significant role in reducing prejudice and conflict by communicating anti-prejudice messages. The impact of media on conflict resolution has remained very small. Their impacts on conflict situations appear deficient. Media's impact on the escalation of conflict is more widely recognized than on peace-building.

The mass media are very powerful instruments that inform, educate, enlighten, sensitize and entertain the public and society at large. The media have the capability to affect the society positively and negatively. As Asemah (2011a, p.13) observes, "the media in an attempt to educate, inform and entertain have some negative effects on the audience. This therefore, means that the mass media plays functional and dysfunctional roles. That is, positive and negative roles in the society." Akpunonu (2010) points out that the instruments of radio, television, Internet, print, though wonderful inventions, can become double-edged sword producing war inducing features, life-denying counter values, images of human hatred that arouse vengeance, violence, disaffection and war. Broadcasting with its audio-visual characteristics has the power to stir up feelings of anger, fear and insecurity and these becloud our reasoning. Similarly, Akpede (2011, p.48) affirms that "journalists have enormous power in their hands. With the stroke of a pen they can bring a warring community or country together, and with the same pen they are capable of bringing about disintegration of a nation." In the same vein, Friday Je (1986) in Utor (2009, p.124) explains that "the mass media have the power and capability to bring about change in society for the improvement of the quality of life." He adds that, because the media have this ability to report and inform so effectively, it could be said with great confidence that as change agents, they have the power to alter, even where resistance is strong the way of life of a community positively or negatively.

The performances of mass media affect the society and its members in a variety of ways. Since they could be deployed to undermine conflict prevention exercise, the media have often distorted news beyond recognition. With the emergence of Internet-based information dissemination and reception platforms often referred to as the "new or social media" and the dependence of people everywhere on these platforms for information, the social inclusiveness of the country's population are not only despicably portrayed but propelled towards conflict among them. Auwal (2015) argues that considering the quality of the information available on the

Internet, one would agree with the fact that most of the information accessed on the Internet of social media platform are simply fabricated, treacherous, inaccurate, nonfactual and misleading. This is because anybody who has access to the Internet can write, post, share and publish information of all sorts, regardless of the quality.

Sensationalization of news and bias in its coverage and presentation to the audience by the agencies of mass communication (mass media) can stir up provocative feelings or actions among ethnic and religious groups with different interests and beliefs in the society.

Understanding Mass Media, Conflict and Peace-building

To embellish this discussion, it is relevant to define the key terms. These are: "mass media," "conflict" and "peace-building."

In a broad sense, mass media are the agents or channels of information dissemination from a source to a large number of receivers. Without the devices and technologies of mass media, mass communication is practically impossible to be accomplished.

Conflict, according to the *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary* (2005), is a situation in which people, groups or countries are involved in a serious disagreement or argument. It also means a violent situation or period of fighting between two countries. Simply put, conflict is a situation in which there are opposing ideas, opinions, feelings or wishes; a situation in which it is difficult to choose. According to Best and Obateru (2011, p.39), "conflict is a process through which two or more actors or parties try to pursue incompatible aims or goals while trying to stop the other(s) from pursuing their goals." As defined by the BBC *English Dictionary*, conflict is a "disagreement and argument." The same dictionary also defines conflict as a "war or battle." Writing about the different definitions of conflict, Thomas and Lee (1996) refer to conflict as clashes over economic and political principles that are debated and fought over in the corridors of power in local, national and international arenas, and the real bloody battles in the cause of God and country, nation and ethnic group in the killing fields (cited in Okunna, 2004).

Peace connotes freedom from war or the time when a war or conflict ends. It also means freedom from conflict or disagreement among people or group of people; a state of law and order when there is absence of violence or other disturbances.

Peace-building on the other hand, implies the total efforts put in place by relevant stakeholders – governments and the media, to restore peace, stability and order in a society at critical moments and conflict situations.

The Nigerian Media: Mediators or Instigators of Conflicts?

We live in a world that is ridden with conflicts and crises, according to Omenugha (2013), from the climate change, war on terror, militarism and warfare, world poverty, financial meltdown, energy crises, food insecurity, forced migration, fast moving pandemics to human rights abuses, and so on, the world each day draws to the brink of precipice. How we collectively recognise and respond to these different threats to humanity depends on how they become defined and deliberated, constructed and contested in contemporary news media. Omenugha explains further that despite arguments supporting selective media effects approach whereby the blame of public misdemeanor is not necessarily heaped at the door of the media, there are strong beliefs by many people that the media are key instruments for 'negotiation' of the outcome of conflicts. Kofi Anan, the former United Nations Secretary General cited in Omenugha, notes that "by giving voice and visibility to all people including and especially the poor, the marginalized and members of minorities – the media can help remedy inequalities, the corruption, the ethnic tension and the human rights abuse that form the root causes of many conflicts." The author went further to comment that conflict can degenerate to crises, and crises to further crises, if there is "disinformation," "misinformation," "mal-information," "information lack," and so on.

The question here is that, how vibrant are the Nigerian media in conflict management and resolution?

Media reports are regarded as critical factors in escalating or reducing tensions. The patterns of media reports in the contemporary society, with specific reference to crises are capable of setting the entire nation on fire. The fact still remains that people are more interested in bad news than the good ones. Ironically, the media use this as an advantage and/or opportunity to exaggerate stories in order to sell their papers in the case of newspapers and magazines and provocative images or video clips on television to sustain viewership and patronage. Eti (2009, p.92) states that "conflict, by its nature, holds a forceful attraction for the mass media." In the same vein, Owens-Ibie (2002, p.32) states that "the media are naturally attracted to conflict." Wilson (2013, p.14) remarks that most of the media concentrate on bad news. They are problem focused. Well, they say "bad news is good news and this is what sells the paper!" At present, "the media are often sensational and emotional in tone. All these portrayals are clearly influenced by personal values, professional standards, media ownership and control structure and the news ethics of the organisation." Pate (2011, p.56-61) asserts that conflict sells. Thus, with the drive for profit by private media and the commercialization policy in government

owned outfits, our media organizations "find ready raw material" in conflict. He further argues that in their desire to sell copies and attract viewers and listeners, they trample upon all journalistic ethics through "colourful, unique and unexpected" stories, which may have negative consequences on the society.

Okunna (2004, p.8) asserts that "any meaningful discussion of the role of the media in conflict therefore should look at a number of issues and/or questions." According to her, the following questions, as raised by Thomas and Lee (1996), should be considered:

a.   How should those responsible for public communication and education respond to potential and actual conflict?

b.   What role should journalists play in covering conflicts?

c.   Should such professionals merely report, comment on and interpret it, or should they be actors in the resolution – or, more importantly, the prevention of conflict?

d.   In a mass-mediated world, what are the moral and social responsibilities of journalists involved in reporting conflict situations?

Thomas and Lee (1996) are right in their observation when they note that conflict is the bread and butter of journalism. This is to be expected, because conflict sells. Take up any newspaper, listen to any news broadcast, watch any documentary on television and one is confronted by stories of conflict. This view of the ubiquity of conflict in the media is echoed in Tehranian's (1996) statement thus: "conflict attracts the media as powerfully as flies gather around sweets." In explaining media's interest in conflict, Tehranian refers to the age-old journalistic dictum that the news media concentrate particularly on bad news. Such human and natural disasters as wars, terrorism, and earthquakes are undoubtedly vintage bad news (cited in Okunna, 2004, p.8).

Omenugha (2013, p.6) observes that "in crises situations, headlines are sensationalized to make sales in the Nigerian media." The author exemplifies thus: "*Boko Haram* strikes Kano, killing two Igbo businessmen" and "How Christian youths killed my driver – Dr. Zainab Kwaru," to mention a few. Galadima cited in Asemah (2011b) notes that journalists need to be aware of the fact that reports of crises have the tendencies to either escalate or diminish crisis. The reports of crises generate reactions from different people within and outside the place where the crisis is taking place. According to Galadima, during the year 2000 crisis in Kaduna, the media reported that virtually all the Igbo in Kaduna have been killed and this made the Igbo in Aba and Onitsha to begin to attack all the northerners in an attempt to revenge.

The reporting of any conflict can influence the situation in many ways. Gardener (2001) cited in Ochogwu (2011,

p.10-11) affirms that "media coverage can strongly influence how the parties, both inside and outside relate to a conflict and the 'players' within it by the choice of stories that are covered or omitted, the sources used, and the stand that is taken towards ethical reporting."

Findings by Kurawa (2000) and Pate (2003) cited in Doki (undated) reveal how the Nigerian media escalate tensions and promote diversity along ethno-religious lines in the country, through their reports. They illustrate thus: "…for the first time since 1966, the Jihadists will be confronted by a determined southern army… to teach the northern troublemakers a lesson once and for all," (Reuben Abati, *The Guardian*, March 31, 2000). "Kaduna boils again, three churches burnt," (*The Guardian*, October 7, 2001). "Plateau is the only predominantly Christian state in the north and they are not happy about this," (*Punch*, September 10, 2001). "Wild, Wild North: Bin Laden's men unleash terror in Kano," (*The News*, vol. 17, October 29, 2001). "Ex head of state and governor behind Jos mayhem" (*The Sunday Tribune*, September, 2001). "De-Mallamnisation of the Ports Authority," (Ochereome Nnanna, *The Post Express*, September 12, 2001). "...Whether they like it or not, we will not allow any Muslim to be president of Nigeria again. I am declaring this as President of the Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN)" Dr Sunday Mbang, in *This Day*, Monday, July 31, 2000, p4. Doki (undated) explains that this scenario points to the underlying tribalism that has been the motivating factor in conflicts and the media's subjective coverage. Religious differences alone are not the basis for these violent conflict, the media and parties in the conflict use religion as rallying point for tribal solidarity and propaganda purposes to attract support and assistance from other countries and across boundaries here in Nigeria.

Yusuf (2002) illuminates that two months after the Jos riots, *Tribune* newspaper persisted in its conflict promoting style of reporting. It carried a front-page story attributing the riot to "Christian girls forced to marry Muslims." However, the reporter did not cite a single incident of such a forced marriage. In a front page story, *The Guardian* of October 7, 2001 screamed: "Kaduna boils again: three churches burnt." The *New Nigerian* of October 10, 2001 followed up (the story) with a back page news item titled: "no church burnt in Kaduna, police repute (*Guardian*) reports." The *Guardian* did not carry the government (and the police) reactions to its news report. Yusuf explains further that *Daily Times* of October 10, 2001 on its back page carried a news item titled: "no religious undertone in Kaduna church fire, investigation." In a cover story titled: "The Jihadists invasion – how foreign fundamentalist wreck havoc in the north," *The News* magazine, vol. 17 no 8, August 27, 2001, in its coverage of the Tafawa Balewa crisis, made unsubstantiated claims that Muslims who had been killed and several driven out of Tafawa Balewa had deployed

foreign mercenaries to fight on their side. It reported that "each foreign Jihadist was paid N8000 to help execute the war." *The News* reporters did not interview a single Muslim in the area but all the people interviewed were Christians, among them the chairman of Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN) in Tafawa Balewa. The *Sunday Tribune* of September 30, 2001, carried front page news titled: "Ex head of state and governor behind Jos mayhem." The report did not mention names but stated that a former Muslim military head of state from the north sneaked into Jos before the crisis. The insinuation is that he came to organize Muslims to attack Christians. *The Tribune* also reported that the governor of Bauchi state supported him. A prompt rejoinder by the Bauchi state government was later carried in the *Sunday Tribune* of October 14, 2001.

From Yusuf's illustrations of media reports, it is evident that the media really instigate and sustain violent conflicts in Nigeria. In the same vein, Ahmed (2002, p.123) clarifies that "as ethno-religious conflicts engulfed the city of Jos last September (2001), *This Day* newspaper reportedly carried a report that triggered a reprisal attack on Hausa Fulani in the south-eastern states in its edition of September 10, 2001."

Researchers are yet to reach a consensus on the major causes of media's partisanship and subjectivity in reportage of events, particularly on issues of identity and diversity. Some scholars and media experts attribute this problem to ownership control, while others see unprofessionalism and media's quest for survival and profit maximization as the major causes.

Critics of the privatization of the broadcast media in the country assert that given the crucial role of the mass media institution in the nation's social and political life, the media should not be entrusted to private individuals who may utilize them for selfish, commercial, political, religious and ethnic ends to the detriment of national unity, national interest and peaceful co-existence (Mohammed, 1994). Udomisor (2013, p.5) observes that "there is the fear, and a genuine one, that the concentration of ownership in a few hands (private) will result in the use of the media for the advancement of personal and sectional interests, leading to political and religious instability." From another point of argument, Asemah (2011b, p.247) rightly asserts that "most crisis reports are biased because, most journalists who act as crisis reporters are not trained in the field of journalism. They therefore, do not know the essentials of crisis reporting." Doki (undated) contend that it is not a wonder then that in societies where the mass media is deeply rooted in social responsibility journalism, one hardly witness mass media instigated conflicts unless such conflicts are also instigated by other antagonistic external forces bent on planting their values and political world new in the recipient's society through the mass media.

Conclusion and Recommendations

From the foregoing discussions and scholarly arguments, it is evident that the media instigate and sustain conflicts in Nigeria. No doubt, media organisations and their practitioners violate the laws and ethics of journalism, and by so doing, it is believed that they are committing crimes against the country's citizens and the nation at large. This chapter submits that over the years, the Nigerian media acted as key players in political crises and ethno-religious conflicts than as impartial judges. Hence, they have affected negatively, the management of such crises and conflicts in the country.

In spite of the negative effects of the mass media on the lives of individuals and the country at large, especially in conflict situations, the media can also facilitate and promote peace-building efforts in Nigeria. In crises situations, the roles of the mass media have been found to be very crucial. The mass media are powerful institutions in the society. They ought to be balanced and objective in reporting conflict events. As public servants, journalists and media organisations ought to serve as mediators and not instigators of conflicts. Disagreeing parties in conflict must be given fair, objective and equal coverage. Okali (2011) cited in Hamid and Baba (2014) unveils in his study that the Nigerian media have not done well in discharging their surveillance role, particularly in the *Boko Haram* crisis. In reporting daily occurrences, including the outbreak of conflicts, the media despite the ownership pattern are generally expected to display a real sense of objectivity. They must ensure balance and fairness in their reports; this implies that their report must be free from bias. To guarantee this, all parties involved must be given equal attention. Stories must not be one-sided. Facts must be separated from opinions. Orhewere and Kur (2004) cited in Nwabueze and Ebeze (2013, p.869) observe that "responsible media practice in times of conflict suggest that the media do not carry inaccuracies, distortions, conflict, confusion and errors of facts in their reports."

The role of the media in rebuilding a community or city sharply divided along ethnic and religious lines are critical to peace-building and conflict resolution efforts. These efforts are what Omenugha (2013) describes as "peace journalism" and "conflict-sensitive journalism." According to her, peace journalism denotes a "sensitive" and "responsible" reporting on events in conflict-torn areas of the world. Journalism assists citizens to rebuild their society and to reduce tensions or at least not exacerbate the existing divisions. Conflict-resolution journalism helps citizens live peacefully and move towards democratic institutions. The author concludes that by itself, journalism cannot end conflict, but it can at least try not to worsen it, at best try to reduce it.

According to Tobechuckwu (undated), the pattern of reporting conflict and its management by the Nigerian media since the nationalistic days seems to be continuing. This is clearly shown in the press handling of the crises that engulfed their principal personalities. Most of the thriving media organizations in Nigeria are individually owned. Some were even established to achieve political and economic ends of their publishers. To move the press forward in their reporting of crises and conflicts; the Nigerian press should avoid advocacy journalism (journalism of taking stands on controversial issues and advocating the acceptance of such stands notwithstanding the feelings of the audience who have not been properly sensitized on all the sides of such an issue), or practice it with caution if and when it cannot be avoided. Asemah (2011b, p.242) comments that "journalists must report stories accurately and factually during crisis. Journalists should not be happy about the occurrence of crises in any given society to the extent of turning it to money making venture." According to Okunna (2004), any meaningful discussion of the role of the media in conflict therefore should look at a number of issues and/or questions. This role should revolve around clearly defined responsibilities, which require the media to do the following eight tasks: provide truthful information; avoid sensationalism; sensitize people by providing full information; observe balance or fairness in coverage; have a full understanding of the context of the conflict; de-emphasize the profit motive; play the role of peacemaker. Okunna adds that "the media should not merely report, comment on or interpret conflict; they should also play a role in enhancing the process of conflict resolution." Ekwo (2001) in Okunna reechoes this view when he notes that "we must be conscious of evolving a conflict-resolving media." Ekwo makes the point about the need for the media to also play the role of peacemaker, thus:

> It is true that media practitioners may not have handled the coverage of these crises in the best manner. Editors and reporters owe this young civilian government a duty to save it from possible collapse. It is part of our duty to achieve systemic balance in society. How best can the media balance their responsibility to report conflict with the need to contribute positively to the resolution of such conflict? To begin with, journalists who are assigned to cover conflict should be people who are genuinely committed to peace, both in the context of the particular conflict they are assigned to cover, and in the context of conflicts generally.

Working in line with the principles of responsible journalism can also reduce media's instigation of conflicts. If journalists report events accurately, fairly and objectively, their tendencies to worsen conflict situations will be reduced to the barest minimum. Doki (undated, p. 9) affirms that "when journalists are thoroughly professional, the media will also be, so neither of the two

will be accused of instigating conflicts." Egbon (1994) cited in Tobechukwu (undated) comments that sensationalism that could possibly blow up crises should be seriously avoided. Suppression of the truth should be avoided as it will obviously escalate the crises and create a false sense of security. Professionalism and ethical considerations must be held in high esteem or sacrosanct in the management and coverage of crises. Journalists ought to maintain a healthy skepticism and provide socially responsible criticism, avoiding relentless hostility. Conflict and diversity reporting should be taught in institutions of higher learning where mass communication, journalism, broadcasting or media studies are taught. This will help the journalist to become more professional in handling of conflict-based reports. Pate (2011, p.60-61) postulates that "some of the journalists even where they appear competent are often subdued by the attitudes and policies of their individual media houses to the detriment of their professional honour." Pate explains further that, it is important to also address media owners for their understanding in this issue. For the media to be eminently respected and trusted, practitioners must demonstrate professional competence in dealing with issues of diversity and conflict. The starting point is for the media environment to be diverse by reflecting in their structure and content the various social, economic and cultural realities of the society in which they operate, in a more or less proportional way.

The media must learn to portray the diverse realities of the society within which it operates in such a way that it does not promote division and sectarianism. The major challenge, therefore, is to equip media practitioners with specific and specialized conflict reporting skills that will promote "peace media" against the hitherto "hate media" which seems to have gained ground in the pre, during and after violent conflict periods. It has been argued that an informed and responsible citizenry can help make the media responsive and responsible; therefore, the media's imperfections reflect the imperfection of citizens who approve or ignore them. However, with professional ethics and standard, the media must strive above societal imperfections to display credible roles for peaceful coexistence and development (Ochogwu, 2011).

Nigerian press must rise above petty reporting and face the challenges of constructive and balanced reporting especially during crises or conflicts periods. The press, however, should not support evil or help to perpetuate it and should therefore always take a stand against it. This must be done "professionally," "ethically," "objectively," and "cautiously." The public interest (the interest of the generality of people ascertained and through democratic principles) must be the guiding and overriding interest in such situations (Ekeanyanwu, 2005 in Tobechukwu, undated).

It is only when there is peace that a society can witness growth and development. Hence, peaceful and stable atmospheres are needed for a nation to develop economically, educationally, politically and socially. To this end, it is imperative for media practitioners and relevant stakeholders in the industry to take into cognizance, the assertion of Matthew 5:9 which says: "blessed are the peace-makers: for they shall be called the sons of God." As such, media practitioners must strive to promote peace in the society.

The media's role in contributing to cognitive, attitudinal and behavioral change on a large scale is unique. Conflict prevention and peace-building professionals can use the media in harmony with their other programs – if they know when, why, and how to use the media for the most strategic impact in lessoning the polarization between groups. On the other hand, media professionals still have much to learn about why and when their work can contribute to preventing violent conflicts and building peace between groups. The media and peace professionals both have their limitations and share an interest in the dynamics of conflict (Bratic and Schirch, 2007).

Members of the public or citizens must also learn live in peace with one another despite their ethnic and religious diversities. The Holy Books (Qur'an and Bible) enjoin believers and adherents to be at peace with one another and to payback evil deeds with good ones. "Peace is Allah's attribute. All prophets were champions of peace. Islam calls for cooperation and good of mankind. Islam is a religion of peace" (Gwamna, 2014, p.17). Romans 12:17-21 says: "repay no one evil for evil. Have regard for good things in the sight of all men. If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceable with all men. Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." Similarly, Qur'an 41:34 says: "the good deed and the evil deed cannot be equal. Repel (the evil) with one which is better (i.e. Allah ordered the faithful believers to be patient at the time of anger, and to excuse those who treat them badly), then verily! He, between whom and you there was enmity, (will become) as though he was a close friend."

On this note, therefore I will like to end this chapter by reechoing Martin Luther King Jnr's assertion which reads as follows: "if we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must become ecumenical rather than sectional. Our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class and our nation: and this means we must develop a world perspective… Now the judgment of God is upon us and we must either learn to live together as brothers or we are all going to perish together as fools."

References

Ahmed G (2002). "The Role of the Nigerian State in Promoting Ethnic Conflict and the Writer in Nigeria," in Jika, A. et al. (eds.). *Mass Media and National Development,* Kano: Mubin Publishers.

Akinwale AA (2010). "Repression of Press Freedom in Nigerian Democratic Dispensation." *Africa Development,* Vol. XXXV, No. 3. Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).

Akpede KS (2011). "Implementation of Ethics Practice by the Nigerian Media Practitioners: The Journey So Far," in Idebi, S.K.O. and Madaki, W.M. (eds.). *Journalism Ethics: A Philosophical Approach to Issues in the Nigerian Media.* Ibadan: Cobweb Book Publishers.

Akpunonu C (2010). *Radio/Television Broadcast Messages: Production and Presentation.* Abuja: Virtual Contact Limited.

Asemah ES (2011a). *Mass Media in the Contemporary Society*. Jos: University Press.

Asemah ES (2011b). *Principles and Practice of Mass Communication*, Second Edition. Jos: Great Future Press.

Auwal AM (2014, September 18). "Stopping Social Media Abuse." *The Nation,* p.43.

Auwal AM (2015). "New Media and Education: An Overview of Its Impacts on the Academic Performances of Nigerian Students." *New Media and Mass Communication*, Vol. 35. International Institute of Science, Technology and Education (IISTE), pp.29-34.

Best CGE and Obateru T (2011). "The Challenges of Responsible Journalism in Conflicts: The Jos Crisis as Paradigm," in Golwa, J.H.P. and Ochogwu, J.P. (eds.). *Media, Conflict and Peace building in Nigeria.* Abuja: Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR).

Bratic V and Schirch L (2007). "Why and When to Use the Media for Conflict Prevention and Peace building." Netherland: European Centre for Conflict Prevention/Global Secretariat of the Global Partnership for the Prevention of Armed Conflict.

Doki AM (undated). "Mass Media and Conflicts in Northern Nigeria." Kaduna: Department of Mass Communication, Kaduna Polytechnic.

Eti CI (2009). "Objectivity and Balance in Conflict Reporting: Imperatives for the Niger Delta Press." *The Journal of Pan African Studies,* Vol. 3, No. 3.

Gwamna JD (2014). "The Imperatives of Interfaith Understanding and Co-operation for Responsible Politics in Nigeria." A Paper Presented at the Interfaith Initiative for Peace Conference, Held in Abuja.

Hamid AM and Baba IM (2014). "Resolving Nigeria's '*Boko Haram*' Insurgence: What Role for the Media?" *Procedia – Social and Behavioral Sciences, 155*. The International Conference on Communication and Media. Malaysia: Elsevier Ltd.

Hornby AS (ed.) (2005). *Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary: International Students' Edition,* Seventh Edition. New York: Oxford University Press.

Mohammed JB (1994). "Democratization and the Challenge of Private Broadcasting in Nigeria." *Africa Media Review*, Vol. 8, No. 1. African Council for Communication Education.

Nwabueze C and Ebeze E (2013). "Mass Media Relevance in Combating Insecurity in Nigeria," *International Journal of Development and Sustainability*, 2(2): 861-870.

Ochogwu JP (2011). "Introductory Narrative on Media, Conflict and Peace building in Nigeria," in Golwa, J.H.P. and Ochogwu, J.P. (eds.). *Media, Conflict and Peace building in Nigeria.* Abuja: Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR).

Okunna CS (2004). "Communication and Conflict: A Commentary on the Role of the Media." *Africa Media Review,* Vol. 12, No. 1. Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESRIA).

Omenugha KA (2013). "The Sociology of Crises and the Responsibility of Journalists in Conflicts Reporting for Peace Journalism." *The Press*, Issue Number Twenty. Abuja: Nigerian Press Council (NPC).

Owens-Ibie N (2002). "Socio-cultural Consideration in Conflict Reporting in Nigeria" in Pate, U.A. (ed.). *Introduction to Conflict Reporting in Nigeria.* Lagos: Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.

Pate UA (2011). "Issues and Challenges of Reporting Diversity and Conflict in Democratic Nigeria" in Golwa, J.H.P and Ochogwu, J.P. (eds.). *Media, Conflict and Peacebuilding in Nigeria.* Abuja: Institute for Peace and Conflict Resolution (IPCR).

Tobechukwu EU (undated). "The Nigerian Press Coverage of Political Conflicts in a Pluralistic Society." Ota: Department of Mass Communication, Covenant University.

Udomisor IW (2013). "Management of Radio and Television Stations in Nigeria." *New Media and Mass Communication,* Vol. 10. International Institute for Science, Technology and Education (IISTE).

Utor M (2009). "An Appraisal of the Impact of Media Ethics on the Practice of Journalism," in Keghku, T. and Melladu, B.B. (eds.). *Topics in the Mass Media and Publics Relations in Nigeria*. Makurdi: Aboki Publishers.

Wilson D (2013). "Role of the Media in Identifying and Reporting Potential Sources of Conflicts." *The Press*, Issue Number Twenty. Abuja: Nigerian Press Council (NPC).

Yusuf B (2002). "Media Coverage of Ethnic and Religious Conflicts in some parts of Northern Nigeria," in Jika, A. et al. (eds.). *Mass Media and National Development,* Kano: Mubin Publishers.